

Characteristics of InP/InGaAs HPT-based Optically Injection-Locked Self-oscillating Optoelectronic Mixers and Their Influence on RoF System Performance

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Abstract

A 30GHz optically injection-locked self-oscillating optoelectronic mixer (OIL-SOM) is implemented with a high-performance InP/InGaAs heterojunction phototransistor. The sub-harmonic conversion efficiency and phase noise characteristics of OIL-SOM are investigated and used for analyzing OIL-SOM-based 60GHz radio-on-fiber downlink data transmission performance. The OIL-SOM characteristics provide lower and upper boundaries for the input optical LO power range within which the link performance does not significantly depend on input optical LO power.

Index Terms: heterojunction phototransistor (HPT), optically injection-locked self-oscillating optoelectronic mixer (OIL-SOM), phase noise, conversion efficiency, 60GHz, radio-on-fiber system, optical LO power.

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I. Introduction

There is a growing need for millimeter-wave wireless data transmission systems having very wide bandwidth. Millimeter-wave wireless networks should have small cell sizes since millimeter-waves have high transmission loss in air. While the small cell size can offer effective frequency reusability and low power consumption, it requires a large number of base stations. Radio-on-fiber systems is an attractive candidate for millimeter-wave wireless networks, because they can connect a large number of base stations to one central station having centralized functions through fiber, which can support low loss and wide bandwidth transmission.

Among several approaches for realizing radio-on-fiber systems, the remote up-conversion scheme with optical LO distribution is attracting much attention [1]-[2]. In this scheme, data are transmitted from central station to base stations in the optical immediate frequency (IF) and frequency up-converted to the desired radio frequency (RF) with the optically distributed LO signal, thus eliminating the need for phase-locked oscillators in base stations. Furthermore, the optical LO signal provided by central station can be shared among many base stations. InP-based heterojunction phototransistors (HPTs) can be used as optoelectronic mixers in this scheme because they can simultaneously perform photo-detection of optical LO and data signals, and frequency mixing of them [2]-[3]. HPTs are fully compatible to monolithic microwave integrated circuit (MMIC) technology [4]-[5], allowing the possibility of the system-on-chip solution for the entire base-station including power amplifier (PA) and band-pass-filter (BPF) except the antenna.

Although the remote up-conversion scheme with optical LO and HPT optoelectronic mixer has the potential to simplify base station architecture, the required optical LO

power for efficient frequency up-conversion can be very high, and the variation of delivered optical LO power due to differences in the distance between central and base stations can seriously affect system performance. The HPT-based optically injection-locked self-oscillating optoelectronic mixer (OIL-SOM) [6]-[7] can be a solution for these problems because the output power of the optically injection locked oscillator [8]-[9] does not directly depend on the injected optical LO power. Using the OIL-SOM as a harmonic optoelectronic mixer, we have successfully demonstrated 30GHz and 60GHz RoF downlink transmission of 20Mbps 16QAM data [6]-[7]. In the 60GHz RoF downlink demonstration, we observed that the link performance does not significantly change with the optical LO power when the input optical LO power is in a range from -11dBm to 0dBm [7]. In this paper, we report the characteristics of phase noises and optoelectronic mixing efficiencies for the HPT-based 60GHz harmonic OIL-SOM at various optical LO power levels. Then, we analyze the influence of these characteristics on the link performance of OIL-SOM-based RoF downlink transmission.

II. Operation Principle and Characteristics

Using a high performance InP/InGaAs HPT having 70nm-thick undoped InP emitter, 50nm carbon-doped InGaAs base and 300nm-thick InGaAs collector, we implemented a hybrid-type HPT oscillator operating in 30GHz. The HPT has responsivity of 0.2A/W at PD-mode when the base-emitter terminal is shorted. The electrical current gain cutoff frequency and the maximum oscillation frequency of this HPT are 153GHz and 94GHz, respectively [10]. Because the HPT has sufficient gain of 14dB at 30GHz, a free-running HPT oscillator can be implemented with a simple feedback loop connecting the collector and base ports through a 30GHz bandpass filter having Quality Factor of 100 as shown in Fig. 1. The oscillator also produces harmonic signals at the 60GHz band and our investigation is focused on 60GHz signals as we are interested in using the OIL-SOM for 60GHz applications.

When 30GHz optical LO generated in central station is injected into the HPT, it can injection-lock the free-running oscillator and significantly improve the phase noise characteristics. The resulting spectrum of optically injection locked 60GHz LO signal with 0dBm optical LO is shown in Fig. 1. The inset in Fig. 2 shows the single-sideband phase noise characteristics of 60GHz LO. Significant reduction in phase noises due to injection-locking can be observed especially in the low frequency offset range. Fig. 2 also shows the phase noise at 10KHz and 100KHz offset frequencies measured at various optical LO powers. When the optical LO power is higher than -10dBm, low phase-noise characteristics are maintained. However, when the optical LO power is lower than -10dBm, the HPT oscillator becomes unlocked and the phase noise increases rapidly. In addition, the injection locking range of HPT oscillator depends on the injected optical LO power. The locking range is defined as a frequency range within

which the oscillator is synchronized to the optical LO. Figure 3 shows the increase in the locking range with the incident optical LO power. The small locking range is due to the high Q-factor (about 100) of BPF used in our experiment. A reduced Q-factor BPF or an MMIC oscillator can produce a much larger locking range.

Fig. 4 shows the experimental set-up used for characterizing harmonic mixing characteristics of OIL-SOM. Optical IF signals are generated by direct modulation of a DFB LD with 100MHz IF signals. Then, the optical IF signals are combined with optical LO generated by the double sideband suppressed carrier method [11] and, after 10km transmission in single-mode fiber, injected into the HPT inside OIL-SOM. Injected optical IF signals are first photo-detected and then mixed with LO signals. As a result, we can obtain harmonically frequency up-converted RF signals in the 60GHz band whose spectrum is shown in inset of Fig. 4. Figure 5 shows the internal conversion gain of OIL-SOM as a function of delivered optical LO power when the input optical IF power is -6dBm. The internal conversion gain is defined as the power ratio of the frequency up-converted RF signals to the photo-detected IF signal power measured in PD-mode, as schematically shown in Fig. 5. Measured conversion gain is independent of optical LO power, because the output power of OIL-SOM does not directly depend on the injected optical LO power. When the optical LO power becomes larger than 1dBm, however, the conversion efficiency decreases. This is because the saturation effect of HPT under high power optical illumination lowers oscillation power of the HPT oscillator and degrades the conversion efficiency.

The performance of OIL-SOM as an optoelectronic mixer was investigated by injecting 20Mbps 16QAM optical data into the mixer along with optical LO, up-converting them into the 60GHz, and then evaluating the resulting EVMs (Error Vector

Magnitudes) of down-converted baseband signals. The details of down-conversion and demodulation methods can be found in our previous work [7]. The EVMs were measured as a function of input optical LO power when the optical IF power was fixed at -6dBm. As shown in Fig. 6, as long as injected optical LO power to OIL-SOM is in the range from -11dBm to 0dBm, the EVMs do not significantly change with the optical LO power. This is because the phase noise characteristics and conversion efficiencies of OIL-SOM do not change much with the incident optical LO power in this range. Reducing optical LO power below -11dBm causes a rapid increase in EVM since the phase noise degrades due to unlocking of OIL-SOM. When the optical LO power increases over 0dBm, the EVM slowly increases because the conversion efficiency of OIL-SOM decreases due to high power optical illumination. Overall, OIL-SOM provides uniform link performance over the larger than 10dB optical LO power range, which corresponds to substantial margin in system design to accommodate fiber length and other variations.

III. Conclusion

We implemented a 30GHz hybrid-type OIL-SOM based on a high performance InP/InGaAs HPT. It has low phase-noise characteristics and provides efficient optoelectronic frequency up-conversion at 60GHz. Once the input optical LO power is larger than -11dBm, the phase noise of OIL-SOM is maintained below -85dBc/Hz @100-kHz offset independent of optical LO power. The conversion efficiency of OIL-SOM does not depend on optical LO power as long as the optical power is lower than 0dBm. These phase noise and conversion characteristics provide the lower and upper boundaries of optical LO power within which the OIL-SOM-employed RoF downlink transmission system can have uniform link performance.

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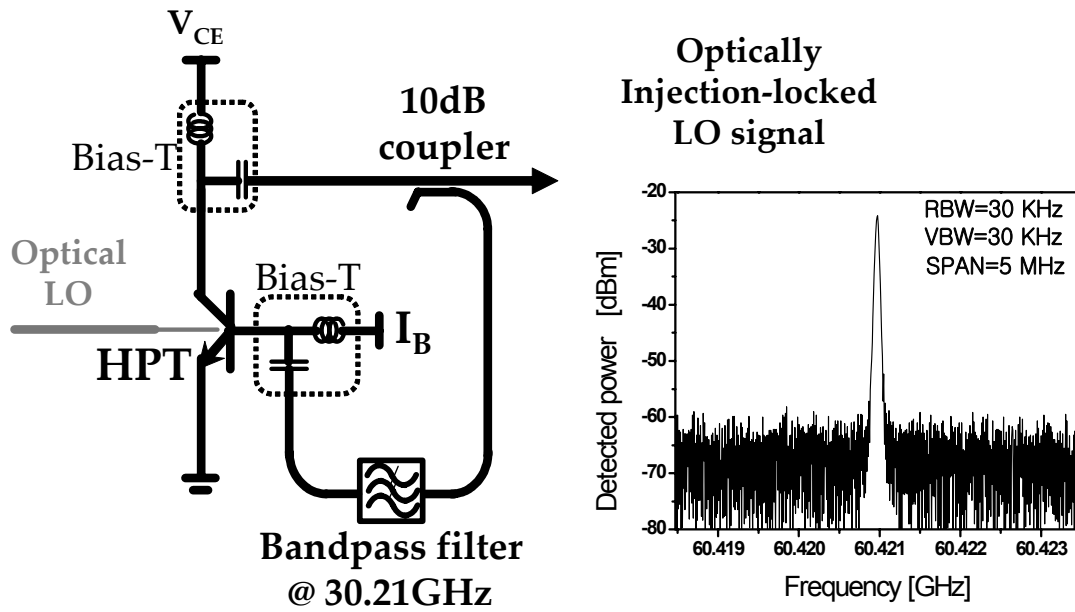


Figure 1. Schematic diagram of HPT-based OIL-SOM

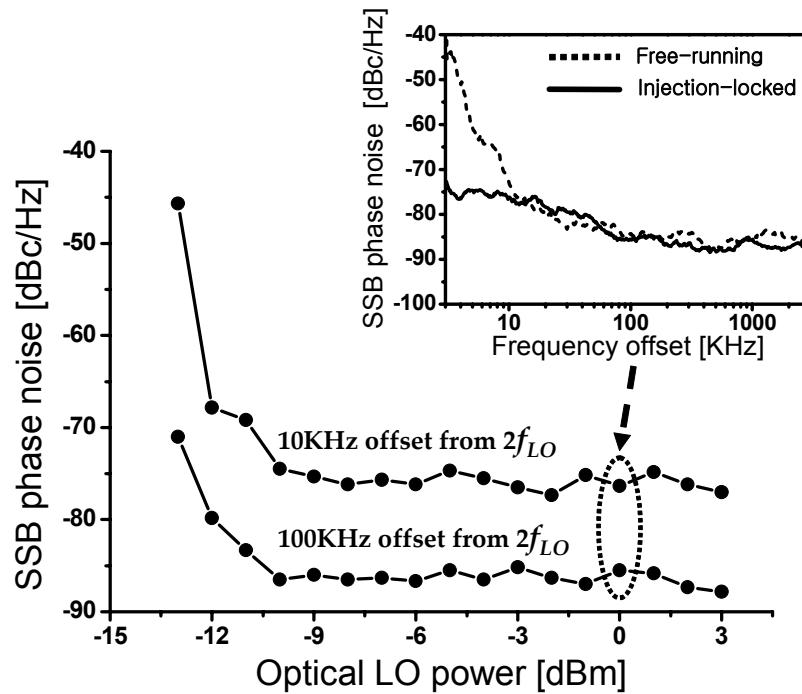


Figure 2. Single-sideband phase noise of optically injection-locked oscillator as a function of optical LO power

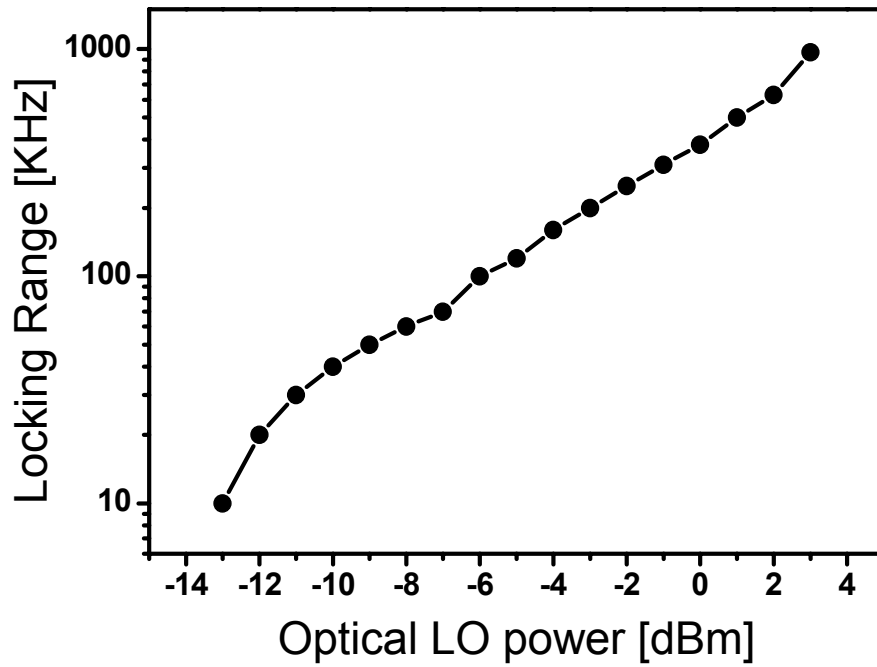


Figure 3. Locking range of optically injection-locked oscillator as a function of optical LO power

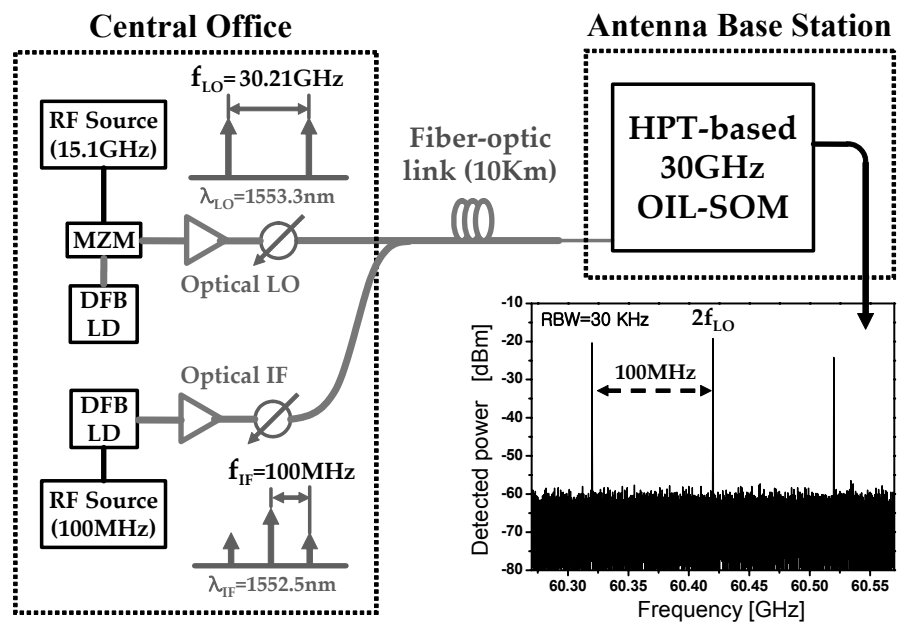


Figure 4. Base station architecture using HPT-based OIL-SOM

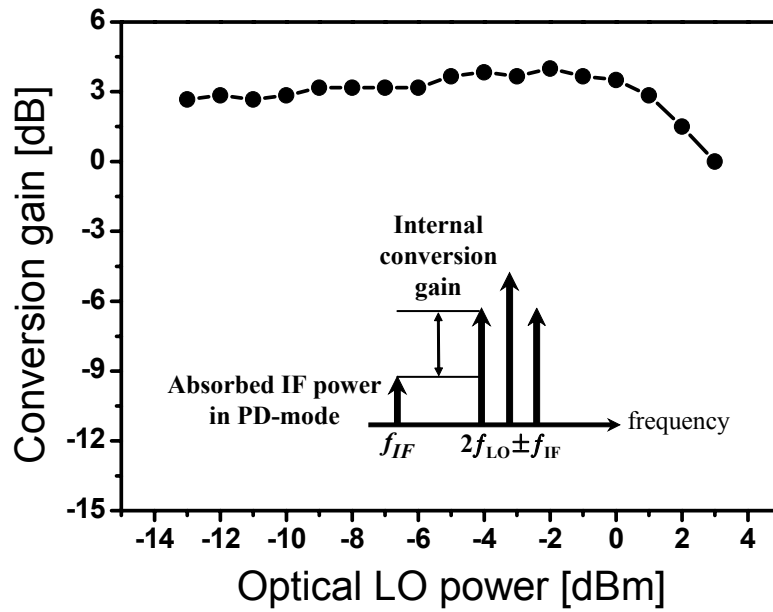


Figure 5. Internal conversion gain of OIL-SOM as a function of optical LO power

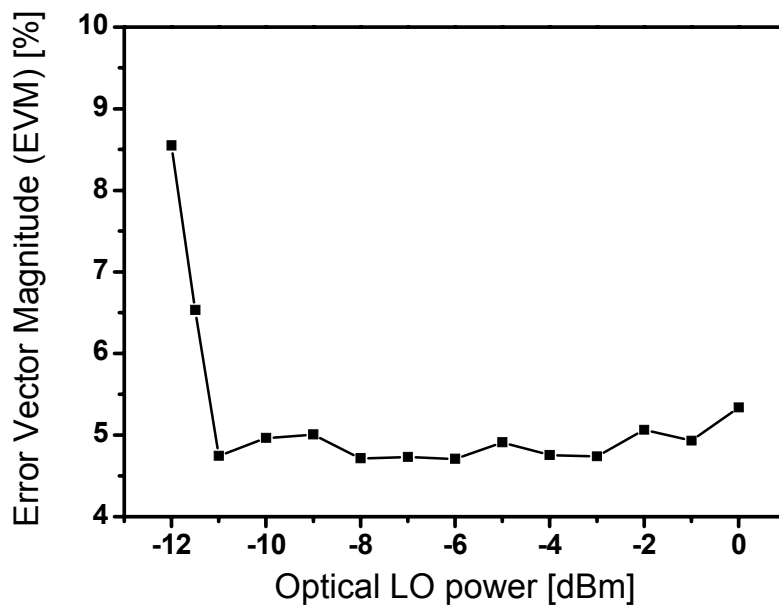


Figure 6. Error vector magnitude (EVM) as a function of optical LO power