

Fourier's Theorem

Any continuous single-valued periodic function can be expressed as a summation of simple harmonic terms having frequencies which are multiple of that of the given function.

Thus, any complex sound of frequency n can be analysed into number of pure tones of frequencies $n, 2n, 3n, \dots$ and appropriate amplitudes.

Mathematically, The Fourier's theorem can be expressed as,

$$y = f(\omega t) = A_0 + A_1 \cos \omega t + A_2 \cos 2\omega t + A_3 \cos 3\omega t + \dots \\ \dots A_r \cos r\omega t + B_1 \sin \omega t + B_2 \sin 2\omega t \\ + B_3 \sin 3\omega t + \dots + B_r \sin r\omega t \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

where y is the displacement of a complex periodic motion of frequency $\omega/2\pi$. Thus the complex motion is the sum of sine and cosine components of amplitudes $A_1, A_2, A_3, \dots, B_1, B_2, B_3, \dots$ and frequencies which are multiples of $\omega/2\pi$. A_0 is a constant representing the displacement of the axis of vibration curve from the axis of coordinates.

In order to use this theorem for analysing a complex wave, we have to evaluate the constant A_0, A_r and B_r .

Evaluation of A_0 ! — Let us multiply equation ① by dt and integrate from 0 to T .

$$\begin{aligned} \therefore \int_0^T y dt &= A_0 \int_0^T dt + A_1 \int_0^T \cos \omega t dt + \dots + A_n \int_0^T \cos n\omega t dt \\ &+ B_1 \int_0^T \sin \omega t dt + \dots + B_n \int_0^T \sin n\omega t dt \\ &= A_0 T \quad (\text{because other terms are zero}) \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore A_0 = \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T y dt \quad \text{--- ②}$$

Evaluation of A_n ! — Let us multiply equation ① by $\cos n\omega t dt$ and integrate from 0 to T .

$$\begin{aligned} \therefore \int_0^T y \cos n\omega t dt &= A_0 \int_0^T \cos n\omega t dt + A_1 \int_0^T \cos \omega t \cdot \cos n\omega t dt + \dots \\ &+ A_n \int_0^T \cos^2 n\omega t dt + B_1 \int_0^T \sin \omega t \cdot \cos n\omega t dt + \dots \\ &\dots + B_n \int_0^T \sin n\omega t \cdot \cos n\omega t dt \\ &= A_n \int_0^T \cos^2 n\omega t dt, \quad (\text{the other terms are zero}) \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \therefore \int_0^T y \cos n\omega t dt &= A_n \int_0^T \left(\frac{1 + \cos 2n\omega t}{2} \right) dt \\ &= \frac{A_n}{2} \left[\int_0^T dt + \int_0^T \cos 2n\omega t dt \right] \\ &= \frac{A_n}{2} \cdot T \quad \left[\because \int_0^T \cos 2n\omega t dt = 0 \right] \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore A_n = \frac{2}{T} \int_0^T y \cos n\omega t dt \quad \text{--- ③}$$

Evaluation of B_n ! — Multiplying equation ① by $\sin n\omega t dt$ and integrating from 0 to T and proceeding as above, we get

$$B_n = \frac{2}{T} \int_0^T y \sin n\omega t dt \quad \text{--- ④}$$

The value of the coefficient A_0, A_n and B_n can be used to analyse a given wave-form