

Description

This invention relates to lightwave transceivers.

Coherent lightwave communication systems have grown in interest as the wavelength stability, wavelength tunability and manufacturable reproducibility of semiconductor lasers has been improved. In most coherent lightwave communication systems, optical heterodyning has been the suggested reception technique. In an optical heterodyne receiver, received lightwave signals and lightwave signals from a local oscillator are directed onto a photodetector. See S.D. Personick, *Fiber Optics: Technology and Applications*, pp. 242-245 (Plenum Press 1985). If the frequencies of the received and local oscillator lightwave signals differ, the resulting lightwave signals experience beating at a frequency corresponding to the difference in frequency of the received and local oscillator lightwave signals. Electronic (intermediate frequency) signals resulting from this interaction are directed to a square law mixer (for intensity or amplitude modulated signals) for further processing and detection. Beating causes oscillation in the photoresponse of the detector at the same difference frequency.

In a proposed optical heterodyne receiver, received lightwave signals are directed onto a semiconductor laser biased above threshold to interfere with lightwave signals being produced therein via optical mixing. See *Sov. Phys. - JETP*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 522-7 (1974).

In such systems, whether real or proposed, the semiconductor laser has been operated primarily as a dedicated receiver. As a result, another laser source is necessary to produce lightwave signals for full duplex or half duplex transmission on either communication system. Such a duplication is costly in that it doubles laser and electronic drive circuit costs plus it requires additional mounting and optics to handle separate reception and transmission.

According to this invention there is provided a lightwave transceiver as claimed in claim 1.

In an embodiment of the invention full duplex operation is achieved in a lightwave communication system by employing terminals having a distributed Bragg reflector (DBR) laser having separate electrically controllable Bragg reflector and gain sections. While operating as the basic heterodyne reception element, the DBR laser simultaneously generates lightwave signals for transmission to other terminals. External circuits process the electrical (intermediate frequency) signals from the simultaneously modulated and signal mixing laser to extract received information.

In one embodiment, full duplex operation is described for an FSK lightwave communication system.

Brief Description of the Drawing

A more complete understanding of the invention may be obtained by reading the following description of a specific illustrative embodiment of the invention in conjunction with the appended drawing in which:

FIG. 1 shows an exemplary embodiment of a full duplex, FSK lightwave communication system; and

FIG. 2 shows plots of various exemplary data signals in the lightwave communication system of FIG. 1.

Detailed Description

Heterodyne reception using a semiconductor laser while performing simultaneous lightwave transmission from the same semiconductor laser is the principle at the heart of the present invention. Heterodyning the incoming lightwave signal in the resonant laser cavity while simultaneously modulating the same laser cavity with the data signal to be transmitted causes the various lightwave signals to interfere within the laser cavity. Since the interference is deterministic, it may be extracted from a composite signal which represents the interfering signals.

While the invention is shown realized by a distributed Bragg reflector laser, it is contemplated that distributed feedback lasers having one or more electrode sections and other heterostructure lasers having stripe contact electrodes are capable of performing in the lightwave system.

Other structures such as buried ridge, crescent or V-groove, double channel planar buried heterostructure, semi-insulating blocking region planar buried heterostructure and the like are contemplated for use as embodiments of the laser structure. By employing lasers having separate electrically controllable sections such as a multiple electrode distributed Bragg reflector (DBR) laser or multiple electrode multiple-quantum-well (MQW) DBR laser, it is possible to provide simultaneous transmission and coherent reception with the same laser structure.

Details about fabrication and operation of DBR and MQW-DBR lasers including two- and three-section (electrode) devices are available in *Appl. Phys. Lett.*, 53 (12), pp. 1036-8 (1988), and *Elect. Lett.*, Vol. 24, No. 23, pp. 1431-2 (1988) (three section devices having a phase control section). The teachings of these references are expressly incorporated herein by reference.

While the embodiment to be described hereinbelow relates to an exemplary FSK modulation lightwave system, it is understood that the present invention is equally applicable to other forms of modulation such as intensity or amplitude modulation and the like. Moreover, even though only binary modulation (two-level or two-frequency) is disclosed, it is under-

stood that the invention is directly applicable to multi-level (M-ary) modulation systems. In the case of intensity or amplitude modulation systems, it is understood that modulation levels may be required to be less than 100% to insure proper operation as a heterodyne receiver.

FIG. 1 shows a simplified diagram of a lightwave communication system employing FSK modulation and heterodyne reception at local terminal 10 and at remote terminal 20. The lightwave communication system also includes transmission medium 32 for supporting bidirectional propagation of lightwave signals between local terminal 10 and remote terminal 20. Remote is intended to mean any location away from the transmitter either in a microscopic sense such as being colocated on the same semiconductor chip or in a macroscopic sense such as being geographically separated

Local terminal 10 includes DBR laser 11 having a gain section controlled via electrode 13 and a Bragg section controlled via electrode 12. Bias signals for heterodyne operation are applied to DBR laser 11 via terminal 14. Data signals such as data signal A (see FIG. 2) is applied to the Bragg section of DBR laser 11 via terminal 17. Local terminal 10 also includes amplifier 15 connected to gain section electrode 13, discriminator 16 connected to the output of amplifier 15 and difference amplifier 19 connected to the output of discriminator 16 and via variable impedance element 18 to terminal 17. When the lightwave signal representation of data signal B (see FIG. 2) is transmitted from remote terminal 20 to local terminal 10, local terminal 10 outputs a representation of data signal B at terminal 34 which is the output of difference amplifier 19.

Remote terminal 20 includes DBR laser 21 having a gain section controlled via electrode 23 and a Bragg section controlled via electrode 22. Bias signals for heterodyne operation are applied to DBR laser 21 via terminal 24. Data signals such as data signal B (see FIG. 2) are applied to the Bragg section of DBR laser 21 via terminal 27. Local terminal 20 also includes amplifier 25 connected to gain section electrode 23, discriminator 26 connected to the output of amplifier 25 and difference amplifier 29 connected to the output of discriminator 26 and via variable impedance element 28 to terminal 27. When the lightwave signal representation of data signal A (see FIG. 2) is transmitted from local terminal 10 to remote terminal 20, remote terminal 20 outputs a representation of data signal A at terminal 33 which is the output of difference amplifier 29. In order to provide a substantially equal offset between the frequencies of lasers 11 and 21, it is necessary to include frequency locking circuit 31 having its input connected to the output of amplifier 25 and having its output connected to Bragg section electrode 22.

Both the discriminator elements and the frequen-

cy lock element are well known to those skilled in the art. The discriminator is known to convert an intermediate frequency frequency-modulated signal into a corresponding baseband amplitude-modulated signal. The function of the frequency lock element has been described above.

Remote terminal 20 includes terminal 35 at the output of discriminator 26. The signal labeled "composite" in FIG. 2 is available at terminal 35. The composite signal at terminal 35 includes superimposed representations of signal A and signal B as seen from a laser electrode 23. Difference amplifier 29 allows data signal B to be extracted from the composite signal leaving a representation of data signal A at the output of difference amplifier 29, namely, terminal 33. See FIG. 2, signal labeled "received data A". By sampling at the instants marked by the up arrow in FIG. 2, it is possible to obtain truly quantized representations of received data signal A.

It is contemplated that remote terminal 20 and local terminal 10 may operate at vastly different data rates for their corresponding data signals.

Claims

1. A lightwave transceiver (20) responsive to a first lightwave signal (from 32) for generating a first data signal (at 33) and separately responsive to a second data signal (at 27) for generating a second lightwave signal, said lightwave transceiver including a semiconductor laser structure (21) controllable from first and second electrodes (22,23) and biassable electrically above a lasing threshold via the first electrode (23) for heterodyne reception of said first lightwave signal in said semiconductor laser structure, said second data signal being supplied to said semiconductor laser structure via the second electrode (22), means (25,26) connected to the first electrode and being responsive to electrical signal variations caused substantially by said heterodyne reception for producing a composite data signal (at 35), and means (29) jointly responsive to said second data signal and to said composite data signal for generating a representation of said first data signal (at 33), wherein simultaneous transmission and coherent reception are provided by the transceiver using the same laser structure for both operations.
2. A transceiver as claimed in claim 1 including means (31) responsive to electrical signals from the first electrode for correcting offset of an operating frequency of the laser structure by applying a predetermined electrical signal to the second electrode (22), so that said first and second lightwave signals are substantially equally offset



stood that the invention is directly applicable to multi-level (M-ary) modulation systems. In the case of intensity or amplitude modulation systems, it is understood that modulation levels may be required to be less than 100% to insure proper operation as a heterodyne receiver.

FIG. 1 shows a simplified diagram of a lightwave communication system employing FSK modulation and heterodyne reception at local terminal 10 and at remote terminal 20. The lightwave communication system also includes transmission medium 32 for supporting bidirectional propagation of lightwave signals between local terminal 10 and remote terminal 20. Remote is intended to mean any location away from the transmitter either in a microscopic sense such as being colocated on the same semiconductor chip or in a macroscopic sense such as being geographically separated

Local terminal 10 includes DBR laser 11 having a gain section controlled via electrode 13 and a Bragg section controlled via electrode 12. Bias signals for heterodyne operation are applied to DBR laser 11 via terminal 14. Data signals such as data signal A (see FIG. 2) is applied to the Bragg section of DBR laser 11 via terminal 17. Local terminal 10 also includes amplifier 15 connected to gain section electrode 13, discriminator 16 connected to the output of amplifier 15 and difference amplifier 19 connected to the output of discriminator 16 and via variable impedance element 18 to terminal 17. When the lightwave signal representation of data signal B (see FIG. 2) is transmitted from remote terminal 20 to local terminal 10, local terminal 10 outputs a representation of data signal B at terminal 34 which is the output of difference amplifier 19.

Remote terminal 20 includes DBR laser 21 having a gain section controlled via electrode 23 and a Bragg section controlled via electrode 22. Bias signals for heterodyne operation are applied to DBR laser 21 via terminal 24. Data signals such as data signal B (see FIG. 2) are applied to the Bragg section of DBR laser 21 via terminal 27. Local terminal 20 also includes amplifier 25 connected to gain section electrode 23, discriminator 26 connected to the output of amplifier 25 and difference amplifier 29 connected to the output of discriminator 26 and via variable impedance element 28 to terminal 27. When the lightwave signal representation of data signal A (see FIG. 2) is transmitted from local terminal 10 to remote terminal 20, remote terminal 20 outputs a representation of data signal A at terminal 33 which is the output of difference amplifier 29. In order to provide a substantially equal offset between the frequencies of lasers 11 and 21, it is necessary to include frequency locking circuit 31 having its input connected to the output of amplifier 25 and having its output connected to Bragg section electrode 22.

Both the discriminator elements and the frequen-

cy lock element are well known to those skilled in the art. The discriminator is known to convert an intermediate frequency frequency-modulated signal into a corresponding baseband amplitude-modulated signal. The function of the frequency lock element has been described above.

Remote terminal 20 includes terminal 35 at the output of discriminator 26. The signal labeled "composite" in FIG. 2 is available at terminal 35. The composite signal at terminal 35 includes superimposed representations of signal A and signal B as seen from a laser electrode 23. Difference amplifier 29 allows data signal B to be extracted from the composite signal leaving a representation of data signal A at the output of difference amplifier 29, namely, terminal 33. See FIG. 2, signal labeled "received data A". By sampling at the instants marked by the up arrow in FIG. 2, it is possible to obtain truly quantized representations of received data signal A.

It is contemplated that remote terminal 20 and local terminal 10 may operate at vastly different data rates for their corresponding data signals.

Claims

1. A lightwave transceiver (20) responsive to a first lightwave signal (from 32) for generating a first data signal (at 33) and separately responsive to a second data signal (at 27) for generating a second lightwave signal, said lightwave transceiver including a semiconductor laser structure (21) controllable from first and second electrodes (22,23) and biassable electrically above a lasing threshold via the first electrode (23) for heterodyne reception of said first lightwave signal in said semiconductor laser structure, said second data signal being supplied to said semiconductor laser structure via the second electrode (22), means (25,26) connected to the first electrode and being responsive to electrical signal variations caused substantially by said heterodyne reception for producing a composite data signal (at 35), and means (29) jointly responsive to said second data signal and to said composite data signal for generating a representation of said first data signal (at 33), wherein simultaneous transmission and coherent reception are provided by the transceiver using the same laser structure for both operations.
2. A transceiver as claimed in claim 1 including means (31) responsive to electrical signals from the first electrode for correcting offset of an operating frequency of the laser structure by applying a predetermined electrical signal to the second electrode (22), so that said first and second lightwave signals are substantially equally offset



with respect to their transmission frequencies.

3. A transceiver as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein said electrical signal variations are frequency modulated, and said composite signal producing means includes a discriminator (26) for frequency demodulating said electrical signal variations.
4. A transceiver as claimed in claim 1, 2, or 3 wherein the semiconductor laser structure is a distributed Bragg reflector laser structure having a gain section and a Bragg section coupled optically to said gain section, each section including an electrode (22,23) for individually controlling the section, said gain section being biassable electrically above a lasing threshold via the electrode (23) for heterodyne reception in said distributed Bragg reflector laser structure of said first lightwave signal, and said second data signal being supplied to said Bragg section via the electrode of the Bragg section.

Patentansprüche

1. Lichtwellen-Sendeempfänger (20), der unter Ansprechen auf ein erstes Lichtwellensignal (von 32) ein erstes Datensignal (bei 33) und unter getrenntem Ansprechen auf ein zweites Datensignal (bei 27) ein zweites Lichtwellensignal erzeugt, mit einer Halbleiter-Laserstruktur (21), die über eine erste und eine zweite Elektrode (22, 23) steuerbar ist und elektrisch oberhalb eines Laserschwellenwertes über die erste Elektrode (23) vorspannbar ist, um das erste Lichtwellensignal in der Halbleiter-Laserstruktur heterodyn empfangen wird, wobei das zweite Datensignal über die zweite Elektrode (22) an die Halbleiterlaserstruktur geliefert wird, eine Einrichtung (25, 26) mit der ersten Elektrode verbunden ist und auf elektrische Signaländerungen anspricht, die im wesentlichen durch den heterodynen Empfang verursacht werden, um ein zusammengesetztes Datensignal (bei 35) zu erzeugen, und eine Einrichtung (29) vorgesehen ist, die gemeinsam auf das zweite Datensignal und das zusammengesetzte Datensignal anspricht, um eine Darstellung des ersten Datensignals (bei 33) zu erzeugen, wobei eine gleichzeitige Übertragung und ein kohärenter Empfang durch den Sendeempfänger unter Verwendung der gleichen Laserstruktur für beide Operationen ermöglicht wird.
2. Sendeempfänger nach Anspruch 1 mit einer Einrichtung (31), die unter Ansprechen auf elektrische Signale von der ersten Elektrode ein Abwandern einer Betriebsfrequenz der Laserstruktur durch Anlegen eines vorbestimmten elektri-

schen Signals an die zweite Elektrode (22) korrigiert, so daß das erste und das zweite Lichtwellensignal im wesentlichen die gleiche Versetzung mit Bezug auf ihre Übertragungsfrequenzen aufweist.

3. Sendeempfänger nach Anspruch 1 der 2, bei dem die elektrischen Signaländerungen frequenzmoduliert sind und die Erzeugungseinrichtung für das zusammengesetzte Signal einen Diskriminator (26) zur Frequenzdemodulation der elektrischen Signaländerungen aufweist.
4. Sendeempfänger nach Anspruch 1, 2 oder 3, bei dem die Halbleiterlaserstruktur eine verteilte Bragg-Reflektorlaserstruktur mit einem Verstärkungsabschnitt und einem Bragg-Abschnitt ist, der optisch mit dem Verstärkungsabschnitt gekoppelt ist, jeder Abschnitt eine Elektrode (22, 23) zur individuellen Steuerung des Abschnitts besitzt, der Verstärkungsabschnitt elektrisch oberhalb eines Laserschwellenwertes über die Elektrode (23) vorspannbar ist, um einen Heterodyn-Empfang des ersten Lichtwellensignals in der verteilten Bragg-Reflektorlaserstruktur zu ermöglichen, und wobei das zweite Datensignal an den Bragg-Abschnitt über die Elektrode dieses Abschnitts zugeführt wird.

Revendications

1. Emetteur-récepteur optique (20) sensible à un premier signal optique (de 32) afin de générer un premier signal de données (en 33) et sensible séparément à un second signal de données (en 27) afin de générer un second signal optique, ledit émetteur-récepteur optique comprenant une structure laser à semi-conducteur (21) pouvant être commandée au moyen des première et seconde électrodes (22, 23) et pouvant être polarisée électriquement au-dessus d'un seuil d'émission laser via la première électrode (23) pour une réception hétérodyne dudit premier signal optique dans ladite structure laser à semi-conducteur, ledit second signal de données étant fourni à ladite structure laser à semi-conducteur via la seconde électrode (22), un moyen (25, 26) connecté à la première électrode et sensible à des variations de signal électrique provoquées en substance par ladite réception hétérodyne afin de produire un signal de données composite (en 35), et un moyen (29) sensible à la fois audit second signal de données et audit signal de données composite afin de générer une représentation dudit premier signal de données (en 33), dans lequel l'émission et la réception cohérente simultanées sont assurées par l'émetteur-récep-



teur en utilisant la même structure laser pour les deux opérations.

2. Emetteur-récepteur suivant la revendication 1, comprenant un moyen (31) sensible à des signaux électriques provenant de la première électrode afin de corriger le décalage d'une fréquence de fonctionnement de la structure laser en appliquant un signal électrique prédéterminé à la seconde électrode (22), de sorte que lesdits premier et second signaux optiques sont décalés en substance de manière égale par rapport à leurs fréquences de transmission. 5 10

3. Emetteur-récepteur suivant la revendication 1 ou 2, dans lequel lesdites variations de signal électrique sont modulées en fréquence, et ledit moyen de production du signal composite comprend un discriminateur (26) afin de démoduler en fréquence lesdites variations de signal électrique. 15 20

4. Emetteur-récepteur suivant la revendication 1, 2 ou 3, dans lequel la structure laser à semi-conducteur est une structure laser à réflecteur de Bragg distribué présentant une section de gain et une section de Bragg couplée optiquement à ladite section de gain, chaque section comprenant une électrode (22, 23) afin de commander individuellement la section, ladite section de gain pouvant être polarisée électriquement au-dessus d'un seuil d'émission laser via l'électrode (23) pour une réception hétérodyne, dans ladite structure laser à réflecteur de Bragg distribué, dudit premier signal optique, et ledit second signal de données étant fourni à ladite section de Bragg via l'électrode de la section de Bragg. 25 30 35

40

45

50

55

5