

## 微环发光二极管通信探测一体化研究

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**摘要** 面向 6G 无线通信感知一体化技术, 提出、制造并表征了基于 GaN 微环形状的多量子阱(MQW)二极管。基于二极管发光光谱和响应光谱重叠的物理现象, 微环发光二极管(MR-LED)具有多功能性, 可以同时发光探测, 实现通信探测一体化。作为一个发光源, MR-LED 能够实现片外 150 Mbit/s 开关键控调制方式的数据传输。同时通过 MATLAB 软件处理, MR-LED 能够实现光无线图像数据传输。作为接收端, 无论 MR-LED 是否在发光状态, MR-LED 在不同的偏置电压下都能检测自由空间光信号。MR-LED 用于通信探测一体化, 可实现空间全双工通信, 促进微型高速可见光通信系统的发展。

**关键词** 光通信; 多层量子阱二极管; 微环发光二极管; 同时发光探测

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## 1 引言

自可见光通信的概念被提出后, 有关可见光通信的新概念、新技术层出不穷, 可见光通信技术发展迅速<sup>[1-2]</sup>, 成为国际研究热点。如何提高传输速率、传输距离和设备利用率是目前可见光通信系统的主流研究方向。金属有机化学气相沉积(MOCVD)技术的发展, 推动各种高性能 III 族氮化物器件相继问世<sup>[3-4]</sup>, 而高亮度蓝光二极管<sup>[5]</sup>更是加快了微型发光二极管(micro-LED)的发展。随着 LED 研发技术的不断创新和发展<sup>[6-8]</sup>, GaN-LED 因尺寸小、亮度高、调制带宽窄、相干性低等特点, 在可见光通信方面获得了相当大的关注<sup>[9-11]</sup>。目前, 国内外报道的高速可见光通信系统大多采用 InGaN/GaN 量子阱有源区。2016 年, 国外 Dawson 课题组<sup>[12]</sup>通过改进加工技术制备出的 micro-LED 在 16 kA/cm<sup>2</sup> 电流密度的驱动下实现了 830 MHz 的 -3 dB 调制带宽; 2021 年, 国内复旦大学迟楠教授课题组<sup>[13]</sup>在硅衬底上制备了 4×4 多色波分复用 LED 阵列芯片, 将该芯片用于数据传输实验时传输速率高达 24.25 Gbit/s。micro-LED 不仅可作为发射源, 还可作为接收端。2022 年, 迟楠教授课题组<sup>[14]</sup>利用 50 μm 尺寸的硅衬底垂直结构 micro-LED 制作微型探测器, 在 1 m 距离内能够实现 10.14 Gbit/s 的数据传输速率。尽管对高速 micro-LED 的研究已经历时十余年, 但是所报道的高速 micro-LED 仍仅能实现光发射或者光接

收。对于面向未来的 6G 光无线通信感知一体化技术<sup>[15]</sup>来说, 如何利用 micro-LED 融合无线通信和无线感知来实现通信探测一体化是研究面临的难题之一。

GaN 基光电器件具有发射、传输、调制和探测的能力, 近几年在可见光区集成光电器件领域中引起了极大的关注<sup>[16-19]</sup>。在本课题组早期的工作中, 制备了两个相同的多量子阱(MQW)二极管, 向两端发送不同的信号, 通过自干扰消除法提取出信号, 实现了片内全双工通信<sup>[20]</sup>。片内 p-n 结二极管以及波导的集成实现了片内通信与探测一体化, 提高了系统集成度。

为在空间上实现通信探测一体化的可见光通信系统, 本文在硅晶圆上采用 InGaN/AlGaN 多量子阱有源层制备出近紫外微环发光二极管(MR-LED)。设计的 MR-LED 可作为发射器, 实现片外高速可见光通信; 同时也可作为探测器, 通过外部激光照射 MR-LED, 实现空间同步发光、光检测。实验证明, 制备的多功能 MR-LED 既可以同时发光探测, 也可以促进可见光全双工通信的发展, 并且其通信探测一体化的特点在未来也将推动智慧交通、医疗健康、智能工厂等众多领域的发展。

## 2 MR-LED 制备流程

采用 MOCVD 技术制备 MR-LED 的晶圆, 如图 1(a) 所示, 在 2 inch(5.08 cm) 硅衬底(111)晶面上由下到上依次生长 750 nm 厚的 AlN/AlGaN 多层缓冲层、

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1030 nm 厚的 n 型 GaN 层、2450 nm 厚的 n 型 Si 掺杂 AlGaIn 接触层、750 nm 厚的 Si 掺杂 AlGaIn 包覆层、80 nm 厚的 Si 掺杂 GaN 波导层、52 nm 厚的 InGaIn/AlGaIn 多量子阱有源层、7 nm 厚的 AlGaIn 最后一层量子势垒(LQB)层、60 nm 厚的 GaN 波导层、20 nm 厚的 Mg 掺杂 AlGaIn 电子阻挡层(EBL)、500 nm 厚的

Mg 掺杂 AlGaIn 包覆层、25 nm 厚的 p 型 Mg 掺杂 GaIn 接触层。如图 1(b)的多量子阱有源区透射电子显微镜图所示,多量子阱有源层是由 InGaIn 和 AlGaIn 周期性生长得到的,周期数为 4,并且多量子阱有源层上下均有分离限制异质结构波导层,以限制量子阱有源区侧向发光。

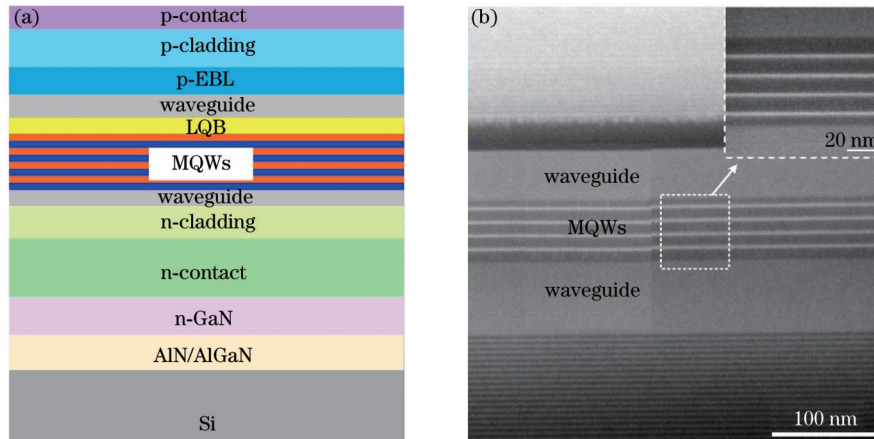


图 1 晶圆层结构。(a)横截面结构示意图;(b)InGaIn/AlGaIn 多量子阱有源区横截面透射电子显微镜图

Fig. 1 Layer structure of the wafer. (a) Schematic of the cross-sectional structure; (b) cross-sectional transmission electron microscopy image of InGaIn/AlGaIn multiple quantum well active region

MR-LED 制备过程采用标准的半导体制备工艺。制造工艺示意图如图 2(a)所示。1)在 p 接触层上蒸发一层金属电极(20 nm Ni/100 nm Au 金属薄膜),使用快速热退火工艺形成低阻值的欧姆接触。2)通过光刻定义电极形状,剥离多余的金属电极,保留 p 电极,用离子束刻蚀 p 型包覆层,刻蚀出高为 720 nm 的隔离台面。3)该器件通过光刻定义出 p 电极区域,并通过使用  $\text{Cl}_2$  和  $\text{BCl}_3$  混合气体的电感耦合等离子体中的反应离子进行蚀刻,一直刻蚀到 n 接触层。4)利用等离子体增强化学气相沉积技术沉积一层 200 nm 厚的  $\text{SiO}_2$ ,通过光刻,并使用氟化氢和氟化铵混合缓冲氧化物来刻蚀  $\text{SiO}_2$  薄膜层,使器件的侧壁钝化,从而降低漏电流。5)蒸发用于探针接触的金属电极层(50 nm Ti/100 nm Pt / 500 nm Au 金属薄膜)并使用剥离工艺制成 n 电极接触层和 p 电极接触层,至此晶圆加工完成。

图 2(b)所示为利用扫描电子显微镜(SEM)从正面观察到的 MR-LED 的形貌特征,为方便后续的扎针或引线测试,制备了 2 个  $100 \mu\text{m} \times 100 \mu\text{m}$  方形 n 型电极和 1 个 p 型电极,圆环形电极宽度为  $5 \mu\text{m}$ 。LED 的 -3 dB 带宽近似计算公式<sup>[21]</sup>为

$$f_{-3\text{dB}} = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2\pi} \left( \frac{1}{\tau_{\text{DLT}}} + \frac{1}{\tau_{\text{RC}}} \right). \quad (1)$$

由式(1)可知,LED 的 -3 dB 调制带宽与微分载流子寿命  $\tau_{\text{DLT}}$  和电阻-电容(RC)电路的时间常数  $\tau_{\text{RC}}$  有关。基于 III 族氮化物的发光二极管的 RC 时间常数与器件台面尺寸密切相关,可以通过减小台面尺寸来改善频率响应,所以电极宽度为  $5 \mu\text{m}$  的 MR-LED 很容

易达到高注入电流密度。可见,该电极宽度的 MR-LED 具有优异的频率响应特性,在高速可见光通信系统中可作为发射源,提高系统速率。

### 3 MR-LED 光电性能表征

将器件放置在探针台上,在 p 和 n 两个电极上分别扎直流探针,使用安捷伦 B1500A 半导体参数仪进行测试,得到 MR-LED 的电流-电压曲线。从图 3(a)可以看出,MR-LED 的开启电压为 2.8 V,图 3(a)插图所示为二极管在 6 mA 电流驱动下的光斑,器件光斑呈圆环形,并且亮度均匀、稳定。加偏置电压后,改变了内部电场,从而也改变了量子势阱,将电子注入多量子阱有源层,产生电子-空穴对,因此多量子阱二极管能发出宽光谱的光。如图 3(b)所示,二极管在不同电流的驱动下,电致发光光谱强度随着注入电流的增加而增大,发光中心波长为 379.4 nm。所以,p-n 结二极管除了可以用来照明,当电流快速改变、其发光强度可控时,也可以用于可见光无线通信。

作为双功能器件,InGaIn/AlGaIn 多量子阱二极管不仅可以作为光源,还可以吸收光子以释放电子-空穴对,用作探测器。图 4 为二极管电致发光光谱图与光谱响应图,光谱响应图通过 Oriel IQE-200 B 量子效率测试系统的单色光照明探测设备测得,测量的波长范围为 320~450 nm,在波长为 335 nm 时探测响应达到峰值。从结果来看,InGaIn/AlGaIn 量子阱结构二极管的发光光谱和探测光谱在 366~386 nm 重叠,所以在 20 nm 的重叠范围内,量子阱二极管既能发光,又能吸

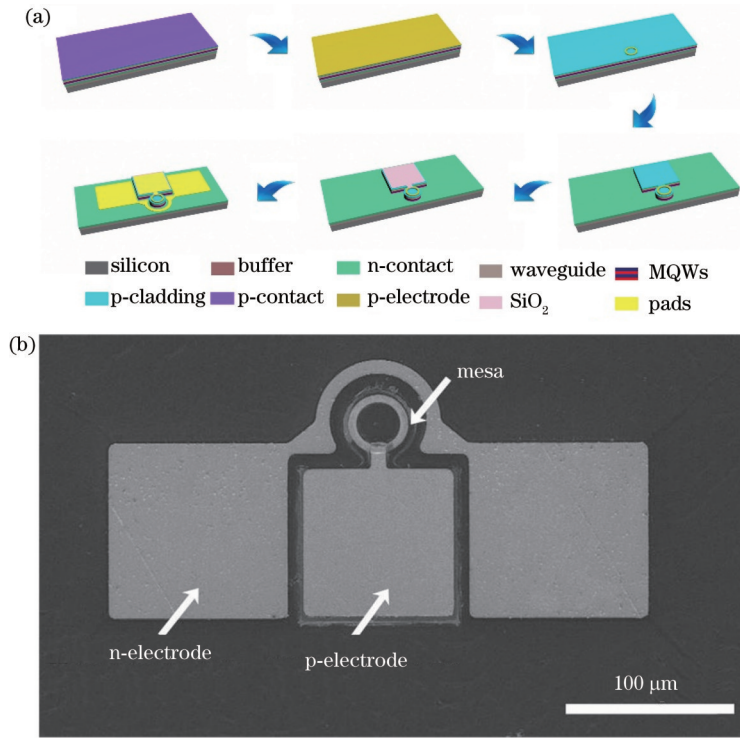


图 2 MR-LED 制备流程及形貌图。(a) 制备示意图;(b)SEM 图

Fig. 2 Preparation process and morphology of MR-LED. (a) Schematic illustration of the fabrication; (b) SEM image

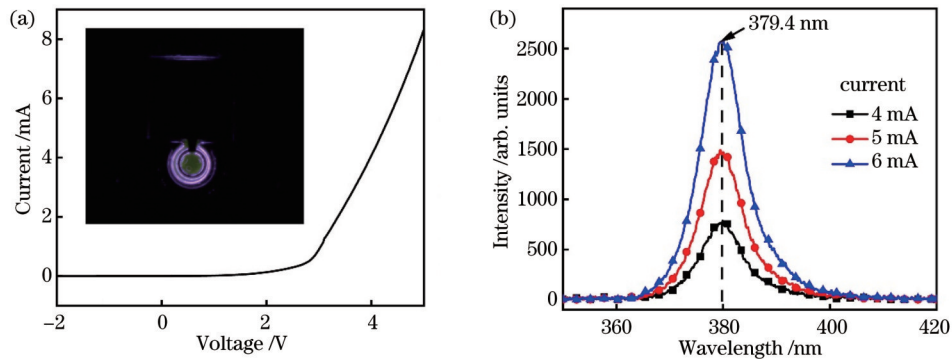


图 3 MR-LED 光电性能。(a)MR-LED 电流-电压关系,插图为 6 mA 电流驱动下的 MR-LED 光斑;(b) MR-LED 电致发光曲线

Fig. 3 Photoelectric performance of MR-LED. (a) Current-voltage curve of MR-LED, inset shows MR-LED spot driven by 6 mA current; (b) electroluminescence curves of MR-LED

收这个波段的光,因此 MR-LED 发出短波长的光会被其本身吸收以产生光电流。在 LED 发光的同时,LED 吸收了外部高能光子,产生电子-空穴对,导致 p-n 结内部电压发生变化,这时会产生同时发光探测的现象,这使得 MR-LED 实现空间全双工通信成为可能。

#### 4 MR-LED 通信性能表征

当快速改变 LED 的电流强度时,LED 光电转换发出明暗闪烁的光信号来传递信息,实现可见光通信。用安捷伦网络分析仪 E8190A 测出微环二极管的频率响应、偏置电压(4.4 V)和网络分析仪输出的扫频信号,然后经偏置三通注入到 MR-LED,如图 5(a)所示,MR-LED 的 -3 dB 截止带宽为 66.8 MHz。MR-LED

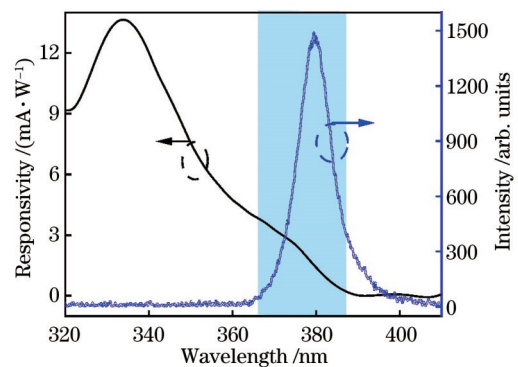


图 4 LED 电致发光光谱与多量子阱二极管响应曲线

Fig. 4 Electroluminescence spectrum of the LED and the response curve of the LED

正负电极通过引线机引至外围电路板上,方便通信性能表征。LED的发光强度取决于注入电流的大小,当增加驱动电压时,输出光功率增大。采用任意波形信号发生器给二极管加载偏置电压为 5.6 V、峰峰值为 1.2 V、速率为 150 Mbit/s 的伪随机序列信号,器件发

出的光信号通过光学透镜聚焦到滨松 C12702-11 商用探测器上,探测器将接收的光信号转换为电信号,并经是德 DSOS604A 示波器显示。发送、接收的信号如图 5(b)所示,眼图如图 5(c)所示。从图 5(c)可以看出,眼图形状清晰可见。

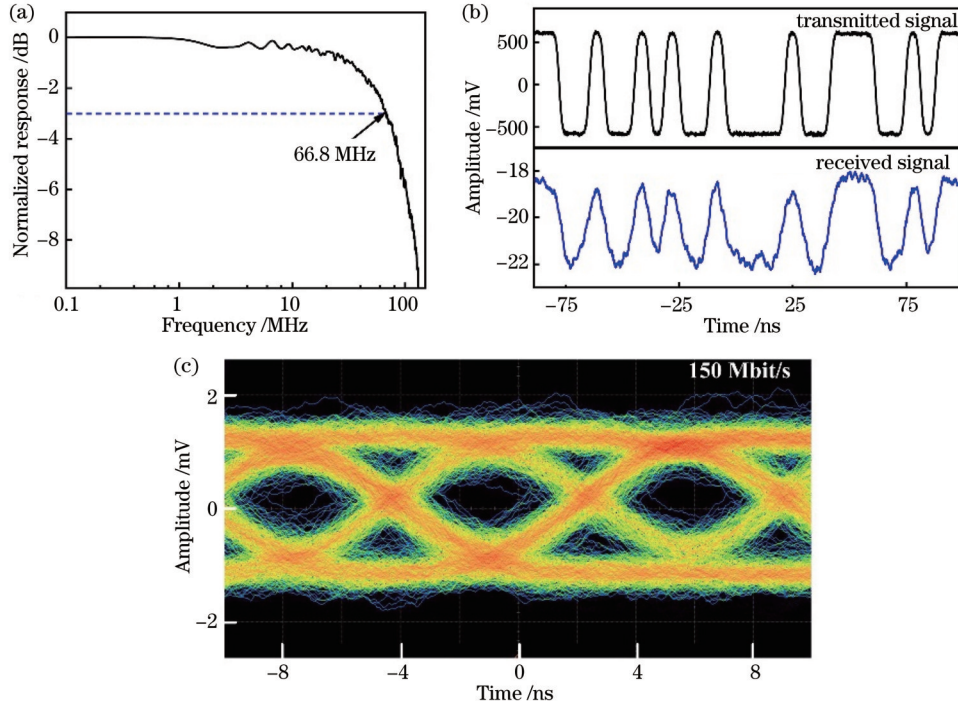


图 5 MR-LED 作为发射端的通信性能表征。(a) -3 dB 频率响应;(b) 以 150 Mbit/s 的传输速率发送和接收的伪随机序列信号;(c) 150 Mbit/s 的眼图

Fig. 5 Characterization of communication performance of MR-LED as transmitter. (a) -3 dB frequency response; (b) transmitted and received pseudo-random binary sequence data at transmission rate of 150 Mbit/s; (c) eye diagram at 150 Mbit/s

MR-LED 能够作为通信系统中的发射端传递信号,传输的信息可以为语音、图像、视频等形式,如图 6(a)所示,设计了基于 MR-LED 的光无线图像数据传输系统。利用 MATLAB 编写实现光无线图像传输的调制解调代码:首先,在 MATLAB 中读取图像,通过 im2b 函数将图像二值化并输出  $256 \times 256$  的逻辑矩阵;然后,通过 reshape 函数将矩阵转换为一维数组,这个一维数组通过任意波形信号发生器输出非归零开关键控信号,再通过偏置与直流信号合为一路信号,驱动 MR-LED 发出调制光;最后,由商用探测器接收光信号,接收到的信号通过放大器后,在输出到示波器上显示眼图的同时在 MATLAB 中判决解调信号,还原出图像。在接收到信号后,将信号数组输入到 MATLAB 中,该信号数组中包括多组图像信号,选取其中一组图像信号进行判决,将接收的信号转换为一维逻辑数组,通过 reshape 函数将一维逻辑数组转换成  $256 \times 256$  的矩阵,最后通过 inshow 函数显示并还原出接收的图像。系统接收信号的眼图如图 6(b)所示,原始和还原后的图像如图 6(c)、(d)所示。图像通过 MR-LED 传输后,放大信号被保存后输入 MATLAB,

不仅可以解调还原图像,还能计算误码率。基带传输系统接收端的最佳判决电平是由最小接收误码决定的。误码率计算公式为

$$P_e = \frac{N_e}{N}, \quad (2)$$

式中: $N_e$  为出错的位数; $N$  为传输的二进制总位数。biterr 函数可以根据误码率计算公式以及接收信号和发射信号数组,计算出最小误码率为  $3.47 \times 10^{-3}$ ,此时最佳判决门限为 3.5 mV。光无线图像传输系统在最佳判决条件下,接收端信号眼图“眼睛”清晰可见,且最小误码率小于  $3.8 \times 10^{-3}$ ,这满足前向纠错误码率门限。从图 6 也可看出,还原图像和原始图像对比未有较大失真。在未来可见光通信中,micro-LED 占较大市场份额,通过光子实现信息传输,能够有效地提高频率利用率。

光电探测器作为人类感知和获取光波信息的重要工具,能够将接收的光信号转换为电信号,从而实现对光信号的感知。当 InGaN/AlGaIn 量子阱二极管作为探测器时,光电二极管受到光辐射后,产生光生载流子,形成光电流。当光电二极管加载负电压时,光生电

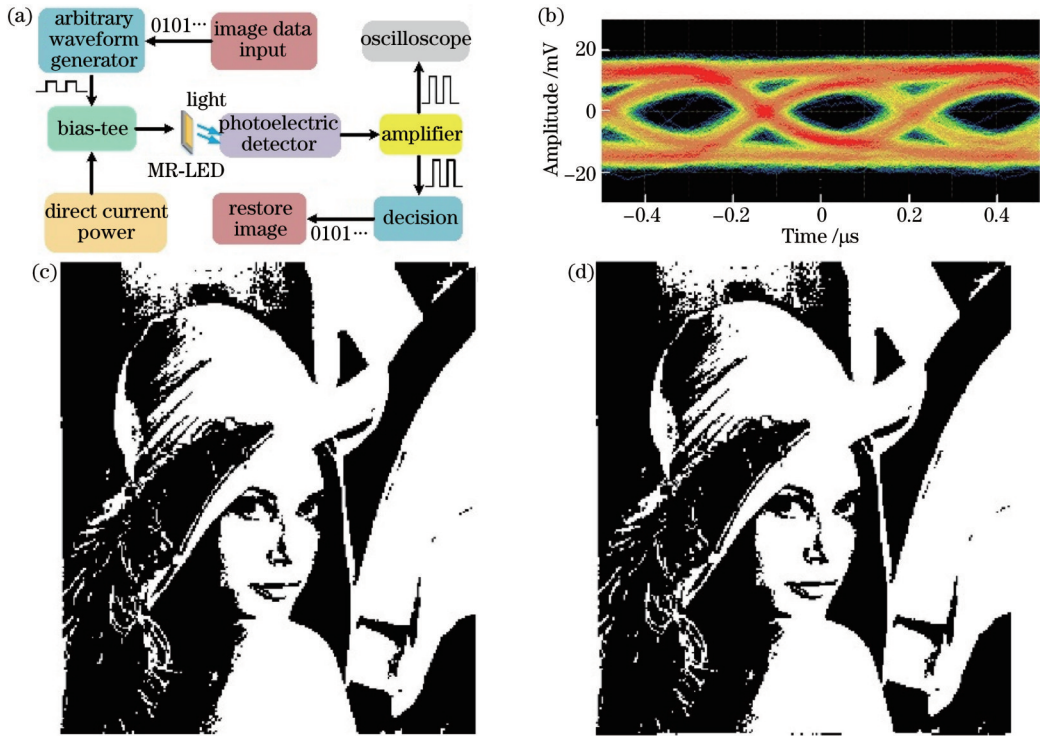


图 6 光无线图像传输系统示意图及测试结果。(a)系统示意图;(b)放大信号眼图;(c)传输的原始图像;(d)还原的图像  
Fig. 6 Schematic diagram and test result of the optical wireless image transmission. (a) Schematic diagram; (b) eye diagram of the amplified signal; (c) transmitted original image; (d) restored image

子-空穴对迅速分离,此时二极管探测能力增强。MR-LED 在不同负电压下,用波长为 375 nm、强度为 20 mW 的激光器照射,发出频率为 4 kHz 的光信号,如图 7(a)所示。当加载的负电压分别为 -2、-4、-6 V 时,信号幅度分别为 150、280、350 mV。实验结果表明,MR-LED 上加载的偏置负电压增大,使得量子效率增加,响应度提高,MR-LED 接收的信号幅值随之增大。

InGaN/AlGaIn 多量子阱二极管发光谱与探测谱有重叠区域,二极管在短波长处有光电响应,所以 MR-LED 能够实现同时发光探测。当二极管开启且被外部光照射时,二极管同时发光探测,测量的电流是驱动电流和光电流的总和。当给二极管适当的偏置电

压和照明亮度时,光电流与驱动电流是可区分的,能将光电流信号提取出来并进行分析。MR-LED 在 4.15 V 偏置电压的驱动下发出微弱的光,用波长为 375 nm、功率为 20 mW 的激光器发出不同频率的方波信号。当激光照射在 MR-LED 上时,MR-LED 接收的信号如图 7(b)所示。MR-LED 在正偏压下作为光电探测器时,二极管结电容增加,响应速度变慢。当信号频率高于响应速度时,MR-LED 在发光的同时接收到的信号幅度会出现失真。如图 7(b)所示,当外部光信号频率从 1 kHz 增加到 4 kHz 时,MR-LED 接收信号幅度出现失真的现象。通过研究发现,当 InGaN/AlGaIn 多量子阱二极管都处于发光状态时,随着加载在二极管的正向偏置电压的增加,二极管同时发光探测的能

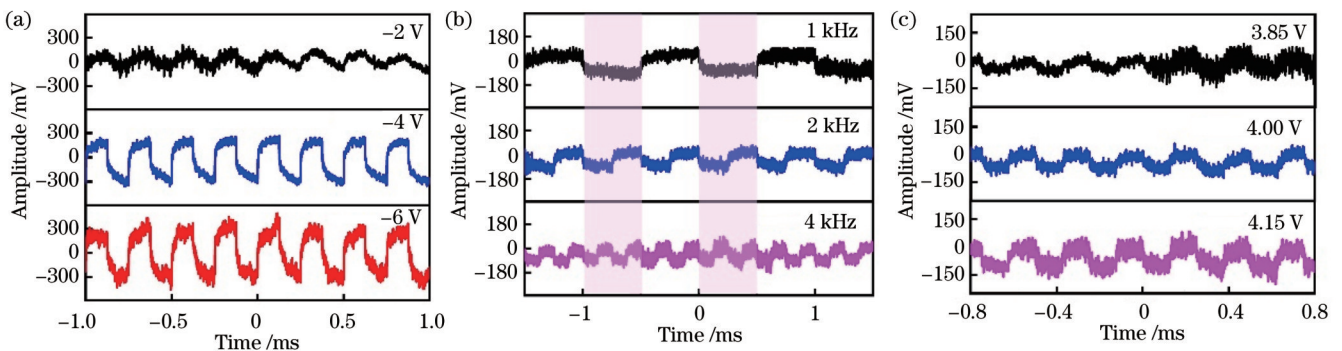


图 7 不同探测模式下 MR-LED 接收的信号。(a) 不同负向偏置电压;(b) 不同激光器频率;(c) 不同正向偏置电压  
Fig. 7 Received signals of MR-LED in different detection modes. (a) Different negative bias voltages; (b) different frequencies of the laser; (c) different forward bias voltages

力有所提高。如图 7(c)所示,MR-LED 在大于开启电压的不同正向偏置电压下,接收波长为 375 nm、功率为 20 mW、频率为 4 kHz 方波激光信号的幅度分别为 38.8、69.9、110.8 mV。

## 5 结 论

制备了硅基 InGaN/AlGaIn 多量子阱二极管,发光波长为 379.4 nm,通过对光电性能的测试,验证了 MR-LED 具备同时发光探测的功能,集通信与探测于一体。通过搭建片外可见光通信系统,MR-LED 实现了速率为 150 Mbit/s 信号传输和光无线图像传输。同时,空间全双工通信的实现验证了 MR-LED 集照明、通信、探测于一体,除了可见光通信外,智慧照明、智能路灯等均可采用 MR-LED,这为物联网时代的万物互联提供了有力支撑。所提光通信系统采用常见的开关调制技术,在此基础上,micro-LED 可以采用高谱效率的先进调制技术,包括一维多阶调制技术脉冲幅度调制、多载波调制技术正交频分复用调制、多维多阶调制技术无载波幅度相位调制等方式,进一步提高可见光通信系统的传输速率,提高系统频带的利用率。

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# Integrated Communication and Detection Micro-Ring Light-Emitting Diodes

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## Abstract

**Objective** Although visible light communication has become a research hotspot, its development continues to focus on how to improve the transmission rate, transmission distance, and equipment utilization. The development of metal organic chemical vapor deposition technology leads to micro-light-emitting diodes (micro-LEDs) and other high-performance III-nitride devices. Compared with the white commercial LEDs, the micro-LED has the advantage of high modulation bandwidth, high brightness, and low coherence in the visible light communication (VLC). A variety of optical wireless transmissions using multiple quantum well LEDs or photodetectors has recently been reported. Considering that miniature high-speed visible light communication using LEDs is a potential complementary technology for dual-functional wireless communication network towards 6G, we propose that GaN-based multiple quantum well (MQW) diodes on the silicon substrate can simultaneously emit and detect light, which in practice can perform transmitting devices and receiving devices simultaneously in the VLC.

**Methods** Based on the schematic of the cross-sectional structure of the InGaN/AlGaIn diodes, we design and fabricate a Si-substrate micro-ring light-emitting diode (MR-LED) using a standard semiconductor process. We begin by evaluating the photoelectrical performance and communication performance of MR-LED. The optoelectronic characteristics of the MR-LED including  $I$ - $V$  relation, electroluminescence, and the response curve of the LED are measured by an Agilent Instrument B1500A source meter and an Oriel Instrument IQE-200 B quantum efficiency system. Subsequently, for characterizing the communication performance, we propose out-of-plane visible light communication where a Hamamatsu C12702-11 photodiode module detects spatial modulated light emission by MR-LED, and the MR-LED pluses its light in coded pseudorandom binary sequence signals or carries image information. The photogenerated electron-hole pairs lead to an induced photocurrent when we employ a 375 nm and 20 mW laser beam to illuminate the MR-LED. We extract the signals detected by MR-LED. When the diode is turned on with external illumination, the measured current is a summation of the driving current and photocurrent. In this situation, the diode simultaneously emits and detects light. When appropriately biased and illuminated, the induced photocurrent is distinguishable from the driving current. We can then extract the photocurrent signal for analysis and implement a spatial full-duplex communication system.

**Results and Discussions** According to the photoelectrical performance of MR-LED, the turn-on voltage of the diode is 2.8 V, and the dominant EL peak is measured at approximately 379.4 nm and an injection current of 5 mA. The overlap area between the luminescence spectrum and the detection spectrum of the MR-LED is 20 nm, which proves that the communication system of simultaneous light transmission and light reception is feasible from an optical point of view (Fig. 4). The MR-LED is observed to provide a  $-3$  dB frequency response exceeding 66.8 MHz, and thus is suitable for high-speed VLC. The external photodiodes detect the spatial light emission to convert the photos back into electrons at a rate of 150 Mbit/s. The KEYSIGHT DSOS604A digital storage oscilloscope shows resolved eye diagrams at the rate of 150 Mbit/s (Fig. 5). In optical wireless image transmission systems, MR-LED emits signals carrying the image information. The signal received by the photodetector is amplified and then restored in MATLAB, and an eye diagram is displayed on the oscilloscope (Fig. 6). As a receiver, the MR-LED based on negative voltage of  $-2$ ,  $-4$ , and  $-6$  V detects the 375 nm laser modulated light signal. The received signal amplitude is around 150, 280, and 350 mV respectively. Therefore, the higher negative bias voltage loaded on the MR-LED leads to better detection performance of the MR-LED. When biased at 4.15 V, the diode as a receiver operating in the simultaneous emission-detection mode can still receive different frequency laser signals. As the frequency of the external light signal increases, the amplitude of the received signal is distorted when the MR-LED is emitting light. The amplitude of the received signal increases from 38.8 mV to 110.8 mV as the  $V_{\text{bias}}$  rises from 3.85 V to 4.15 V (Fig. 7). Above the turn-on voltage of 2.8 V, the increase in the biased voltage slightly influences the amplitude of the received signals. The results show that the MQW-diode can sense light in either the detector or emitter mode, indicating the possibility of spatial full-duplex communication using visible light.

**Conclusions** We propose, fabricate, and characterize GaN-based MQW diodes with micro-ring geometry. Due to the spectral overlap between the emission and absorption spectra, a multifunctional MR-LED allows light emission and detection simultaneously. As a transmitter, the MR-LED demonstrates out-of-plane data transmission at 150 Mbit/s using on-off keying modulation. The optical wireless transmission of image data is also implemented by software processing. As a receiver, whether illuminated or not, the MR-LED can detect free-space optical signals under different bias voltages. The realization of space full-duplex communication shows that the multi-functional MR-LED can reduce material costs and processing costs in a miniature high-speed VLC system.

**Key words** optical communication; multiple quantum well diode; micro-ring light-emitting diode; simultaneous emission detection