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Stefan Bilbao, Reginald Harrison, Jean Kergomard, Bruno Lombard, Christophe Vergez. On Passive Models of Viscothermal Wave Propagation in Acoustic Tubes Passive Models of Wave Propagation in Acoustic Tubes. 2015. hal-01151253v1

HAL Id: hal-01151253

<https://hal.science/hal-01151253v1>

Preprint submitted on 12 May 2015 (v1), last revised 28 Apr 2016 (v2)

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On Passive Models of Viscothermal Wave Propagation in Acoustic Tubes

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(Dated: May 13, 2015)

Abstract

A novel continued fraction expansion to the immittances defining viscothermal wave propagation in a cylindrical tube has been presented recently in this journal, intended as a starting point for time domain numerical method design. Though the approximation has the great benefit of passivity, or positive realness under truncation, its convergence is slow leading to approximations of high order in practice. Other passive structures, when combined with optimisation methods, can lead to good accuracy over a wide frequency range, and for relatively low order.

PACS numbers: 43.20.Mv, 43.20.Hq, 43.55.Ev, 43.75.Fg

I. INTRODUCTION

The authors of a recent article¹ propose a novel approximation to viscothermal losses in a cylindrical tube based on continued fraction expansions, in frequency, of exact expressions for impedance and admittance. The idea is to show that such an approximation is a suitable starting point for time domain numerical methods. In particular, the method proposed serves to sidestep difficulties encountered when high-frequency approximations are employed—while useful in the frequency domain, these lead to fractional derivatives in the resulting time domain system, and must be further approximated to lead to a recursive method.

The approach offers many advantages—and most importantly structural passivity, due to the non-negativity of element values in the resulting circuit representation. The immittances are positive real functions, and remain so under truncation to any order. Not all such representations have this property—see, e.g., the article by Kergomard². Such structures are thus excellent candidates for the construction of time domain schemes³. The proposed structure, however, converges slowly, and approximation order can be high if one is interested in performing a simulation over a large range of frequencies. The aim of this short article is to show other passive representations for viscothermal wave propagation which are amenable to optimisation and operation over a wide frequency range, even at low order.

II. IMMITTANCES FOR A CYLINDRICAL TUBE

A standard model of wave propagation in a cylindrical tube can be written in the frequency domain in terms of a pair of equations relating the pressure $P = P(\omega, x)$ and volume velocity $U = U(\omega, x)$:

$$\partial_x P + ZU = 0 \qquad \partial_x U + YP = 0 \qquad (1)$$

See, e.g., the article by Keefe⁴ and the references therein. Here, $x = [0, L]$ is a spatial coordinate, for some tube length L , and ω is a frequency variable, in radians/s. $Z = Z(j\omega)$

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and $Y = Y(j\omega)$ are the series impedance and shunt admittance respectively for the tube. Expressions for Z and Y are given as follows:

$$Z = \frac{j\omega\rho}{\pi a^2} \frac{1}{1 - F_v} \quad Y = \frac{j\omega\pi a^2}{\rho c^2} (1 + (\gamma - 1) F_t) \quad (2)$$

where here, ρ is air density, in kg/m³, c is the wave speed in m/s, γ is the ideal gas constant and a is the tube radius in m. The functions F_v and F_t are defined by

$$F_v = \phi\left(\sqrt{-j}r_v\right) \quad F_t = \phi\left(\sqrt{-j}r_t\right) \quad \phi(\zeta) = \frac{2J_1(\zeta)}{\zeta J_0(\zeta)} \quad (3)$$

where $j = \sqrt{-1}$, J_0 and J_1 are zeroth and first order Bessel functions and r_v and r_t are defined as

$$r_v = a\sqrt{\rho\omega/\eta} \quad r_t = a\nu\sqrt{\rho\omega/\eta} \quad (4)$$

with viscosity coefficient η and Prandtl number ν^2 .

The immittances Z and Y may be split as

$$Z = Z_l + Z_v \quad Y = Y_l + Y_t \quad (5)$$

where $Z_l = j\omega\rho/\pi a^2$ and $Y_l = j\omega\pi a^2/\rho c^2$ are the immittances corresponding to wave propagation in the absence of viscous (respectively thermal) losses, and where

$$Z_v = \frac{j\omega\rho}{\pi a^2} \frac{F_v}{1 - F_v} \quad Y_t = \frac{j\omega\pi a^2}{\rho c^2} (\gamma - 1) F_t \quad (6)$$

represent the additional contributions due to such effects.

When extended to the entire complex plane, through the variable s , where $\text{Im}(s) = \omega$, it is useful to examine the pole/zero structure of $Z_v(s)$ and $Y_t(s)$. See Figure 1. Both Z_v and Y_t possess interlaced poles and zeros on the negative real axis with a zero closest to the origin in both cases. This arrangement suggests particular circuit representations, as will be described shortly.

III. CIRCUIT REPRESENTATIONS

The breakdown of the immittances Z and Y into lossless and viscothermal effects as per (5) may be represented simply through a circuit diagram, using the analogy between

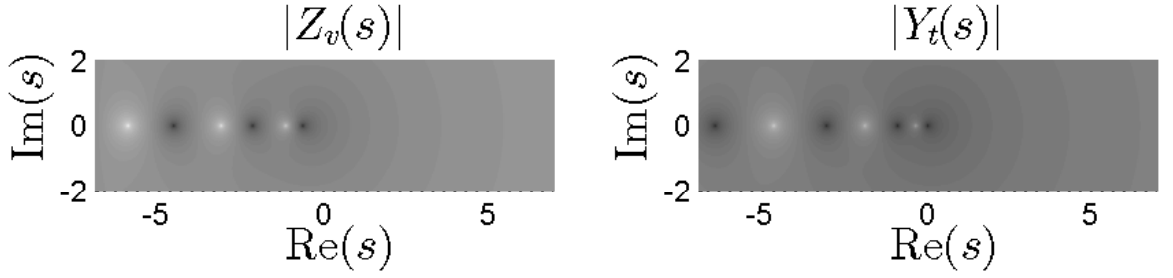


FIG. 1. Impedance magnitude $|Z(s)|$ (left) and admittance magnitude $|Y(s)|$ (right), plotted in the complex plane, in dB. Dark and light spots represent zeros and poles, respectively.

pressure with voltage, and volume velocity with current, leading to a series combination for Z and a parallel combination for Y . See Figure 2.

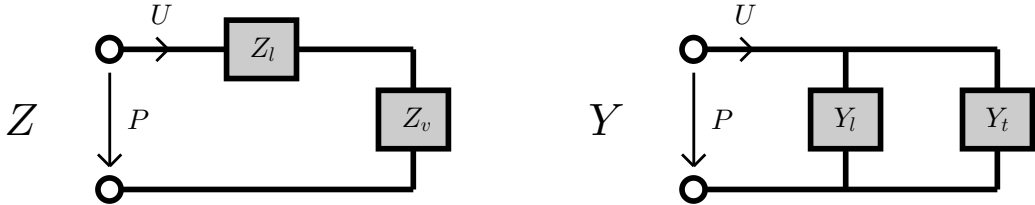


FIG. 2. Circuit representation of the breakdown of the impedance $Z = Z_l + Z_v$ and admittance $Y = Y_l + Y_t$.

Given the observation that the immittances Z_v and Y_t possess poles and zeros on the negative real axis, it is natural to seek approximations which are of two-element type⁵— RL in the case of Z_v , and RC in the case of Y_t . Furthermore, the approximations should be positive real and thus passive—a condition which is simply met if the network components take on non-negative coefficient values. A continued fraction expansion of the immittances about DC leads to ladder structures sometimes referred to as Cauer’s second form⁵, as employed recently in the article by Thompson et al¹. See Figure 3 at top. In what follows, only the series impedance Z_v will be discussed—the case of the shunt admittance Y_t is similar.

In practice, the ladder is truncated after a finite number N of branches, leading to

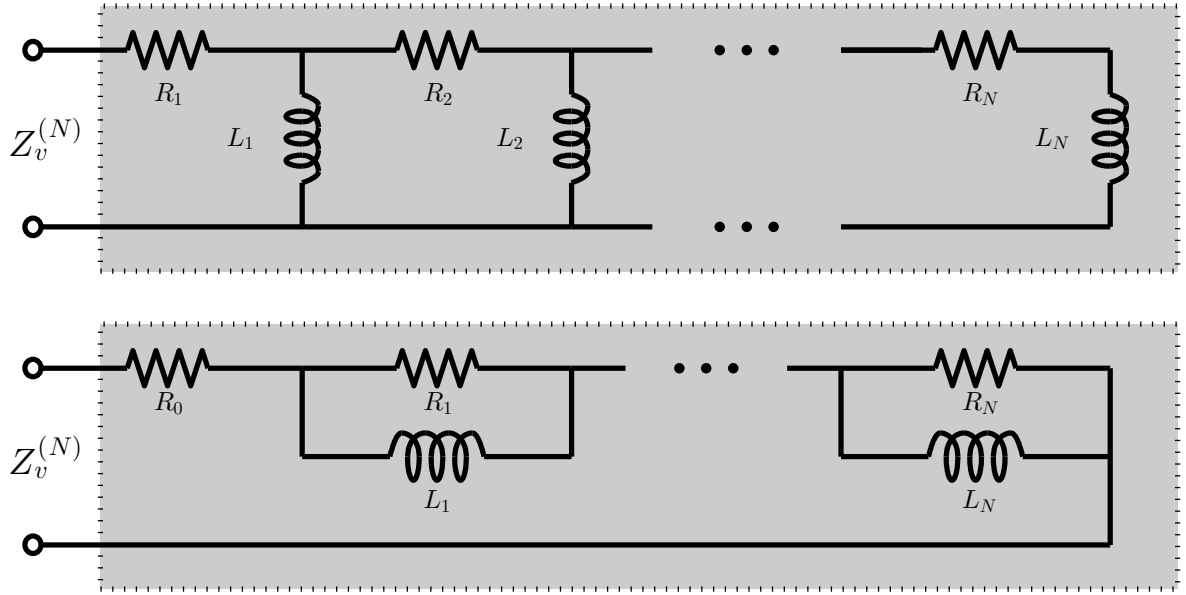


FIG. 3. Cauer (top) and Foster (bottom) structures corresponding to approximations $Z_v^{(N)}$ to Z_v , employing N branches, with element values R_j and L_j , $j = 1, \dots, N$ plus an additional resistance R_0 in the case of the Foster form.

an approximation $Z_v^{(N)}$. As expected, the approximation is excellent in the low frequency range, and increases in accuracy with N . See Figure 4. Here, and henceforth, the tube is assumed to be of radius 7.5 mm, and the various constants are set to values corresponding to a temperature of 26.85°C, using formulae given by Keefe⁴. Notice in particular that the approximation converges slowly—for this tube, a fourth order approximation produces results of reasonable accuracy up to about 20 Hz. For the study of wind instruments, approximation to at least order 16, giving reliable results up to the mid kHz range, would be necessary.

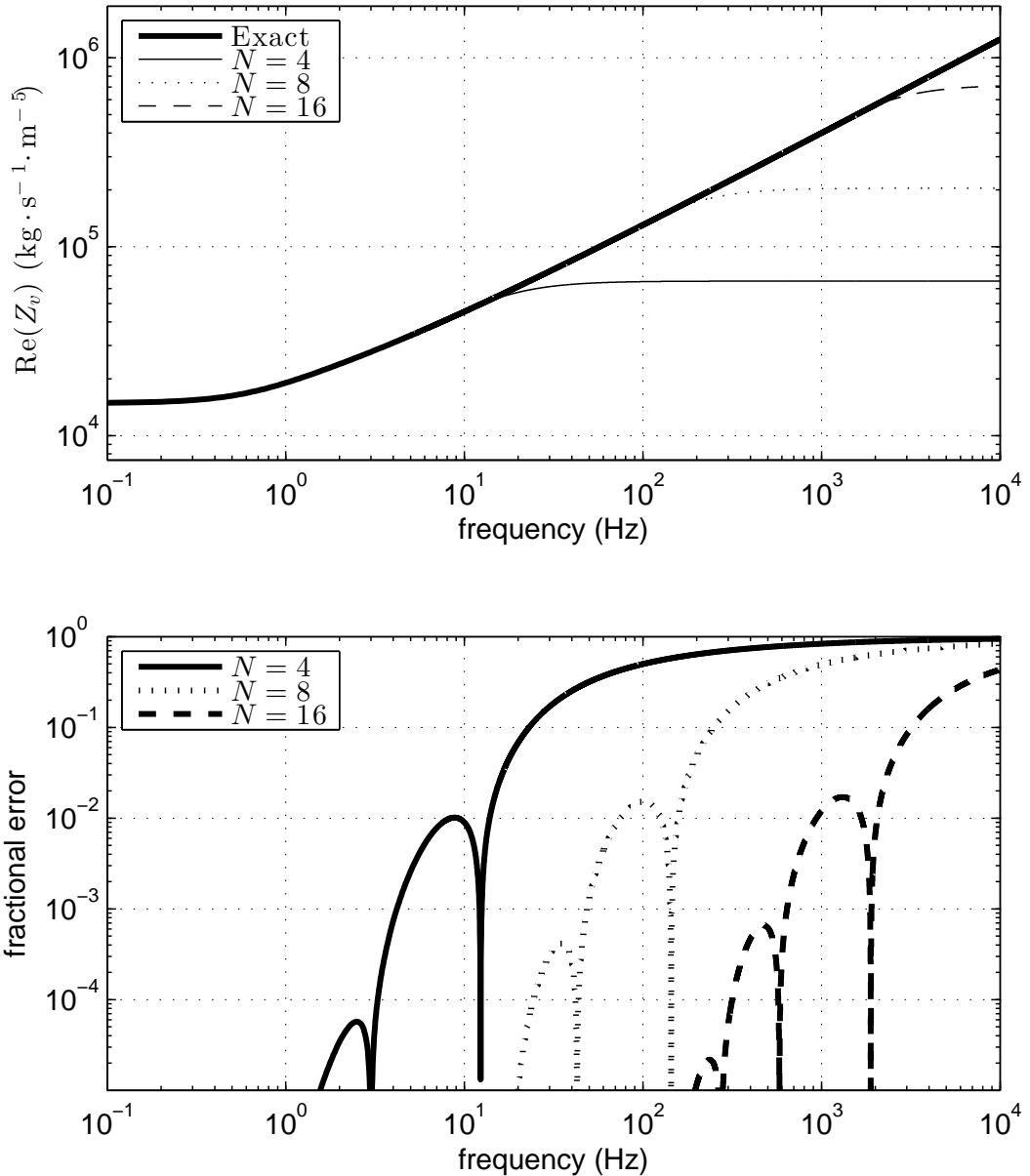


FIG. 4. Top: Real part of the impedance Z_v , and of continued fraction approximations $Z_v^{(N)}$, to various orders N , as indicated. Bottom: fractional error, as a function of frequency.

A. Optimisation and Numerical Results

Another approach, perhaps better suited to efficient numerical implementation, is optimisation of an approximation to the impedance⁶. The Cauer structure has the great benefit

of structural passivity, due to the non-negativity of all the element values. But other structures are also available—one example is the two element RL Foster network, shown in Figure 3 at bottom. The impedance $Z_v^{(N)}$ may be decomposed as a sum,

$$Z_v^{(N)}(j\omega) = R_0 + \sum_{p=1}^N \frac{R_p L_p j\omega}{R_p + L_p j\omega} \quad (7)$$

allowing for easy evaluation of derivatives with respect to the free parameters R_0 and R_q, L_q , $q = 1, \dots, N$. (R_0 may be left free, or constrained to take on the limiting value $Z_v(0) = 8\eta/\pi a^4$.)

At this point, a wide variety of choices are available to the designer regarding the range of frequencies over which to optimise, the cost function and the method of optimisation—these should clearly be chosen according to the application at hand. In the interest of reducing computational complexity in resulting time domain numerical designs, it is perhaps useful to examine the behaviour of the approximation over a wide range of frequencies, and employing a cost function E , dependent on the circuit parameters:

$$E = \sum_{m=1}^M |1 - Z_v^{(N)}(j\omega_m)/Z_v(j\omega_m)|^2 \quad (8)$$

for a set of M exponentially spaced frequencies ω_m , $m = 1 \dots, M$.

Some results are shown in Figure 5, for a tube of radius 7.5 mm, and optimised over the range of frequencies from 0.1 Hz to 10 000 Hz. A gradient descent technique was used, with $M = 100$ frequency values, and circuit values constrained to be positive. For $N = 4$, for example, the optimised structure gives a reduced error relative to the continued fraction expansion from approximately 20 Hz upwards. For $N = 16$, the optimised structure has an error on the order of 0.01 per cent over the entire range of frequencies.

IV. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The article by Thompson et al. is clearly geared towards designing time domain methods to be used for the simulation of viscothermal effects in tubes—and as such, the passive Cauer structure arrived at through continued fraction expansion is an extremely useful one, as it

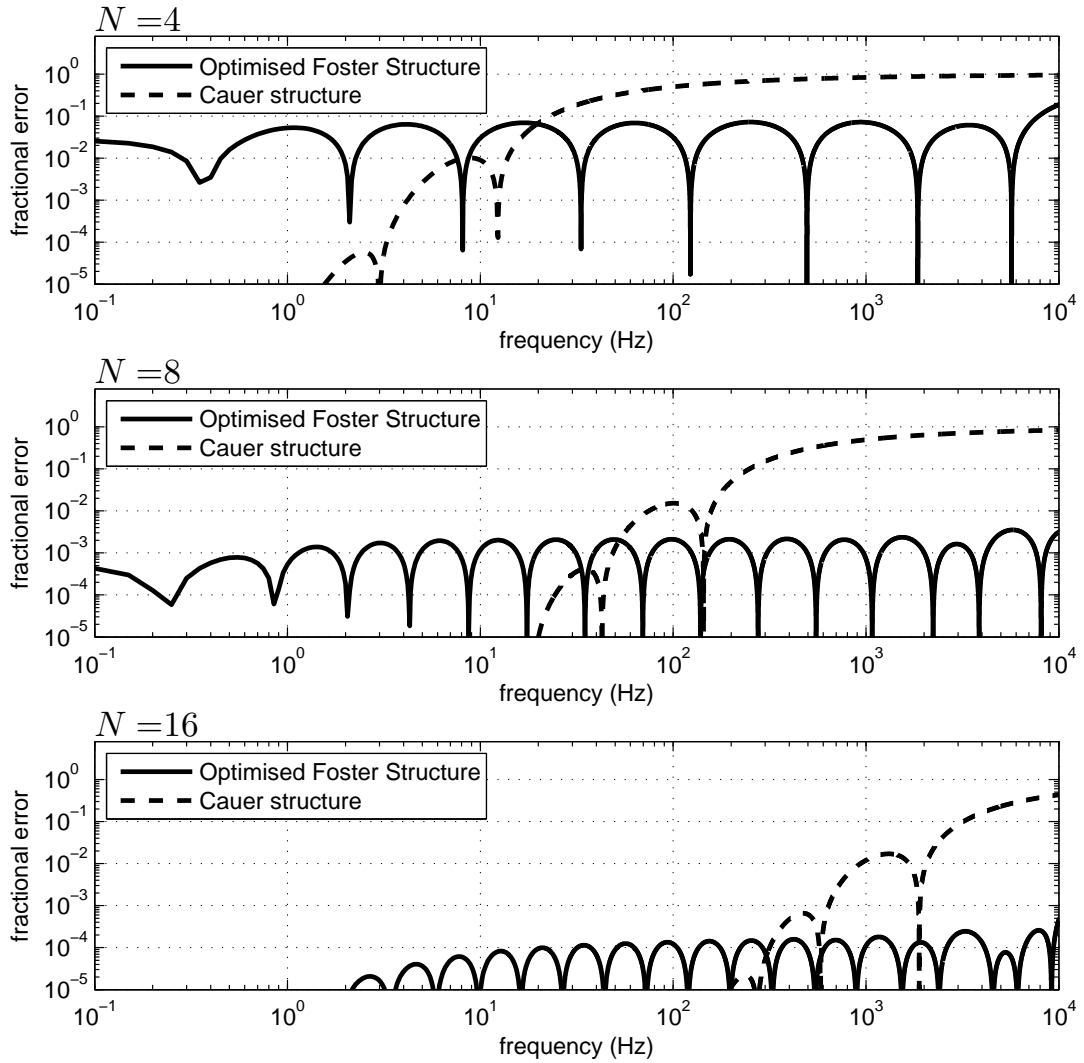


FIG. 5. Fractional error in the real part of the impedance Z_v against frequency for Cauer structures and optimised Foster structures, for approximations of order $N = 4, 8$ and 16 .

allows for a stable numerical design. The main powerful insight is that it is possible to begin from the exact expression for the losses, rather than a derived form, often leading to fractional derivatives in the resulting time domain approximation⁷. In short, it can be simpler to work with the exact expression, which is clearly advantageous.

Yet, if a time domain numerical method is the eventual goal, then it must be borne in mind that the order of the approximation to the loss terms will dominate calculation time

and memory costs. The response of the Cauere structure converges relatively slowly to that of the exact form, and thus the approximating order will be large if wideband accuracy is desired. By retaining the same idea of a passive representation, but enlarging the scope to include optimised designs, it is possible to obtain reasonable accuracy over a wide band of frequencies with approximations of a relatively low order, leading to much more efficient numerical methods.

Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the European Research Council, under grant number StG-2011-279068-NESS, as well as Labex MEC (ANR-10-LABX-0092) and the A*MIDEX project (ANR-11-IDEX-0001-02), funded by the Investissements d’Avenir program of the French National Research Agency (ANR).

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