ABSTRACT TEXT: Piezoelectric transducers arranged in a controlled configuration can be used to produce a variety of actuation mechanisms, where rotary and linear motors are some of the examples. Such devices have attractive characteristics that made them emerge commercially in such products as cameras and are now approaching a maturity that makes them considered for space and planetary applications. The reported actuators are showing efficiency levels in the range of 20 to 30% and it is desirable to reach as high level as possible to bring these motors to the point of making them the preferred choice in motors. Such a goal can be reached by the use of an accurate modeling of these devices, which involve solving nonlinear equations to support the design of such motors. The analysis of the motors operation is complex and requires a system treatment that include: equivalent circuit that represent the transition of the electrical signals to elastic vibration, force transfer thru a compliant interface, stator/rotor interaction, complex geometry, etc. These issues have been studied by the authors, were a finite element model was developed and elements of the model were corroborated experimentally. The model incorporates the various components and the complex geometrical configuration to predict the excitation frequency and modal response of an annular stator. An effective USM was developed using the results of the model, where the details of the stator were used in the design including the teeth, piezoelectric crystals, stator geometry, etc.

KEY WORDS: Ultrasonic Motors (USM), Stators and Rotors, Actuators, Active Materials, cryovac operation.

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