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Electric vehicle charging system with battery temperature control

Abstract

The disclosed technology generally relates to charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle and more particularly to thermal management of the secondary battery associated with charging. In one aspect, a method of charging a battery of an electric vehicle includes determining that a battery temperature of a secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging the secondary battery at a high charging power greater than 18 kW. The method additionally includes externally applying, by contactless energy transfer means, electromagnetic energy to an energy conversion module of the electric vehicle. The method additionally includes converting the electromagnetic energy to heat and heating the secondary battery to a temperature above the lower temperature limit. The method further includes charging the secondary battery at the high charging power while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy transferred by the contactless energy transfer means. Aspects further relate to an electric vehicle charging station, a powering system for an electric vehicle and an electric vehicle charging system.

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Background/Summary

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE TO ANY PRIORITY APPLICATIONS (1) Any and all applications for which a foreign or domestic priority claim is identified in the Application Data Sheet as filed with the present application are hereby incorporated by reference under 37 CFR 1.57. (2) This application is a U.S. Continuation Patent Application of U.S. Non-Provisional patent application Ser. No. 17/303,360, filed May 27, 2021, entitled “ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING SYSTEM WITH BATTERY TEMPERATURE CONTROL”, which claims the priority benefit under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) to U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 63/041,415, filed Jun. 19, 2020, entitled “THERMAL ANOMALY MANAGEMENT DEVICE FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLE BATTERY,” the content of which is hereby expressly incorporated by reference in its entirety.

BACKGROUND

Field

(1) The disclosed technology generally relates to an electric vehicle charging system and more particularly to an electric vehicle charging system with battery temperature control and a method of charging a secondary battery using the same.

Description of the Related Art

(2) Although a rapid advancement of electric vehicles has led to a corresponding rapid advancement in secondary battery and battery management technologies, speed and safety associated with charging the secondary battery continue to remain a concern. As the speed of charging the secondary battery continue to improve, there is an increasing need for improving the reliability and safety features associated with charging the secondary battery.

SUMMARY

(3) In one aspect, a method of charging a battery of an electric vehicle includes determining that a battery temperature of a secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging the secondary battery at a high charging power greater than 18 kW. The method additionally includes externally applying, by contactless energy transfer means, electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle. The method additionally includes converting the electromagnetic energy to heat and heating the secondary battery to a temperature above the lower temperature limit. The method further includes charging the secondary battery at the high charging power while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy.

(4) In another aspect, an electric vehicle charging station comprises a battery charging module configured to provide charging energy to a secondary battery of an electric vehicle. The charging station additionally comprises an electromagnetic energy generator configured to generate and transfer electromagnetic energy, by contactless energy transfer means, to the electric vehicle. The charging station additionally comprises a communication interface configured to receive a battery temperature of the secondary battery from the electric vehicle. The charging station further comprises a control unit configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging the

secondary battery at a high charging power greater than 18 kW, activate the electromagnetic energy generator and to generate and transmit the electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle to cause the secondary battery to be heated. The control unit is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery exceeds the lower temperature limit, activate the battery charging module to initiate charging the secondary battery at the high charging power.

(5) In another aspect, a powering system for powering an electric vehicle comprises a secondary battery for powering an electric vehicle. The powering system additionally comprises a temperature sensing module configured to monitor a battery temperature of the secondary battery. The powering system additionally comprises an energy conversion module. The energy conversion module is configured to electromagnetically couple to an electromagnetic energy generator of a charging station and to receive electromagnetic energy therefrom by contactless energy transfer means, convert the electromagnetic energy into heat, and heat the secondary battery with the heat. The powering system further comprises a control unit. The control unit is configured to receive the battery temperature from the temperature sensing module and to communicate the battery temperature to a charging station through a communication interface. The control unit is additionally configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging at a high charging power greater than 18 kW, activate the energy conversion module to receive the electromagnetic energy and to cause the secondary battery to be heated. The control unit is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery exceeds the lower temperature limit of the secondary battery, activate the secondary battery to initiate charging the secondary battery at the high charging power.

(6) In another aspect, an electric vehicle charging system comprises a powering system for powering an electric vehicle and an electric vehicle charging station. The powering system comprises a secondary battery for powering the electric vehicle, a temperature sensing module configured to monitor a battery temperature of the secondary battery. The powering system additionally includes an energy conversion module configured to receive electromagnetic energy by contactless energy transfer means, convert the electromagnetic energy to heat and heat the secondary battery. The powering system further comprises a control unit configured to receive the battery temperature from the temperature sensing module and to communicate the battery temperature to a charging station through a communication interface. The electric vehicle charging station comprises a battery charging module configured to provide charging energy to the secondary battery. The charging station additionally comprises an electromagnetic energy generator configured to generate and transfer the electromagnetic energy, by the contactless energy transfer means, to the energy conversion module. The charging station further comprises a control unit configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging the secondary battery at a high charging power greater than 18 kW, activate the electromagnetic energy generator and to generate and transmit the electromagnetic energy to the energy conversion module to cause the secondary battery to be heated. The control unit is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery exceeds the lower temperature limit of the secondary battery, activate the battery charging module to initiate charging the secondary battery at the charging power greater than 18 kW.

Description

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

(1) FIG. 1 illustrates an electric vehicle charging system configured for charging a secondary battery installed in an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic

energy, according to various embodiments.

(2) FIG. 1A illustrates an electric vehicle charging system in which electromagnetic energy is transferred from a charging station to an electric vehicle by electromagnetic induction to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to some embodiments.

(3) FIG. 1B illustrates an electric vehicle charging system in which electromagnetic energy is transferred from a charging station to an electric vehicle by electromagnetic induction to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to some other embodiments.

(4) FIG. 1C illustrates an electric vehicle charging system in which electromagnetic energy is transferred from a charging station to an electric vehicle in the form of microwave energy to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to some other embodiments.

(5) FIG. 1D illustrates an electric vehicle charging system in which electromagnetic energy is transferred from a charging station to an electric vehicle in the form of photon radiation energy to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to some other embodiments.

(6) FIGS. 1E-1G illustrate enhanced photon absorbing structures facing a photon generator of the electric vehicle charging system of FIG. 1D, according to embodiments.

(7) FIG. 2A illustrates a method of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to various embodiments.

(8) FIG. 2B illustrates a flow chart illustrating a method of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to some embodiments.

(9) FIG. 2C illustrates a flow chart illustrating a method of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to some other embodiments.

(10) FIG. 2D illustrates a flow chart illustrating a method of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to some other embodiments.

(11) FIG. 2E illustrates a flow chart illustrating a method of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to some other embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

(12) The modern automobile industry is undergoing a fundamental change with the explosive growth of electric vehicles. Improved stability, lower noise and eco-friendliness of electric vehicles are expected to solve or mitigate many problems traditionally associated with automobiles based on internal combustion engines. However, one of the biggest obstacles to the infrastructure of electric vehicles is the relatively long charging time. In contrast to refueling gasoline-based automobiles, which usually lasts around 15 minutes or less, charging time of electric vehicles can take much longer, e.g., as long as 10 hours, depending on, among other factors, the charge level of the battery, the charging technology used, the charging cable used and the charging station.

(13) The international standard IEC 61851 classifies four different charging modes (IEC, 2003). For example, in North America, chargers are classified depending on the charge level. The slowest charge is from level 1 chargers. Using a charging current of about 12-16 amps and a charging power of about 1-3 kW and standard (110V) plug sockets, level 1 chargers can charge plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs) with 100 miles of range in more than 10 hours (h), e.g., around 24 h, and are mostly used for overnight charging at home. Using a charging current of about 16-40 amps and a charging power of about 1-7 kW, level 2 charging can charge a PEV with 100 miles of range in about 4-12 h. Using a charging power of up to about 43.5 kW, level 3 charging can charge a PEV with 100 miles of range in about 0.5 to -1.5 h. Using a charging power of about 50-150 kW, level 4 charging can charge a PEV with 100 miles of range in less than 15 min. As used herein, fast charging refers to charging with a high charging power, e.g., a charging power substantially greater than that of level 2 charging.

(14) While the availability of charging stations and fast charging technologies have made tremendous progress over the years, electric vehicle charging continues to suffer from some unique refueling challenges. One of the unique challenges relates to safety and reliability of some secondary batteries. While the refueling time for gasoline vehicles does not depend on the ambient temperature, the recharging time for electric vehicles may depend on or be limited by the ambient temperature. In particular, unlike gasoline refueling, the speed of charging Li-based secondary batteries may be severely limited at lower temperatures.

(15) One problem recognized in the industry associated with charging Li-based secondary batteries at lower temperatures is lithium plating. Li plating refers to an undesirable side reaction on the anode side of Li-ion batteries where Li ions are reduced to metallic Li instead of intercalating into the anode crystal structure. Among other harmful effects, the metallic Li can form dendrites under some circumstances, which can severely degrade the performance and reliability of Li-ion batteries. Without being bound to any theory, Li plating can occur when the local anode potential drops below about 0 V vs. Li/Li⁺. The anodes of some Li-ion batteries contain graphite, which has an equilibrium potential within 100 mV vs. Li/Li_{sub}⁺. As a result, under certain circumstances, e.g., relatively low temperatures and high current, the large anode polarization can push graphite potential below the threshold for lithium plating in Li-ion batteries. In addition, various other characteristics of Li-ion batteries can contribute to Li-plating in Li-ion batteries. For example, Li plating can be exacerbated by the presence of local inhomogeneities at the graphite anode surface, relatively slow intercalation kinetics, relatively high solid electrolyte interface (SEI) film resistances in the anode, and slow lithium diffusion in the anode, to name a few contributing factors. Anode material type can also influence Li plating behavior due to the differences in equilibrium potential. Similarly, electrolyte composition can also affect the low-temperature performance of Li-ion batteries. While deposited metallic Li can be reversible by oxidation, during oxidation, Li dendrites can become disconnected from the active material, leading to “dead Li” in the cell. Furthermore, the plated metallic Li can be highly reactive and can form an irreversible SEI with the electrolyte.

(16) These effects of Li plating can lead to a rapid reduction in battery cycle life and/or capacity, and can also pose significant safety hazards. The rapid performance reduction can be associated with, e.g., exponential dependence of various processes that affect Li-plating on temperature. It has been observed, e.g., that some secondary batteries including graphite/LiNi_{sub}.1/3Mn_{sub}.1/3Co_{sub}.1/3O_{sub}.2 cells can lose 75% capacity in 50 cycles with 1-C charge at 5° C., although the same cells can survive 4,000 cycles at 25° C. Similarly, in secondary batteries including graphite/LiFePO_{sub}.4 cells, cell life at a temperature of 10° C. had been observed to be only about half of the cell life at 25° C. To prevent such degradation in the battery cycle life and/or capacity, the charging rate at lower temperatures may be significantly reduced, leading to increased charging time. In view of the fact that 47 out of 50 US states have an average temperature below 10° C. in winter, even when the availability of charging stations become as ubiquitous as gas stations, the performance and reliability degradation of Li-ion batteries at low temperatures may be a limiting factor in further commercialization of electric vehicles. To address these and other needs of performance, reliability and safety concerns related to fast charging at low temperatures, the disclosed technology relates to rapidly and efficiently heating the secondary battery to a safe temperature for fast charging prior to or during charging, and maintaining the battery temperature within a safe range during charging.

(17) Electric Vehicle Charging Systems with Battery Temperature Control Using Electromagnetic Energy

(18) To reduce the various risks associated with charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle at low temperatures including degradation of performance and/or cycle life of the secondary battery as described above, aspects of the disclosed technology relate to an electric vehicle charging system equipped with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy. The charging

system is configured to raise the temperature of the secondary battery to a temperature suitable for fast charging before initiating charging the secondary battery by transferring electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle using contactless energy transfer means and converting the electromagnetic energy to heat for heating the secondary battery. Advantageously, the contactless energy transfer means enable localized heating of the secondary battery to ensure that the performance and/or reliability of the secondary battery is not compromised when the ambient temperature is relatively low.

(19) FIG. 1 illustrates an electric vehicle charging system **100** configured for managing a temperature of a secondary battery installed in an electric vehicle before and/or during charging, according to embodiments. The electric vehicle charging system **100** includes a charging station **110** and an electric vehicle **150**.

(20) The electric vehicle **150** comprises a powering system **160** for powering the electric vehicle **150** through a power train **154**. The powering system **160** comprises a secondary battery **158** for powering the electric vehicle **150** and a temperature sensing module **162** thermally coupled to the secondary battery **158**. The temperature sensing module **162** includes a temperature sensor e.g., a thermocouple, a resistance temperature detector (RTD), a thermistor or a semiconductor-based integrated circuit, for monitoring a battery temperature of the secondary battery **158**. The temperature sensing module **162** is configured to generate temperature data from monitoring the battery temperature. The temperature sensing module **162** may also store temperature data which may include historical temperature information.

(21) The powering system **160** additionally comprises an energy conversion module **166** electrically and thermally coupled to the secondary battery **158**. The energy conversion module **166** is configured to electromagnetically couple to an electromagnetic energy generator **118** of a charging station **110** and to receive electromagnetic energy **120** therefrom by contactless energy transfer means, convert the electromagnetic energy into heat, and heat the secondary battery with the heat.

(22) The energy conversion module **166** may be in thermal communication with the secondary battery **158** in a number of ways to efficiently transfer heat therebetween. For example, the energy conversion module **166** may directly contact the secondary battery **158** or indirectly contact the secondary battery **158** through an efficient heat conducting medium such as a material having high thermal conductivity, e.g., a metal.

(23) The powering system **160** additionally comprises a control unit **170** communicatively coupled to each component of the powering system **160**. The control unit **170** comprises a processing logic device configured to execute various instructions for controlling various components of the powering system **160** as disclosed herein. The control unit **170** further comprises a memory and/or storage device having loaded thereon various instructions for providing control signals to various components of the powering system **160** as disclosed herein. The control unit **170** is electrically and communicatively coupled to the secondary battery **158**, the temperature sensing module **162** and the energy conversion module **166**. The control unit **170** is configured to receive the temperature data from the temperature sensing module **162** and to communicate the temperature data to the charging station **110** through a communication interface **174**. The control unit **170** is additionally configured to receive the temperature data from the temperature sensing module **162** and to activate and deactivate the energy conversion module **166** for receiving the electromagnetic energy **120** by contactless energy transfer means from an electromagnetic energy generator **118** of the charging station **110**, converting the electromagnetic energy to heat and transferring the heat to the secondary battery **158** to raise the temperature thereof. The energy conversion module **166** can be configured to transfer electromagnetic energy **120** by electromagnetic induction or microwave energy, as described with respect to FIGS. 1A-1D.

(24) In some embodiments, the energy conversion module **166** may include separate components to perform its functions described above. In these embodiments, the energy conversion module **166**

may include an energy receive module **164** configured to electromagnetically couple to the electromagnetic energy generator **118** of the charging station **110** without making physical contact thereto. The energy receive module **164** is configured to receive electromagnetic energy **120** from the electromagnetic energy generator **118** by contactless energy transfer means. The energy conversion module **166** may additionally include a heat generator **168** as a separate component from the energy receive module **164**, which is configured to convert the electromagnetic energy into heat and to transfer the heat to the secondary battery **158** to raise the temperature thereof.

(25) The control unit **170** is configured such that, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery **158** is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for fast charging, e.g., charging at a charging rate greater than 18 kW, the control unit **170** may activate the energy conversion module **166** to receive the electromagnetic energy **120** from the electromagnetic energy generator **118** of the charging station **110**, e.g., through the energy receive module **164**, and to cause the secondary battery **158** to be heated using heat generated by the heat generator **168**.

(26) After heating, the control unit **170** is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery **158** exceeds the lower temperature limit of the secondary battery, activate the secondary battery **158** to initiate fast charging the secondary battery **158**, e.g., at the charging power greater than about 18 kW.

(27) The control unit **170** is further configured for fast charging the secondary battery **158**, e.g., at the charging power greater than about 18 kW, while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy **120** converted into heat by the energy conversion module **166**.

(28) Still referring to FIG. **1**, the charging station **110** comprises a battery charging module **114** configured to electrically connect and provide charging energy to the secondary battery **158**. The charging station **110** additionally comprises an electromagnetic energy generator **118** configured to generate and transfer the electromagnetic energy **120**, by contactless energy transfer means, to the energy conversion module **166**. The battery charging module **114** and the electromagnetic energy generator **118** are each powered by a power source **122**. The electromagnetic energy generator **118** can include one or more of an inductive energy generator or a microwave energy generator, as described infra with respect to FIGS. **1A-1D**.

(29) The charging station **110** additionally comprises a control unit **128** communicatively coupled to each component of the charging station **110**. The control unit **128** comprises a processing logic device configured to execute various instructions for controlling various components of the charging station **110** as disclosed herein. The control unit **128** further comprises a memory and/or storage device having loaded thereon various instructions for providing control signals to various components of the charging station **110** as disclosed herein. The control unit **128** is configured to receive the temperature data from the control unit **170** of the powering system through a communication interface **132** communicatively coupled to the communication interface **174** of the powering system **160**.

(30) The control unit **128** is configured to, based on the temperature data, determine whether the battery temperature of a secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for fast charging, e.g., charging at a charging power greater than about 18 kW. The control unit **128** is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature is below the predetermined lower temperature limit, activate the electromagnetic energy generator **118** to generate and transmit the electromagnetic energy **120** to the energy conversion module **166** to cause the secondary battery **158** to be heated.

(31) After heating, the control unit **128** is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery **158** exceeds the lower temperature limit, activate the battery charging module **114** to initiate charging the secondary battery **158** at the fast charging rate, e.g., at a charging power greater than about 18 kW.

(32) The control unit **128** is further configured for fast charging the secondary battery **158**, e.g., at the charging power greater than about 18 kW, while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy **120** generated and transferred by the electromagnetic energy generator **118**.

(33) Still referring to FIG. **1**, the communication interfaces **132**, **174** may be configured for wired or wireless communication utilizing any suitable protocol for carrying out the operations described herein, e.g., IEEE 802.11 protocols, Bluetooth, SPI (Serial Peripheral Interface), I^{sup}.2C (Inter-Integrated Circuit), USB (Universal Serial Port), CAN (Controller Area Network), Modbus protocols, cellular data protocols (e.g. 3G, 4G, LTE, 5G), optical communication networks, Internet Service Providers (ISPs), a peer-to-peer network, a Local Area Network (LAN), a Wide Area Network (WAN), a public network (e.g. "the Internet"), a private network and a satellite network, to name a few.

(34) The control units **128**, **170** may include one or more logic devices including digital and/or analog circuitry, such as processors, microprocessors, multi-core processors, and/or field programmable gate arrays (FPGAs) to execute various operations disclosed herein. Furthermore, while not illustrated, the control units **128**, **170** may include one or more memory and/or storage devices such as static random access memory device, a dynamic random access memory device, a non-volatile memory device and/or a disk drive. The memory and/or storage device store instructions to execute the various operations and/or store data.

(35) According to various embodiments disclosed herein, the secondary battery **158** of the electric vehicle is a Li-ion battery. As described herein, Li-ion battery refers an energy storage device that rely on insertion reactions from both electrodes where lithium ions act as the charge carrier. According to various implementations, the Li-ion battery includes a negative electrode comprising, e.g., carbon (e.g., graphite) or lithium titanate (Li_{sub}.4Ti_{sub}.5O_{sub}.12). The Li-ion battery additionally includes an electrolyte including, e.g., a mixture of lithium salts (e.g., LiPF_{sub}.6) and an organic solvent (e.g., diethyl carbonate) to allow for ion transfer. A separating membrane is used to allow lithium ions to pass between the electrodes while preventing an internal short circuit. When operating as an energy source or discharge mode, electrons travel from the negative electrode to the positive electrode, and the Li_{sub}.+ ions travel from the negative electrode through the electrolyte to the positive electrode to maintain electroneutrality. When the system is operated in charge mode the electron current and Li_{sub}.+ ion flow is reversed.

(36) According to various embodiments, the secondary battery **158** is configured such that fast charging at reduced temperatures can lead to significant probability of reduction of one or both of the battery capacity and cycle life. For example, the secondary battery **158** may be configured such that, relative to the cycle life and/or the capacity at 25° C., the corresponding cycle life and/or the capacity of the secondary battery **158** at reduced temperatures, reduces by more than 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50% or a percentage in a range defined by any of these values at 20° C., more than 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60% or a percentage in a range defined by any of these values at 15° C., more than 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70% or a percentage in a range defined by any of these values at 10° C., more than 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80% or a percentage in a range defined by any of these values at 5° C., and more than 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90% or a percentage in a range defined by any of these values at 0° C. According to embodiments, the degradation of one or both of the battery capacity and/or the battery cycle life of the secondary battery may be associated with a risk of lithium plating in the secondary battery **158**.

(37) Still referring to FIG. **1**, the electromagnetic energy generator **118** of the charging station **110** is configured to generate an electromagnetic energy **120** and to apply, by contactless energy transfer means, the electromagnetic energy **120** to the energy conversion module **166** of the powering system **160**. The energy conversion module **166** is configured to convert the electromagnetic energy **120** to heat for heating the secondary battery **158**. As described herein, the

contactless energy transfer means includes means other than convection or conduction. The electromagnetic energy **120** comprises, according to embodiments, an inductive energy, a photon radiation energy, or a microwave energy.

(38) FIGS. **1A-1D** illustrate electric vehicle charging systems **100A**, **100B**, **100C**, **100D** each configured for electromagnetic energy transfer from a charging station to an electric vehicle for heating a secondary battery installed in the electric vehicle before and/or during charging, according to embodiments. The electric vehicle charging systems **100A**, **100B**, **100C**, and **100D** include electric vehicles **150A**, **150B**, **150C**, and **150D**, respectively, and different examples of the energy conversion module **166** described above with respect to FIG. **1**. In the following, the electric vehicle charging systems **100A**, **100B**, **100C** and **100D** include analogous features as the electric vehicle charging system described above with respect to FIG. **1**, the details of which are not repeated herein for brevity.

(39) FIG. **1A** illustrates an electric vehicle charging system **100A** in which electromagnetic energy **120A** is transferred from a charging station **110A** to an electric vehicle **150A** by electromagnetic induction using a pair of induction coils to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to embodiments. The charging station **110A** comprises an electromagnetic energy generator **118A** including an energy transmit coil. The energy transmit coil may be electrically connected to and driven by a driver circuitry (not shown), which may in turn include an RF amplifier. The electromagnetic energy generator **118A** is powered by the power source **122**. The power source **122** also powers the battery charging module **114** in a similar manner as described above with respect to FIG. **1**.

(40) The electric vehicle **150A** comprises an energy conversion module **166A**. The energy conversion module **166A** comprises an energy receive module **164A** including an energy receive coil. The energy receive coil may be electrically connected to a rectifier and/or a power regulator. The energy conversion module **166A** further comprises a heat generator **168A** including a resistive heating element configured to convert the wireless energy received by the energy receive coil into heat energy, which is transferred to the secondary battery **158** by, e.g., conduction or convection through the heat generator **168A**.

(41) As illustrated, the vehicle charging system **100A** is configured to heat the heat generator **168A** using wireless energy transferred from the energy transmit coil to the energy receive coil. According to various embodiments, each of the energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil has a suitable number of windings and extend in a plane to occupy a suitable area. The energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil may substantially face each other, such that the planes in which the energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil extend form an angle less than about 60, 45, 30, 15 degrees, or a value in a range defined by any of these values. The energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil may substantially overlap each other, such that the projected areas of the energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil in the planes in which they extend overlap by more than 30, 45, 60, 75 percent, or a value in a range defined by any of these values.

(42) It will be appreciated that the energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil are configured to transfer wireless energy therebetween for heating the secondary battery. In some embodiments, the energy transmit coil and the energy receive coil are dedicated for heating the secondary battery, and not configured for energy transfer for other purposes, e.g., charging the secondary battery **158**.

(43) FIG. **1B** illustrates an electric vehicle charging system **100B** in which electromagnetic energy **120B** is transferred from a charging station **110B** to an electric vehicle **150B** to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to embodiments. The charging station **110B** comprises an electromagnetic energy generator **118B** including an energy transmit coil. The energy transmit coil may be electrically connected by and driven by a driver circuitry (not shown), which may in turn include an RF amplifier. The electromagnetic energy generator **118B** is powered by the power source **122**. The power source **122** also powers the battery charging module **114** in a similar manner as described above with respect to FIG. **1**.

(44) The electric vehicle **150B** comprises an energy conversion module **166B**. The energy conversion module **166B** comprises an energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B** including a conductor. The conductor may be placed adjacent to or within the energy transmit coil. The conductor of the energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B** is configured to convert the electromagnetic energy **120B** from the energy transmit coil into eddy current flowing through the conductor, which is in turn converted into heat energy that is transferred to the secondary battery **158** by, e.g., conduction or convection.

(45) As illustrated, the electric vehicle charging system **100B** is configured for heating the secondary battery **158** by induction heating. As described herein, induction heating refers to an effect wherein an electric conductor is placed in the region of a time varying magnetic field, thereby inducing an electric current in the body. The electric current induced in the electric conductor in turn causes thermal power generation therein. In the illustrated electric vehicle charging system **100B**, magnetic field is produced by a suitable arrangement of conductors in the electromagnetic energy generator **118B**, e.g., an induction coil, connected to the power source **122** configured to provide the suitable time varying current, e.g., AC, in the induction coil. The electrical power supplied to the induction coil **118B** is thus converted to thermal power in the electric conductor of the energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B** through the electromagnetic field, without the use of a physical connection between the electromagnetic energy generator **118B** and the energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B**. The power sources **122** may provide an alternating current to the induction coil at a suitable frequency, depending on the configuration and the material of the conductor.

(46) The induced eddy current intensity can be greater at the surface of the conductor and decrease towards its center as a function of a ratio between the thickness and skin depth of the conductor. As the ratio increases, a greater proportion of the total power is dissipated near the surface, according to a phenomenon referred to as the skin effect. The skin depth, δ , can be expressed as $\delta = \sqrt{\frac{2\rho}{\omega\mu}}$, where ρ is the electrical resistivity (Ωm), $\omega = 2\pi f$ (rad/s) is the angular frequency of the current in the induction coil and the absolute magnetic permeability μ is $\mu_{\text{sub.0}} = 4\pi \times 10^{-7}$ (H/m). The amount of induced power is inversely proportional to the skin depth, and can thus be increased by selecting a material with relatively small skin depth.

(47) According to embodiments, the material and the shape of the conductor can be optimized for power and efficiency of the electric vehicle charging system **100B**. The conductor of the energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B** can have any suitable shape, e.g., a cylindrical rod or tube and a rectangular slab. Depending on the shape and the material of the conductor, the amount of induced power can be adjusted by adjusting a characteristic dimension of the conductor. For example, for a conductor having a cylindrical shape, the induced power can be proportional to the characteristic dimension of the diameter, and for a conductor having slab shape, the induced power can be proportional to the characteristic dimension of the thickness. On the one hand, the characteristic dimension can be increased to increase the induced power. However, the characteristic dimension may be limited such that the thermal mass is not too high, which can lower the efficiency. According to various embodiments, a ratio of the characteristic dimension, e.g., diameter of a cylindrical conductor or thickness of a slab conductor, to the skin depth can exceed 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9, or have a value in a range defined by any of these values.

(48) FIG. 1C illustrates an electric vehicle charging system **100C** in which electromagnetic energy **120C** is transferred from a charging station **110C** to an electric vehicle **150C** in the form of microwave energy to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to embodiments. The charging station **110C** comprises an electromagnetic energy generator **118C** including a microwave generator. The microwave generator is powered by the power source **122**. The power source **122** also powers the battery charging module **114** in a similar manner as described above with respect to FIG. 1.

(49) The electric vehicle **150C** comprises an energy conversion module **166C**. The energy conversion module **166C** comprises an energy receive module **164A** including a fluid reservoir having a microwave-transparent window **180** facing the microwave generator **118C** to receive the microwave energy therethrough. The energy conversion module **166C** additionally comprises a heat generator **168C** comprising a fluid with high dissipation factor. The fluid reservoir is connected to a network of conduits **188** through which the fluid is circulated. The network of conduits **188** may include a pump **184** to aid in the circulation of the fluid. The fluid reservoir having the microwave-transparent window **180** is configured such that the fluid serving as the heat generator **168C** contained in the fluid reservoir is heated by microwave energy from the microwave generator **118C**.

(50) The microwave transparent window **180** may be formed of a suitable microwave-transparent material such as quartz, polytetrafluoroethylene (PTFE) or the like.

(51) The fluid serving the heat generator **168C** has dielectric properties suitable for microwave heating with high efficiency. It will be appreciated that the capacity of the fluid to absorb microwave energy is related to the degree of penetration of microwaves in the fluid. When absorption occurs, the conversion of electromagnetic energy into heat depends on the relation between the dielectric loss factor (ϵ'') and the dielectric constant (ϵ') for a given material. This relation is known as the dissipation factor (or loss tangent, $\tan \delta$). The higher the dissipation capacity for a fluid, the lesser will be the penetration of microwaves into the same sample. Thus, the ratio ϵ''/ϵ' suggests the capability of each material to convert electromagnetic energy (microwaves) into heat at specific temperatures and frequencies. According to various embodiments, the fluid serving as a heat generator **168C** has $\tan \delta$ equal or higher than that of water, e.g., higher than 0.157, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1.0, or a value in a range defined by any of these values, e.g., at 25° C. under microwave energy at 3 GHz.

(52) FIG. 1D illustrates an electric vehicle charging system **100D** in which electromagnetic energy **120D** is transferred from a charging station **110D** to an electric vehicle **150D** by photon radiation energy to cause heating of a secondary battery, according to embodiments. The charging station **110D** comprises an electromagnetic energy generator **118D** including a photon radiation generator. The photon radiation generator may be electrically connected to and driven by a driver circuitry (not shown) to control, e.g., intensity and duration. The electromagnetic energy generator **118D** is powered by the power source **122**. The power source **122** also powers the battery charging module **114** in a similar manner as described above with respect to FIG. 1.

(53) The electric vehicle **150D** comprises an energy conversion module **166D**. The energy conversion module **166D** comprises an energy receive module/heat generator **164D/168D** including a photon absorber. The photon absorber of the energy receive module/heat generator **164D/168D** is configured to convert the electromagnetic energy **120D** in the form of photons into heat energy that is transferred to the secondary battery **158** by, e.g., conduction or convection. The photon absorber may have a suitable shape and/or be formed of a suitable material to efficiently absorb the photon radiation energy. For example, the photon absorber may have, e.g., a sheet or a slab structure as shown, to laterally overlap at least a portion of the secondary battery **158** and/or the photon radiation generator. Without being bound to any theory, the photon absorber may be formed of a material having optical levels, e.g., an energy gap, that is smaller than the energy of the photons such that electrons and/or holes can be excited to a higher energy level from a lower energy level, and upon de-excitation, be converted to phonons for generating heat.

(54) The photon radiation generator may include a black body radiation element or a radiating element such as a metal wire, a metal filament, a carbon heating element, a quartz tungsten heating element, a ceramic heating element, a halogen lamp and the like. The radiating element may be configured to emit light in one or more of near infrared (NIR) range (e.g., 0.65-1.4 μm), short-wavelength infrared range (e.g., 1.4-3 μm), medium-wavelength infrared range (e.g., 3-8 μm), long-wavelength infrared range (8-15 μm) and and/or far infrared range. (e.g., 15-1000 μm).

(55) The photon absorber may comprise an enhanced photon absorbing structure, as exemplified by enhanced photon absorbing structures **172E**, **172F** and **172G** illustrated in FIGS. **1E**, **1F**, and **1G**, respectively. Each of the enhanced photon absorbing structures **172E**, **172F** and **172G** may form at least part of or otherwise attached to the energy receive module/heat generator **164D/168D**, and is configured to receive photon radiation from the photon radiation generator **118D**, e.g., infrared photon radiation, by absorbing the photons from the photon radiation generator using an enhanced photon absorbing structure configured to reabsorb a substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by the enhanced photon absorbing structure.

(56) Referring to FIG. **1E**, the enhanced photon absorbing structure **172E** is configured for reabsorption of reflected photons using, e.g., a plurality of cavities, according to embodiments. The openings of the cavities face the photon radiation generator **118D**. In the illustrated configuration, some of the rays of the photon radiation **120D** that are incident on the enhanced photon absorbing structure **172E** are incident at an angle such that, instead of being incident on the bottom surfaces of the cavities, the rays may be incident on a side wall thereof. Each of the cavities has sidewalls that are configured such that a substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by one of the sidewalls is absorbed by another one of the sidewalls.

(57) Referring to FIG. **1F**, the enhanced photon absorbing structure **172F** is configured for reabsorption of reflected photons using, e.g., a plurality of protrusions, according to embodiments. In the illustrated embodiment, the protrusions have faceted surfaces, where the sharpened ends of the protrusions face the photon radiation generator **118D**. In the illustrated configuration, some of the rays of the photon radiation **120D** that are incident on the enhanced photon absorbing structure **172F** are incident at an angle such that, instead of being incident on the bottoms of the valleys, the rays may be incident on a side wall of the protrusions. Each of the protrusions has sidewalls that are configured such that a substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by one of the sidewalls is absorbed by another one of the sidewalls.

(58) Referring to FIG. **1G**, the enhanced photon absorbing structure **172G** is configured for reabsorption of reflected photons using, e.g., a plurality of protrusions, according to embodiments. The arrangement of the protrusions may be similar to that described above with respect to FIG. **1F** except, instead of the protrusions having shaped ends, the protrusions of the photon absorbing structure **172G** are rounded. The protrusions form a surface that undulate or vary sinusoidally in a lateral direction such that a substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by a sidewall of one of the protrusions is absorbed by a sidewall of another one of the protrusions.

(59) It will be appreciated that the configurations of the enhanced photon absorbing structures **172E**, **172F** and **172G** are illustrated by way of example only, and various other configurations are possible. For example, while the enhanced photon absorbing structures **172E**, **172F** and **172G** have the cavities or protrusions that form an array of cavities or protrusions, embodiments are not so limited, and the cavities or protrusions can have an irregular or random arrangement. Furthermore, while certain illustrative shapes of the cavities or protrusions are shown, it will be appreciated that various equivalent shapes are possible. For example, while the cavities of the photon absorbing structure **172E** have a honeycomb shape including hexagonal openings, embodiments are not so limited. According to various embodiments, the cavities may form any suitable shape including any polygonal shape or a conic section.

(60) Similarly, while the protrusions of the photon absorbing structures **172F**, **172G** have a faceted or sinusoidal shape when viewed in a cross section, embodiments are not so limited. According to various embodiments, the protrusions can have any suitable three-dimensional shape, including a cylinder, a cone, a pyramid, a prism, a polyhedron and a spheroid, to name a few.

(61) Still referring to FIGS. **1E**, **1F** and **1G**, it will be appreciated that the cavities or protrusions can have suitable dimensions such that photon radiation **120D** having a wavelength can be reflected by a sidewall as discussed above. For example, the opening of the cavities or inter-protrusion spaces can be at least greater than an average or peak wavelength of the photon radiation **120**, e.g.,

greater than 0.5 μm , 1 μm , 5 μm , 10 μm , 50 μm , 100 μm , 500 μm , 1 mm, 5 mm, 10 mm, 50 mm, 100 mm, or a value in a range defined by any of these values.

(62) Referring to FIGS. 1A-1D, at least the electromagnetic generator **118A**, **118B**, **118C**, **118D** may be installed as part of a residential or commercial charging station. As illustrated, at least the electromagnetic generator **118A**, **118B**, **118C**, **118D** may be installed at or below the floor of the charging station over which the electric vehicle is placed during charging of the battery. In addition, the energy conversion module **166A**, **166B**, **166C**, **166D** may be disposed at a bottom of the electric vehicle to face the electromagnetic generator **118A**, **118B**, **118C**, **118D**. Thus configured, the electromagnetic generator **118A**, **118B**, **118C**, **118D** may be configured to, via contactless energy transfer means, transfer electromagnetic energy to the energy conversion module **166A**, **166B**, **166C**, **166D** of the electric vehicle, to provide heat to the secondary battery **158**. In some configurations, the secondary battery **158** may also be located at a bottom of the electric vehicle for rapid heat transfer from the energy conversion module **166A**, **166B**, **166C**, **166D** to the secondary battery **158**.

(63) As configured, according to various embodiments, the electromagnetic generator **118** and the energy conversion module **166** are efficiently coupled to provide targeted and localized heating to the secondary battery **158** compared to, e.g., conductive or convective means that directly provide heat to the secondary battery **158** from outside the electric vehicle **150**. The targeted heating can provide energy efficiency and the localized heating can be advantageous to prevent undesirable heating of parts other than the secondary battery **158**. FIGS. 2A and 2B illustrate methods **200A**, **200B** of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle, according to embodiments. The method **200A** is similar to the method **200B**, but the method **200B** is illustrated in a decision tree format. The methods **200A**, **200B** can be implemented using any of the electric vehicle charging systems described above with respect to FIGS. 1 and 1A-1D. The methods **200A**, **200B** according to various embodiments comprises electrically coupling **205** (FIG. 2B) an electric vehicle to a charging station. Electrically coupling **205** may include plugging in a secondary battery **158** of the electric vehicle **150** to a battery charging module **114** of the charging station **110**, as described above with respect to FIG. 1. Electrically coupling **205** may additionally include establishing a communication link between the communication interfaces **132** and **174** to communicatively couple the electric vehicle **150** with the charging station **110** to transmit control and data signals, e.g., temperature data, as illustrated in FIG. 1.

(64) After electrically coupling **205** (FIG. 2B), the methods **200A**, **200B** proceeds to determining **210** (FIG. 2A) that a battery temperature of a secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for fast charging at a fast charging power such as, e.g., about 18 kW. In some embodiments, determining **210** (FIG. 2A) comprises sensing **210A** (FIG. 2B) the battery temperature using the temperature sensing module **162** (FIG. 1) and comparing the battery temperature against a predetermined lower temperature limit using the control unit **170** of the electric vehicle (FIG. 1). In some other embodiments, determining **210** (FIG. 2A) comprises sensing **210A** (FIG. 2B) the battery temperature using the temperature sensing module **162** (FIG. 1) and comparing the battery temperature against a predetermined lower temperature limit using the control unit **128** (FIG. 1) of the charging station **110**. The predetermined lower temperature limit, which may be stored in a memory and/or storage device of the control unit **128** and/or the control unit **170**, can be the lowest temperature limit that has been predetermined, e.g., based on the battery manufacturer's specification, to be suitable for charging at a fast charging power, e.g., at a charging power greater than 18 kW, which value may be stored in a memory device.

(65) Upon determining that the battery temperature is below the lower temperature limit, the methods **200A/200B** proceeds to externally apply **220**, by contactless energy transfer means using the electromagnetic energy generator **118** of the charging station **110** (FIG. 1), electromagnetic energy to an energy conversion module **166** (FIG. 1) of the electric vehicle **160**.

(66) The methods **200A/200B** further proceeds to convert **230** the electromagnetic energy to heat,

and to heat the secondary battery to a temperature above the lower temperature limit for fast charging. The methods **200A/200B** further comprises charging **240** the secondary battery at the charging rate while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy transferred by the contactless energy transfer means.

(67) Still referring to FIG. **2A**, according to embodiments, determining **210** that a battery temperature is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging at a fast charging rate comprises obtaining temperature data from the secondary battery **158** (FIG. **1**) using the temperature sensing module **162** (FIG. **1**). The temperature data maybe communicated to one or both of the control unit **128** and control unit **170** (FIG. **1**) for determining that the battery temperature is below a predetermined lower temperature limit. The lower temperature limit may be a temperature at which one or both of a battery capacity and/or a battery cycle life of the secondary battery drops by more than 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70% or a value in a range defined by any of these values, compared to a corresponding battery capacity and/or a corresponding battery cycle life of the secondary battery at 25° C. The lower temperature limit can be a temperature lower than 20° C., 15° C., 10° C., 5° C., 0° C., -5° C., -10° C., -15° C., -20° C., or a temperature in range defined by any of these values.

(68) According to embodiments, determining **210** that a battery temperature is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging at a fast charging rate or a high charging power comprises determining that the battery temperature is suitable for charging in a fast charging mode that is at or substantially higher than level 2 charging described above. It will be appreciated that fast charging or high charging power in the context of the disclosed technology can be associated with an elevated risk of Li plating as disclosed above, which risk can be elevated when the secondary battery is charged at a temperature lower than a predetermined lower temperature limit prescribed for the secondary battery. The predetermined lower temperature limit corresponds to a temperature at which, when the secondary battery is charged at a high charging power as described herein, one or both of a battery capacity and/or a battery cycle life of the secondary battery can drop by, e.g., 10% or more compared to a corresponding battery capacity and/or a corresponding battery cycle life of the same or comparable secondary battery at 25° C. The fast charging rate or high charging power can be defined in one of several ways, including by charging power, charging time, charging current and/or C-rate, to name a few. For example, for a standard charging power of about 6 kW within level 2 charging as of the time of the disclosure, a high charging power can be about 3 times or greater relative to the standard charging power, e.g., about 18 kW. However, it will be understood that as the battery technology evolves, this value can change. For example, the fast charging rate corresponds to a charging power sufficient for charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle, e.g., with 100 miles of range or greater, to at least 50% of full capacity from less than 10% of full capacity, or alternatively 80% of full capacity from less than 50% of full capacity. in less than 10 hours, 8 hours, 6 hours, 4 hours, 2 hours, 1 hour, 0.5 hour, 0.25 hour, 0.1 hour or a value in a range defined by any of these values, at charging power exceeding 18 kW, 20 kW, 50 kW, 100 kW, 150 kW, 200 kW, 250 kW or a value in a range defined by any of these values. The secondary batteries according to embodiments can have a 100% capacity exceeding 10 kWh, 100 kWh, 200 kWh, 500 kWh, 1000 kWh, or a value in a range defined by any of these values. Alternatively, the fast charging rate corresponds to a C rate greater than 0.5C 1C, 2C, 5C, 10C or a value in a range defined by any of these values.

(69) Still referring to FIG. **2A** and FIG. **2B**, upon determining **210/210B** that the battery is temperature is higher than the predetermined lower temperature limit, the method **200A/200B** proceeds to fast charge the secondary battery at the fast charging power.

(70) On the other hand, upon determining **210** (FIG. **2A**)/**210B** (FIG. **2B**) that the battery is temperature is below the predetermined lower temperature limit, the control unit **128** of the charging station **110** (FIG. **1**) activates the electromagnetic generator **118** (FIG. **1**) for externally

applying **220**, by contactless energy transfer means electromagnetic energy **120** (FIG. 1) to an energy conversion module **166** (FIG. 1) of the electric vehicle **150** (FIG. 1). In addition, the control unit **170** (FIG. 1) of the electric vehicle **150** (FIG. 1) activates the energy conversion module **166** for converting **230** the electromagnetic energy to heat and heating the secondary battery to a temperature above the lower temperature limit.

(71) Externally applying **220** the electromagnetic energy and converting **230** the electromagnetic energy can be performed using any of the examples of electromagnetic generator **118** and energy conversion module **166** described herein with respect to FIGS. 1A-1D.

(72) According to embodiments using the electric vehicle charging system **100A** described above with respect to FIG. 1A, applying **220** the electromagnetic energy comprises supplying power from the power source **122** (FIG. 1A) to activate the energy transmit coil of electromagnetic energy generator **118A** (FIG. 1A), thereby flowing AC current therethrough. The AC current flowing through the energy transmit coil creates an electromagnetic field (a changing magnetic field) around the energy transmit coil. In these embodiments, converting **230** the electromagnetic energy comprises, when the energy receive coil of the energy receive module **164A** is in sufficient proximity to the energy transmit coil of the electromagnetic energy generator, generating an electric current within the energy receive coil. The AC flowing through the energy receive coil may be converted into DC by circuitry of the energy conversion module **166A** (FIG. 1A). The DC generated is then used to generate heat using a resistive heating element of the heat generator **168A**. However, embodiments are not so limited, and the AC may directly be used to generate the heat.

(73) According to embodiments of using the electric vehicle charging system **100B** described above with respect to FIG. 1B, applying **220** the electromagnetic energy comprises supplying power from the power source **122** (FIG. 1B) to activate the energy transmit coil, thereby flowing AC current therethrough. The AC current flowing through the energy transmit coil creates an eddy current within the conductor of the energy receive module/heat generator **164B/168B**. In these embodiments, converting **230** the electromagnetic energy comprises, when the AC current is applied through the transmit coil, generating an eddy current within the conductor disposed within the energy transmit coil. The power dissipated by the eddy current is dissipated as heat for heating the secondary battery **158A**.

(74) According to embodiments using the electric vehicle charging system **100C** described above with respect to FIG. 1C, applying **220** the electromagnetic energy comprises supplying power from the power source **122** (FIG. 1C) to activate the microwave generator of the electromagnetic energy generator **118C** (FIG. 1C), thereby transmitting the microwave energy **120C** (FIG. 1C) through the microwave-transparent window **180** (FIG. 1C). In these embodiments, converting **230** the electromagnetic energy comprises, upon absorbing the microwave energy transmitted through the microwave-transparent window **180**, generating heat in the high dissipation factor fluid serving as the heat generator **168C** contained in the fluid reservoir of the energy receive module **164C** (FIG. 1C). Thus heated fluid is circulated through the conduits **188** to transfer heat to the secondary battery **158**.

(75) According to embodiments using the electric vehicle charging system **100D** described above with respect to FIG. 1D, applying **220** the electromagnetic energy comprises supplying power from the power source **122** (FIG. 1D) to activate the photon radiation energy generator of the electromagnetic energy generator **118D** (FIG. 1D), thereby transmitting the photon radiation energy **120D** (FIG. 1D) to the energy conversion module **166D** including a photon absorber. The photon absorber can include any one of enhanced photon absorbing structures described above with respect to FIGS. 1E-1G. In these embodiments, converting **230** the electromagnetic energy comprises, upon absorbing the photon radiation energy using a photon absorber, generating heat in the photon absorber of the energy conversion module **166D** (FIG. 1D). Thus heated photon absorber transfers heat to the secondary battery **158**.

(76) As illustrated in FIG. 2B, process of externally applying **220** the electromagnetic energy and converting **230** the electromagnetic energy to heat for heating the secondary battery may be part of a feedback process loop including sensing whether the battery temperature of the secondary battery has reached a temperature above the predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for fast charging after applying **220** the electromagnetic energy and converting **230** the electromagnetic energy. Referring to FIGS. 2A and 2B, upon determining **210/210B** that the battery temperature is higher than the predetermined lower temperature limit, with or without heating the secondary battery as described above, the method **200A/200B** proceeds to fast charge **240** the secondary battery at the fast charging power while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy transferred by the contactless energy transfer means. The upper temperature limit may correspond to a temperature above which the secondary battery can suffer from harmful effects, such as electrolyte decomposition and cathode dissolution. According to embodiments, the upper temperature limit can be less than 70° C., 60° C., 50° C., or a value in a range defined by any of these values.

(77) In some embodiments, maintaining the battery temperature comprises actively cooling the secondary battery when the battery temperature exceeds the upper temperature limit. In these embodiments, the charging system comprises a cooling means for cooling the secondary battery. In some embodiments, the charging system includes non-contacting cooling means such as a cooling fan. In some embodiments, the cooling means may include contact cooling means configured to cool the secondary battery, such that the secondary battery is configured to be water-cooled, oil-cooled, air-cooled, or piezo-electric-cooled by the cooling means.

(78) FIGS. 2C-2E illustrate flow charts illustrating alternative methods of charging a secondary battery of an electric vehicle with battery temperature control using electromagnetic energy, according to some other embodiments.

(79) The method **200C** of FIG. 2C provides a method of additionally accelerating the overall charging speed relative to the method **200B** described above with respect to FIG. 2B by initiating charging at a slow charging rate before proceeding with the method **200B**. The method **200C** of FIG. 2C is the same as the method **200B** described above with respect to FIG. 2B except, prior to sensing the battery temperature **210A**, the method **200C** additionally includes slow charging **207** the secondary battery at lower charging power. That is, before or during externally applying **220** the electromagnetic energy to heat the secondary battery to the temperature above the lower temperature limit, the secondary battery is slow charged. The slow charging **207** can be performed at a charging power lower than a fast charging power described herein, e.g., lower than 18 kW, e.g., any power at level 2 charging or lower. In some embodiments, the rate of the slow charging **207** can be a predetermined rate which may be relatively constant. In some other embodiments, the rate of slow charging **207** can be dynamically adjusted during the slow charging **207** based on the state of charge of the secondary battery. For example, the rate of slow charging **207** can be dynamically adjusted in inverse proportion to the state of charge. The inverse proportion may be linear or superlinear, e.g., exponential. In some embodiments, each of externally applying **220** (FIG. 2A) electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle and converting **230** (FIG. 2A) the electromagnetic energy can be performed in conjunction with slow charging, until the battery temperature reaches the predetermined lower temperature limit. Thereafter, the method **200C** proceeds to charging the secondary battery at the fast charging power, as described above with respect to FIGS. 2A and 2B.

(80) The method **200D** of FIG. 2D provides a method of maintaining the battery temperature after initiating charging **240** at the high charging power according to the method **200B** described above with respect to FIG. 2B by stopping providing heat to the secondary battery once the battery temperature reaches a room temperature. The method **200D** of FIG. 2D is the same as the method **200B** described above with respect to FIG. 2B except, after commencing fast charging **240** the secondary battery, the method **200D** additionally includes further sensing **245** the battery

temperature to determine **250** whether the secondary battery temperature has reached a temperature higher than room temperature (25° C.). Upon determining **250** that the battery temperature has reached a temperature higher than room temperature, further heating the secondary battery is stopped by stopping **260** externally applying electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle. Each of further sensing **245** the battery temperature and determining **250** whether the secondary battery temperature has reached a temperature higher than room temperature is performed in conjunction with fast charging **240**.

(81) The method **200E** of FIG. **2E** combines the method **200C** of FIG. **2C** and the method **200D** of FIG. **2D**. That is, the method **200E** of FIG. **2E** includes, prior to sensing the battery temperature **210A**, slow charging **207** the secondary battery at lower charging power. The method **200E** additionally includes, after commencing fast charging **240** the secondary battery, further sensing **245** the battery temperature to determine **250** whether the secondary battery temperature has reached a temperature higher than room temperature (25° C.), and upon determining **250** that the battery temperature has reached a temperature higher than room temperature, stopping further heating the secondary battery by stopping **260** externally applying electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle.

(82) Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, throughout the description and the claims, the words “comprise,” “comprising,” “include,” “including” and the like are to be construed in an inclusive sense, as opposed to an exclusive or exhaustive sense; that is to say, in the sense of “including, but not limited to.” The word “coupled”, as generally used herein, refers to two or more elements that may be either directly connected, or connected by way of one or more intermediate elements. Likewise, the word “connected”, as generally used herein, refers to two or more elements that may be either directly connected, or connected by way of one or more intermediate elements. Additionally, the words “herein,” “above,” “below,” and words of similar import, when used in this application, shall refer to this application as a whole and not to any particular portions of this application. Where the context permits, words in the above Detailed Description using the singular or plural number may also include the plural or singular number, respectively. The word “or” in reference to a list of two or more items, that word covers all of the following interpretations of the word: any of the items in the list, all of the items in the list, and any combination of the items in the list.

(83) Moreover, conditional language used herein, such as, among others, “can,” “could,” “might,” “may,” “e.g.,” “for example,” “such as” and the like, unless specifically stated otherwise, or otherwise understood within the context as used, is generally intended to convey that certain embodiments include, while other embodiments do not include, certain features, elements and/or states. Thus, such conditional language is not generally intended to imply that features, elements and/or states are in any way required for one or more embodiments or whether these features, elements and/or states are included or are to be performed in any particular embodiment.

(84) While certain embodiments have been described, these embodiments have been presented by way of example only, and are not intended to limit the scope of the disclosure. Indeed, the novel apparatus, methods, and systems described herein may be embodied in a variety of other forms; furthermore, various omissions, substitutions and changes in the form of the methods and systems described herein may be made without departing from the spirit of the disclosure. For example, while blocks are presented in a given arrangement, alternative embodiments may perform similar functionalities with different components and/or circuit topologies, and some blocks may be deleted, moved, added, subdivided, combined, and/or modified. Each of these blocks may be implemented in a variety of different ways. Any suitable combination of the elements and acts of the various embodiments described above can be combined to provide further embodiments. The various features and processes described above may be implemented independently of one another, or may be combined in various ways. All possible combinations and subcombinations of features of this disclosure are intended to fall within the scope of this disclosure.

Claims

1. An electric vehicle charging station, comprising: a battery charging module configured to provide charging energy to a secondary battery of an electric vehicle; an electromagnetic energy generator configured to generate and transfer electromagnetic energy, by contactless energy transfer means, to the electric vehicle; a communication interface configured to receive a battery temperature of the secondary battery from the electric vehicle; and a control unit configured, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging the secondary battery at a high charging power, to activate the electromagnetic energy generator and to generate and transmit the electromagnetic energy to the electric vehicle to cause the secondary battery to be heated, wherein the control unit is further configured to, upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery exceeds the lower temperature limit, activate the battery charging module to initiate charging the secondary battery at the high charging power.
2. The charging station of claim 1, wherein the control unit is further configured to charge the secondary battery at the high charging power while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy generated and transferred by the electromagnetic energy generator.
3. The charging station of claim 1, wherein the lower temperature limit corresponds to a temperature at which one or both of a battery capacity and/or a battery cycle life of the secondary battery drops by 50% or more compared to a corresponding battery capacity and/or a corresponding battery cycle life of the secondary battery at 25° C.
4. The charging station of claim 1, wherein the contactless energy transfer means includes means other than convection or conduction.
5. The charging station of claim 4, wherein the electromagnetic energy generator comprises an energy transmit coil configured to generate and transmit the electromagnetic energy by applying current through the energy transmit coil.
6. The charging station of claim 5, wherein the energy transmit coil is configured to induce current in a receive coil installed on the electric vehicle by electromagnetic induction.
7. The charging station of claim 5, wherein the energy transmit coil is configured to induce eddy current in a conductor installed on the electric vehicle by electromagnetic induction.
8. The charging station of claim 5, wherein the electromagnetic energy generator comprises a microwave generator configured to apply microwave energy to the electric vehicle.
9. The charging station of claim 8, wherein the microwave generator is configured to heat a fluid stored in the electric vehicle.
10. The charging station of claim 4, wherein the electromagnetic energy generator comprises a photon generator configured to generate and transmit photons.
11. The charging station of claim 10, wherein the photon generator comprises an infrared photon generator configured to generate and transmit photons having a near infrared wavelengths or longer.
12. A powering system for powering an electric vehicle, the powering system comprising: a secondary battery for powering the electric vehicle; a temperature sensing module configured to monitor a battery temperature of the secondary battery; an energy conversion module configured to: electromagnetically couple to an electromagnetic energy generator of a charging station and to receive electromagnetic energy therefrom by contactless energy transfer means, convert the electromagnetic energy into heat, and heat the secondary battery with the heat; and a control unit configured to: receive the battery temperature from the temperature sensing module and to communicate the battery temperature to the charging station through a communication interface,

upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery is below a predetermined lower temperature limit suitable for charging at a high charging power, activate the energy conversion module to receive the electromagnetic energy and to cause the secondary battery to be heated, and upon determining that the battery temperature of the secondary battery exceeds the lower temperature limit of the secondary battery, activate the secondary battery to initiate charging the secondary battery at the high charging power.

13. The powering system of claim 12, wherein the control unit is further configured for charging the secondary battery at the high charging power while maintaining the battery temperature between the lower temperature limit and an upper temperature limit at least in part by controlling a magnitude of the electromagnetic energy converted into heat by the energy conversion module.

14. The powering system of claim 13, wherein the lower temperature limit corresponds to a temperature at which one or both of a battery capacity and/or a battery cycle life of the secondary battery drops by 50% or more compared to a corresponding battery capacity and/or a corresponding battery cycle life of the secondary battery at 25° C.

15. The powering system of claim 14, wherein the one or both of the battery capacity and/or the battery cycle life of the secondary battery dropping by 50% or more compared to the corresponding battery capacity and/or the corresponding battery cycle life of the secondary battery at 25° C. is associated with lithium plating in the secondary battery.

16. The powering system of claim 14, wherein the contactless energy transfer means includes means other than convection or conduction.

17. The powering system of claim 12, wherein the energy conversion module is configured to electromagnetically couple to an energy transmit coil installed at the charging station.

18. The powering system of claim 17, wherein the energy conversion module comprises a receive coil is configured to convert the electromagnetic energy received from the energy transmit coil into induced current in the receive coil by electromagnetic induction.

19. The powering system of claim 18, wherein the energy conversion module further comprises a resistive heating element configured to convert at least part of the induced current into the heat for heating the secondary battery.

20. The powering system of claim 17, wherein the energy conversion module comprises a conductor configured to convert the electromagnetic energy received from the energy transmit coil into eddy current in the conductor by electromagnetic induction.

21. The powering system of claim 12, wherein the energy conversion module is configured to receive microwave energy from a microwave generator installed at the charging station.

22. The powering system of claim 21, wherein the energy conversion module comprises a fluid configured to be heated by the microwave energy.

23. The powering system of claim 22, wherein the energy conversion module further comprises conduits configured to circulate the fluid that is heated by the microwave energy in proximity to the secondary battery to heat the secondary battery.

24. The powering system of claim 23, wherein the energy conversion module is configured to receive photon radiation energy from a photon radiation generator installed at the charging station.

25. The powering system of claim 24, wherein the energy conversion module comprises an enhanced photon absorbing structure configured to reabsorb a substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by the enhanced photon absorbing structure.

26. The powering system of claim 25, wherein the enhanced photon absorbing structure comprises a plurality of cavities having sidewalls that are configured such that the substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by one of the sidewalls is absorbed by another one of the sidewalls.

27. The powering system of claim 25, wherein the enhanced photon absorbing structure comprises a plurality of protrusions having sidewalls that are configured such that the substantial portion of photons that are reflected or scattered by a sidewall of one of the protrusions is absorbed by a

sidewall of another one of the protrusions.

28. The powering system of claim 27, wherein the protrusions comprise an array of protrusions having faceted surfaces.

29. The powering system of claim 27, wherein the protrusions comprise an array of protrusions having a sinusoidally varying surface.
