

4.3.5 Magnetic Losses and Frequency Behavior

General Remarks

- So far we have avoided to consider the frequency behavior of the magnetization, i.e. we did not discuss what happens if the external field oscillates!
 - The experience with electrical polarization can be carried over to some magnetic behaviour, of course. In particular, the frequency response of **paramagnetic** material will be quite similar to that of electric dipole orientation, and diamagnetic materials show close parallels to the electronic polarization frequency behaviour.
 - Unfortunately, this is of (almost) no interest whatsoever. The "almost" refers to **magnetic imaging** employing **magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)** or **nuclear spin resonance imaging** - i.e. some kind of "**computer tomography**". However, this applies to the paramagnetic behavior of the magnetic moments of the **nuclei**, something we haven't even discussed so far.
- What is of interest, however, is what happens in a **ferromagnetic** material if you have expose it to an **changing**, i.e. oscillating magnetic field. $\mathbf{H} = \mathbf{H}_0 \cdot \exp(i\omega t)$
 - Nothing we discussed for dielectrics corresponds to this questions. Of course, the frequency behavior of **ferroelectric materials** would be comparable, but we have not discussed this topic.
 - Being wise from the case of dielectric materials, we suspect that the frequency behavior and some **magnetic energy losses** go in parallel, as indeed they do.
- In contrast to dielectric materials, we will start with looking at magnetic losses **first**.

Hystereses Losses

- If we consider a ferromagnetic material with a given hysteresis curve exposed to an oscillating magnetic field at low frequencies - so we can be sure that the internal magnetization can instantaneously follow the external field - we may consider **two** completely independent mechanisms causing losses.
 - 1. The changing magnetic field induces currents wandering around in the material - so called **eddy currents**. This is different from dielectrics, which we always took to be insulators: ferromagnetic materials are usually conductors.
 - 2. The movement of domain walls needs (and disperses) some energy, these are the **intrinsic** magnetic losses or hystereses losses.
- Both effects add up; the energy lost is converted into heat. Without going into details, it is clear that the losses encountered increase with
 - 1. The frequency **f** in **both** cases, because every time you change the field you incur the same losses per cycle.
 - 2. The maximum magnetic flux **B_{max}** in both cases.
 - 3. The conductivity $\sigma = 1/\rho$ for the eddy currents, and
 - 4. The magnetic field strength **H** for the magnetic losses.
- More involved calculations (see the **advanced module**) give the following relation for the total ferromagnetic loss **P_{Fe}** per unit volume of the material

$$P_{Fe} \approx P_{eddy} + P_{hyst} \approx \frac{\pi^2 \cdot d^2}{6\rho} \cdot (f \cdot B_{max})^2 + 2f \cdot H_C \cdot B_{max}$$

- With **d** = thickness of the material perpendicular to the field direction, **H_C** = coercivity.
- It is clear what you have to do to minimize the eddy current losses:
 - Pick a ferromagnetic material with a high resistivity - **if** you can find one. That is the point where **ferrimagnetic** materials come in. What you loose in terms of maximum magnetization, you may gain in reduced eddy losses, because many ferrimagnets are ceramics with a high resistivity.
 - Make **d** small by stacking insulated thin sheets of the (conducting) ferromagnetic material. This is, of course, what you will find in any run-of-the-mill transformer.
- We will not consider eddy current losses further, but now look at the remaining **hystereses losses P_{hyst}**
 - The term **H_C · B_{max}** is pretty much the area inside the hystereses curve. Multiply it with two times the frequency, and you have the hystereses losses in a good approximation.
 - In other words: There is nothing you can do - for a given material with its given hystereses curve.

➤ Your only choice is to select a material with a hystereses curve that is *just right*. That leads to several questions:

- 1. What kind of hystereses curve do I need for the application I have in mind?
- 2. What is available in terms of hystereses curves?
- 3. Can I change the hystereses curve of a given material in a defined way?

➤ The answer to these questions will occupy us in the next subchapter; here we will just finish with an extremely cursory look at the frequency behavior of ferromagnets.

Frequency Response of Ferromagnets

➤ As [already mentioned](#), we only have to consider ferromagnetic materials - and that means the back-and-forth movement of domain walls in response to the changing magnetic field.

- We do not have a direct feeling for how fast this process can happen; and we do not have any simplified equations, as in the case of dielectrics, for the forces acting on domain walls. Note that the atoms do *not* move if a domain wall moves - only the direction of the magnetic moment that they carry.
- We know, however, from the bare fact that permanent magnets exist, or - in other words - that coercivities can be large, that it can take rather large forces to move domain walls - they might not shift easily.
- This gives us at least a feeling: It will not be easy to move domain walls *fast* in materials with a large coercivity; and even for materials with low coercivity we must not expect that they can take large frequencies, e.g. in the optical region
- There are materials, however, that still work in the **GHz** region.

➤ And that is where we stop. There simply is no general way to express the frequency dependence of domain wall movements.

- That, however, does not mean that we cannot define a **complex magnetic permeability** $\mu = \mu' + i\mu''$ for a particular magnetic material.
- It can be done and it has been done. There simply is no *general* formula for it and that limits its general value.

Questionnaire

Multiple Choice questions to 4.3.5