

Contents

Abstract	iii
Resumen	v
Resum	ix
Zusammenfassung	xiii
Acknowledgements	xvii
List of symbols	xxxix
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xxxv
1 Introduction and Scope	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Motivation	5
1.3 Scope of the Thesis	6
1.4 Organization of the Thesis	7
2 Preliminaries and State of the Art	11
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Nuclear Fuel Cycle	14
2.2.1 Exploration of Uranium Deposits	15
2.2.2 Mining and Milling	16
2.2.3 Refining and Conversion	17
2.2.4 Enrichment	17
2.2.5 Fuel Fabrication	18
2.2.6 Electricity Generation	18
2.2.7 Reprocessing	20
2.2.8 Geological Disposal and Radiotoxicity	22
2.3 Solid Nuclear Fuel	23
2.3.1 Pellets	24
2.3.2 Particle Fuel	26

2.4	Sphere-Pac Fuel Production	27
2.4.1	Water Extraction Process	28
2.4.2	External Gelation	28
2.4.3	Internal Gelation	29
2.5	State of the Art of the Internal Gelation SP Fuel Production	30
2.5.1	Silicon Oil Internal Gelation	30
2.5.2	Microwaves Internal Gelation	32
2.6	Conclusions	35
3	Thermal Model	37
3.1	Introduction	39
3.2	The Heat Equation	42
3.2.1	Definition	43
3.2.2	Common Forms of the Heat Equation	44
3.3	Heat Equation Solution by Numerical Methods	46
3.3.1	Finite Difference Time Domain Method	46
3.4	Boundary Conditions	50
3.4.1	The Dirichlet Boundary Condition	50
3.4.2	The von Neumann Boundary Condition	50
3.5	Implementation and Results	53
3.5.1	Thermal Parameters Influence	55
3.5.2	Influence of the Coordinates System Election	58
3.6	Validation	60
3.6.1	Physically Validation	60
3.6.2	Matlab Pdetools	63
3.6.3	Validation from a Literature Example	65
3.6.4	Validation Results	66
3.7	Conclusions	67
4	Microwave Cavities	69
4.1	Introduction	71
4.2	Rectangular Cavities	72
4.2.1	Empty Rectangular Cavities	77
4.2.2	Rectangular Cavities filled with homogeneous dielectrics	79
4.3	Cylindrical Cavities	83
4.3.1	Empty Cylindrical Cavities	84
4.3.2	Cylindrical Cavities completely filled with homoge- neous dielectrics	86
4.4	Cavity coupling	88

4.4.1	The Coupling Factor	89
4.5	Modelling of Microwave Cavities	91
4.5.1	Matlab Modelling	91
4.5.2	Electromagnetic Simulation Software	101
4.6	Perturbation Analysis of Cavities	103
4.6.1	Experimental setup	103
4.6.2	Perturbation Method	103
4.6.3	Power dissipation	107
4.6.4	Model Implementation and Results	110
4.7	Conclusions	118
5	Characterization of Materials	121
5.1	Introduction	124
5.2	Dielectric Loss	124
5.2.1	Polarization	124
5.2.2	Complex Dielectric Constant	126
5.2.3	Volumetric Heating	128
5.3	Dielectric Measuring Techniques	128
5.4	New Characterization Method of Dielectrics	130
5.4.1	Experimental Setup	131
5.4.2	Drop Measurement	134
5.4.3	Drop Simulation	138
5.4.4	Experimental Measurements and Results	139
5.5	Perturbation and Thermal Models of Characterized Materials	144
5.6	Conclusions	148
6	MIG System	151
6.1	Introduction	153
6.2	MIG System description	154
6.3	Equipment	156
6.3.1	Design of the microwave cavity	156
6.3.2	Microwave generator	159
6.3.3	Amplifier	160
6.3.4	Isolator	161
6.3.5	Waveguides	162
6.3.6	Adapter	164
6.3.7	Crystal Detector	164
6.3.8	Vector Network Analyser	165
6.3.9	Oscilloscope	166

6.3.10	Power requirements	167
6.3.11	Calibration	168
6.4	Experimental Techniques	169
6.4.1	Rectangular cavity characterization	169
6.4.2	MIG System Assembly	171
6.4.3	Heating Experiments	175
6.5	Results Analysis	176
6.6	Conclusions	180
7	Conclusions	181
7.1	Summary	184
7.2	Further Work	185
7.3	List of Publications	186
	Appendices	191
A	Convective Heat Transfer Coefficient	193
A.1	Dimensionless groups in heat transfer	195
A.2	Properties of Air	196
A.2.1	Standard Properties	196
A.2.2	Temperature Dependent Properties	197
B	Crank Nicholson Development	203
B.1	Rectangular Coordinates	207
B.2	Cylindrical Coordinates	208
B.3	Spherical Coordinates	209
B.4	General equation	211
C	Energy and Power Solutions	213
C.1	Calculation of Energies in a Rectangular Empty Cavity	215
C.2	Calculation of Power in a Rectangular Empty Cavity	219
D	Bessel Function	223
	Bibliography	229