All Optical Clock Distribution with Synchronous Frequency Division and Multiplication

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References


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ALL-OPTICAL CLOCK DISTRIBUTION WITH SYNCHRONOUS FREQUENCY DIVISION AND MULTIPLICATION

G. Farrell, P. Phelan and J. Hegarty

Indexing terms: Clocks, Optical communications, Lasers

A master optical clock from a mode locked laser is distributed to two slave section lasers. One slave laser divides the optical modulation frequency by 2, the other slave laser multiplies the frequency by 2. It is also possible to vary the multiplication–division ratio in a slave laser using only DC control of the absorber of the twin section laser.

Introduction: The distribution of a master clock to a number of slave circuits is an important function in large computers and communications switching systems. It has been shown [1] that clock distribution by electronic means places a major limitation on the ultimate operating speed of a system. The use of optical clock distribution has been proposed [2] as an alternative because it offers low loss, high bandwidth and a large fanout capability. The use of a mode locked laser as an optical clock has also been demonstrated [2]. A mode locked laser is a very suitable clock source because the pulses are of very short duration and possess very low jitter. In many systems a range of different but synchronous clock frequencies are required. The use of electronic division or multiplication of a distributed optical clock negates many of the advantages of all-optical clock distribution.

Electronics Letters 16th July 1992 Vol. 28 No. 15

Fig. 1 Experimental setup

Twin section laser diodes have been shown to be useful for all-optical timing extraction [3] and more recently for all-optical synchronisation with frequency division for sinusoidal signals [4] and for mode locked signals [5]. Frequency division and multiplication are achieved by overlapping the appropriate harmonics of the source signal and the selfpulsating signal. The relationship between the source frequency and the selfpulsating frequency can be an integer or a rational fraction.

In this Letter we demonstrate for the first time all-optical clock distribution with all-optical frequency division and multiplication of the distributed clock. To achieve this a master optical clock is distributed to two twin section selfpulsating slave lasers. One slave laser divides the frequency of the optical clock by a fixed value of two and the other slave laser is used to multiply the optical clock frequency by two. In addition we demonstrate that by DC control of the absorber of the slave laser the division/multiplication ratio can be varied.

Experimental setup: Fig. 1 shows the experimental setup for optical clock distribution. In this experiment a master optical clock is distributed to two slave lasers. The source of optical clock signals is a tunable grating external cavity laser which is modelocked by an RF signal from a frequency synthesizer. The grating laser is operated at a bias current of 21.4mA modulated at 541.7MHz at +22dBm. The pulse width measured on a 20GHz photodiode was less than 120ps.

This master clock is distributed to the two slave lasers using singlemode fibre and two outputs of a four output fibre splitter. Each of the slave lasers A and B shown in Fig. 1 is a twin section InGaAsP BH device with a length of 500μm and a 4:1 gain to absorber section length ratio. The slave lasers are operated within their selfpulsation regime, described previously [6]. The outputs of the slave lasers are monitored on an avalanche photodiode with a bandwidth greater than 1.5GHz. All of the lasers in the system setup were temperature controlled to within ±0.1°C.

Operation: The master laser operates at 541.7MHz with an average output power of 172μW at a wavelength of approximately 1612.8nm. This master signal is shown in Fig. 2a, where the pulse duration shown is limited by the bandwidth of the avalanche photodiode used. With the master optical clock blocked the selfpulsation frequency of slave laser A is set to just below 270MHz using an absorber voltage of 0-250 V. The frequency of slave laser B is set to just below 1083MHz using an absorber voltage of 0-366V. The gain section current of both slave lasers is set to 90mA.

The master optical clock is then used to injection lock both slave lasers. Synchronisation also occurs and in the case of slave laser A the selfpulsation frequency changes to exactly 270.85MHz providing frequency division by two. For slave laser B the frequency changes to exactly 1082.9MHz: when synchronisation occurs providing frequency multiplication by two. The outputs of slave lasers A and B are shown in Fig. 2b and c, respectively. In both cases the oscilloscope is triggered by a signal from the frequency synthesizer, demonstrating that synchronisation takes place in time. The degree of synchronisation can also be checked using a spectrum analyser, as...
This is achieved by changing only the DC absorber lasers. The noise floor relative to the peak level of the synchronised fundamental component of the self-pulsating laser output is greater than 38dB for both slave lasers. The results for slave laser B are shown in the Table 1, given that the voltage self-pulsation frequency ratio is approximately 3 pW in each case. Given that the pulsed laser output is greater than 38dB for both slave lasers, the multiplication and division ratio of the synchronised slave voltage. The results for slave laser B are shown in the Table 1, third entry corresponding to an output frequency of 812.55 MHz represents multiplication by a rational fraction, in this case 3/2.

The average injection power into the slave lasers required for synchronisation is approximately 3 μW in each case. Given that the low power level a fanout in excess of 50 is possible for an average mode locked laser power of 172pW. Furthermore the self-pulsating laser also provides a net optical power gain which will make subsequent electronic processing easier. For example when slave laser B is synchronised the average output power is 240μW, a net gain of 19dB.

Conclusion: We have demonstrated for the first time all-optical clock distribution with all-optical frequency division and multiplication using self-pulsating twin section laser diodes with a high fanout value. It is also possible to vary the multiplication-division ratio using DC control only. The self-pulsating lasers also provide optical gain. This technique will be useful in systems where a single master clock must be distributed to a number of slave systems, but where each system requires a synchronous clock of a different frequency.

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References

InAlAs/InGaAs Heterojunction Bipolar Transistors with AlAs Etch-Stop Layer


Indexing terms: Bipolar devices, Transistors, Semiconductor devices and materials

A seven monolayer AlAs layer was used as an etch stop at the emitter-base heterojunction of an Npn In0.53Al0.47As/In0.53Ga0.47As HBT. The etch-stop HBTs displayed higher DC gain and similar microwave performance when compared to devices without the AlAs layer.

Introduction: Heterojunction bipolar transistors (HBTs), lattice matched to InP, continue to show promise as high-performance devices for analogue, digital, and optoelectronic applications [1]. Thin InGaAs base layers are exploited to reduce transit times and increase operating frequencies [2, 3]. However, exposing a thin InGaAs base beneath an AlAs emitter is a processing challenge because selective wet chemical etchants, permitting the removal of InGaAs without penetration into the underlying InGaAs, are not available. Recently, Broekaert and Fonstad [4] used a sucinic acid, hydrogen peroxide, and ammonium hydroxide (SA) solution for selective etching of both InGaAs and InAlAs over thin (3-10 monolayer) AlAs layers. In this work, we report the application of the AlAs etch stop to InAlAs/InGaAs HBTs. A seven monolayer AlAs layer was placed between an InAlAs

ELECTRONICS LETTERS 16th July 1992 Vol. 28 No. 15