Introduction to Electroacoustics and Audio Amplifier Design

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### Contents

1 Basic Principles of Sound  
   1.1 Sound .......................... 1
   1.2 Sources of Sound .................. 2
   1.3 Velocity of Sound .................. 2
   1.4 Frequency of Sound ................. 2
   1.5 Pitch .......................... 3
   1.6 Human Speech ...................... 5
   1.7 Frequency Bands .................... 5
   1.8 Audio Sub Bands ................... 6
   1.9 Sound Pressure Level ............... 8
   1.10 Equal Loudness Contours .......... 9
   1.11 Loudness Levels ................. 12
   1.12 Audio Test Signals .............. 14
   1.13 Problems ..................... 18

2 Fundamentals of Acoustics  
   2.1 Basic Equations of Acoustics ..... 21
   2.2 The Acoustic Wave Equation ......... 23
   2.3 The Plane Wave .................. 24
   2.4 Specific Impedance ................ 25
   2.5 Acoustic Energy .................. 25
   2.6 Acoustic Intensity ................ 26
   2.7 Wavelength ..................... 27
   2.8 Particle Displacement .............. 28
   2.9 The Simple Spherical Wave ......... 28
   2.10 Volume Velocity ................ 30
   2.11 Power Radiated in a Spherical Wave 32
   2.12 Acoustic Images ................ 33
   2.13 The Directivity Pattern .......... 35
   2.14 The Plane Circular Piston ......... 36
   2.15 The Pattern Beamwidth .......... 39
   2.16 Fresnel Diffraction Effects ... 40
   2.17 Acoustic Reflections ........... 42
   2.18 Problems ..................... 46
## 3 Analogous Circuits of Acoustical Systems

- **3.1 Acoustic Sources** ........................................ 49
- **3.2 Acoustic Impedance** ........................................ 50
- **3.3 The Plane Wave Tube** ........................................ 51
  - 3.3.1 Infinitely Long Tube ........................................ 53
  - 3.3.2 Closed Tube ................................................ 53
  - 3.3.3 Open-Ended Tube ............................................. 54
- **3.4 Acoustic Resistance** ........................................... 56
- **3.5 Acoustic Compliance** ........................................... 59
- **3.6 Acoustic Mass** ................................................... 60
- **3.7 Acoustic Impedance on a Piston in a Baffle** ..................... 63
- **3.8 Radiation Impedance on a Piston in a Tube** ....................... 67
- **3.9 Radiation Impedance on a Piston in Free Air** .................... 68
- **3.10 Problems** ....................................................... 70

## 4 Analogous Circuits of Mechanical Systems

- **4.1 Mechanical Sources** ............................................ 73
- **4.2 Mass, Compliance, and Resistance** ................................ 74
- **4.3 Mechanical Systems** .............................................. 76
- **4.4 Electromagnetic-Mechanical Transducer** ......................... 78
- **4.5 Crystal Electrostatic-Mechanical Transducer** .................... 82
- **4.6 Condenser Electrostatic-Mechanical Transducer** ................ 83
- **4.7 Mechano-Acoustic Transducer** .................................. 88
- **4.8 Problems** .......................................................... 90

## 5 Microphones

- **5.1 Classifications** .................................................... 93
- **5.2 Modeling Diaphragm Reflections** ................................ 94
- **5.3 Diaphragm Back Acoustical Load** ................................ 97
- **5.4 Diaphragm Mechanical Parameters** ................................. 98
- **5.5 Condenser Microphone** ........................................... 98
- **5.6 Condenser Microphone SPICE Simulation** ....................... 102
- **5.7 Condenser Microphone Buffer Amplifiers** ....................... 105
- **5.8 Dynamic Microphone** ............................................. 106
- **5.9 Ribbon Microphone** ............................................... 110
- **5.10 Proximity Effect** ................................................ 113
- **5.11 Combination Microphone** ....................................... 115
- **5.12 Problems** .......................................................... 118

## 6 Moving-Coil Loudspeakers

- **6.1 Construction** ..................................................... 119
- **6.2 Analogous Circuits** .............................................. 123
- **6.3 Combination Analogous Circuit** ................................... 125
- **6.4 Infinite Baffle Analogous Circuit** ................................. 126
- **6.5 Low-Frequency Solution for \( U_D \)** ............................. 127
- **6.6 Low-Frequency Bode Plots for \( U_D \)** ............................ 129
# CONTENTS

6.7 Small-Signal Parameters ........................................... 130
6.8 High-Frequency Solution for $U_D$ .................................. 131
6.9 On-Axis Pressure ...................................................... 133
6.10 Pressure Transfer Function .......................................... 133
6.11 Bode Plots of On-Axis Pressure .................................... 134
6.12 Filter Theory Description of $G(s)$ ............................. 136
6.13 Cutoff Frequencies ................................................... 137
6.14 Effect of Non-Zero Generator Resistance ......................... 138
6.15 Frequency of Peak Response ....................................... 139
6.16 Voice-Coil Impedance ................................................. 140
6.17 On-Axis Pressure Sensitivity ....................................... 142
6.18 Acoustic Power Response ............................................ 144
6.19 Reference Efficiency .................................................. 146
6.20 Diaphragm Displacement Function .................................. 146
6.21 Voice-Coil Electrical Power Rating ................................ 148
6.22 Displacement Limited Power Rating ................................ 148
6.23 SPICE Models .......................................................... 149
6.24 Problems ............................................................... 154

7 Closed-Box Loudspeaker Systems .................................. 159
7.1 Modeling the Box ....................................................... 159
7.2 The Analogous Circuits ................................................ 162
7.3 The Volume Velocity Transfer Function ............................ 164
7.4 The On-Axis Pressure Transfer Function ........................... 165
7.5 Effect of the Box on the System Response ......................... 166
7.6 Sensitivity of the Lower Cutoff Frequency ......................... 168
7.7 System Design with a Given Driver ................................. 169
7.8 System Design From Specifications ................................. 171
7.9 A SPICE Simulation Example ....................................... 173
7.10 Problems ............................................................... 176

8 Vented-Box Loudspeaker Systems .................................. 179
8.1 Modeling the Enclosure ................................................ 179
8.2 Effect of the Vent ...................................................... 181
8.3 The On-Axis Pressure Transfer Function ........................... 181
8.4 Voice-Coil Impedance Function ..................................... 183
8.5 The Magnitude-Squared Function .................................. 184
8.6 The B4 Alignment ....................................................... 186
8.7 The QB3 Alignments ................................................... 187
8.8 The Chebyshev Alignments ......................................... 187
8.9 Example Pressure Responses ....................................... 188
8.10 Design with a Given Driver ........................................ 189
8.11 Design from Specifications ......................................... 194
8.12 Vented-Box SPICE Example ....................................... 195
8.13 Problems ............................................................... 199
## 9 Crossover Networks

- **9.1 Role of Crossover Networks** ........................................ 203
- **9.2 First-Order Networks** .............................................. 204
- **9.3 Second-Order Networks** ........................................... 206
- **9.4 Third-Order Networks** ............................................. 208
- **9.5 L-Pad Design** ..................................................... 209
- **9.6 Constant-Voltage and All-Pass Functions** ...................... 211
- **9.7 Effect of the Voice-Coil Impedance** ............................ 212
- **9.8 Effect of the Driver Phase Response** ............................ 213
- **9.9 Active Crossover Networks** .................................... 218
  - **9.9.1 Second-Order Filters** ........................................ 218
  - **9.9.2 Third-Order Butterworth Filters** ............................ 219
  - **9.9.3 Fourth-Order Filters** ......................................... 220
- **9.10 SPICE Modeling Example** .................................... 221
- **9.11 Problems** ....................................................... 225

## 10 Acoustic Horns

- **10.1 The Webster Horn Equation** .................................... 229
- **10.2 Salmon’s Family of Horns** ..................................... 229
- **10.3 Finite Length Horn Size** ....................................... 232
- **10.4 A Horn Analogous Circuit** ................................... 233
- **10.5 SPICE Examples** ............................................... 234
- **10.6 Horn Driving Units** ............................................ 239
- **10.7 Mid-Frequency Range** .......................................... 240
- **10.8 Condition for Maximum $P_{AR}$** ............................. 242
- **10.9 The Horn Efficiency** ............................................ 242
- **10.10 The Low-Frequency Range** .................................. 243
- **10.11 The High-Frequency Range** .................................. 243
- **10.12 Low-Frequency System Design** ................................ 244
  - **10.12.1 Design with a Given Driver** ............................. 244
  - **10.12.2 System Design from Specifications** ................... 246
- **10.13 Problems** ....................................................... 249

## 11 Audio Power Amplifiers

- **11.1 Power Specifications** .......................................... 251
- **11.2 Feedback Amplifier Gain** ..................................... 252
- **11.3 Effect of Feedback on Distortion and Noise** ................ 253
- **11.4 Effect of Feedback on Output Resistance** .................. 254
- **11.5 The Stability Criterion** ........................................ 255
- **11.6 The Single-Pole Amplifier** ................................... 258
- **11.7 The Two-Pole Amplifier** ....................................... 260
- **11.8 The Alternate Stability Criterion** ............................ 262
- **11.9 Techniques for Compensating Feedback Amplifiers** ....... 264
  - **11.9.1 Gain Constant Reduction** .................................. 267
  - **11.9.2 First Pole Lag Compensation** ............................ 268
  - **11.9.3 Second Pole Lead Compensation** .......................... 270
## CONTENTS

11.9.4 Feedforward Compensation ........................................ 271
11.10 Signal Tracing ..................................................... 271
11.11 Power Supply Design ............................................. 275
11.12 Amplifier Circuit Topologies ........................................ 277
  11.12.1 Power Output Stage ........................................ 277
  11.12.2 Voltage Gain Stage ......................................... 281
  11.12.3 Input Stage .................................................. 284
  11.12.4 Completed Amplifier Circuit ................................ 286
11.13 Gain-Bandwidth Product ........................................... 288
11.14 Slew Rate ......................................................... 290
11.15 Decoupling and Grounding .......................................... 291
11.16 Protection Circuits ................................................ 293
11.17 Power Dissipation .................................................. 299
11.18 Amplifier Measurements ............................................ 299
  11.18.1 Power Rating ................................................ 299
  11.18.2 Voltage Gain ................................................. 300
  11.18.3 Frequency Response ......................................... 300
  11.18.4 Output Resistance and Damping Factor ....................... 301
  11.18.5 Slew Rate .................................................... 301
  11.18.6 Signal-to-Noise Ratio ...................................... 302
  11.18.7 Total Harmonic Distortion .................................. 302
  11.18.8 Intermodulation Distortion ................................. 304
11.19 Problems ......................................................... 306

A References .................................................................. 313

B Driver Parameter Measurements ........................................ 315
  B.1 Basic Theory ....................................................... 315
  B.2 The Measurement Test Set ......................................... 316
  B.3 Measuring $R_E$, $f_s$, $Q_{MS}$, $Q_{ES}$, and $Q_{TS}$ ................. 318
  B.4 Measuring $V_{AS}$ ............................................... 319
  B.5 Conversion to Infinite-Baffle Parameters ......................... 320
  B.6 Measurement of $L_E$ and $R'_E$ ................................ 320
  B.7 Summary Sheet .................................................... 322

C 4th-Order Bandpass Systems ........................................... 323
  C.1 System Description ............................................... 323
  C.2 Output Volume Velocity .......................................... 324
  C.3 On-Axis Pressure .................................................. 326
  C.4 Fourth-Order Band-Pass Functions ................................. 326
  C.5 System Parameters ................................................. 327
  C.6 Design Procedure ................................................ 328

D Electroacoustic Glossary of Symbols .................................. 331

E The Isobaric Connection ............................................... 335
Preface

This book is an outgrowth of a senior level elective course in audio engineering that I have taught to electrical engineering students at the Georgia Institute of Technology. The first part of the book covers basic acoustics. The emphasis is on that part of acoustics that pertains to the field of audio engineering. Most of the remainder of the book concerns the application of the tools of electroacoustics to the analysis and synthesis of microphones, loudspeakers, crossover networks, and acoustic horns. The book concludes with a chapter that covers the basic theory of audio amplifier design.

Electroacoustics is that part of acoustics that pertains to the modeling of acoustical systems with electrical circuits. Because most acoustical devices have a mechanical part, the modeling of mechanical systems with electrical circuits is a basic part of electroacoustics. Separate chapters in the book are devoted to analogous circuits of mechanical systems and to analogous circuits of acoustical systems. The traditional approach in these circuits has been to use transformers to model the coupling between the electrical, the mechanical, and the acoustical parts. A major departure in this book is the use of controlled sources to model the coupling. An advantage of this approach is that it avoids the need for mobility analogs in the acoustical circuits. In addition, the author has found that students have much less difficulty with the approach. Perhaps this is because the controlled-source circuits are more intuitive than the transformer circuits. In addition, the circuits can be easily analyzed with circuit simulation software such as SPICE.

Electroacoustic models are developed for the more common microphone types and for the moving-coil loudspeaker driver. Separate chapters cover closed-box and vented-box loudspeaker systems. Although the emphasis is on basic system theory, practical methods of design are also presented. Because crossover networks are such an important part of loudspeaker systems, a chapter is devoted to crossover networks. Acoustic horns are a vital component in public address systems. A chapter is devoted to horn models. In all cases, SPICE simulation examples are presented where appropriate.

One might ask why a chapter on audio amplifiers is included in a book that is primarily concerned with electroacoustics. Without a power amplifier, a loudspeaker could not make sound. Therefore, one might say that the role of an amplifier in a system is just as important as the role of a loudspeaker. The chapter on amplifiers is not intended to be an in-depth chapter on electronic theory. Instead, it addresses the more important aspects of amplifier design with an emphasis on the basic operation of the circuits. Practical examples are presented that illustrate how some of the pitfalls of amplifier design can be avoided.

The second edition corrects errors found by students and myself in the first edition. Also, six appendices have been added.

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