Diode Laser Parameters and Characteristics

Wenbo Xie
EE  SMU
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P-I Curve and Related Parameters

The output optical power $P_{out}$ vs. the injection current $I$ can be modified to be

$$P_{out} = \frac{\hbar \omega}{q} \frac{\alpha_m}{\alpha_m + \alpha_i} \eta_i (I - I_{th} - \Delta I_L)$$

where $\Delta I_L$ accounts for any additional increase in the leakage current due to the increase of $I$, $\alpha_i$ is the intrinsic loss, $\alpha_m$ accounts for the transmissions at two end mirrors (facets).
The typical output power vs. injection current relation

A typical diode laser output power vs. injection current density relation
\( \eta_i \) is the internal quantum efficiency, which is defined as the percentage of the injected carriers that contribute to the radiative recombinations.

The external differential quantum efficiency \( \eta_e \) is defined as:

\[
\eta_e = \frac{dP_{out}}{\hbar \omega / q} = \eta_i \frac{\alpha_m}{\alpha_m + \alpha_i}
\]

Below the threshold injection current, the output light intensity is negligibly small.

Above threshold, the output power is linearly increasing until saturation effects occur.
Possible reasons for saturation:

1. The leakage current increases with the injection current.
2. The threshold current may also depend on the injection current due to junction heating. The increase in temperature reduces the recombination lifetime.
3. The internal absorption increases with an increase in the injection current.
G-Energy (Wavelength) Curve and Related Parameters

Finite-Temperature Gain Spectrum

It is given by Eq.

\[ g(\hbar \omega) = \sum_{n,m} g_m [ f_c^n (E_t = \hbar \omega - E_{en}^m) - f_v^m (E_t = \hbar \omega - E_{en}^m) ] H(\hbar \omega - E_{en}^m) \]

Gain occurs when \( f_c^n \rangle f_v^m \)
Finite Temperature Gain Spectrum
$$g(\hbar \omega)/g_m$$

$T = 300K$

$\hbar \omega$

$E_{hl}^{el}(0)$

$E_g + F_c - F_v$

Gain

Absorption
Description of Gain Spectrum

In the figure, it starts with a peak value at the transition edge 
\[ \hbar \omega = E_{h1}^{e1}(0) = E_g + E_{e1} - E_{h1} \] where \( E_t = 0 \), and decreases to zero at \( E_g + F_c - F_v \) then becomes absorption at higher optical energies.

The sharp rise in gain near the band edge compared with the soft increase in a bulk(3D) semiconductor is due to the steplike density of states in 2D vs. the slow increase of the square-root(\( \sqrt{E} \)) density of states in 3D.
The Fermi-Dirac distribution will deviate from a sharp step function and is equal to $\frac{1}{2}$ at the quasi-Fermi level.

The hole concentration is

$$p = \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} n_v \ln(1 + e^{(E_{hm} - F_v) / k_B T})$$

where

$$n_v = \frac{m^* k_B T}{\pi \hbar^2 L_z}$$

which can account for heavy-hole and light-hole subbands, where $m$ accounts for hole subbands.
G-J Curve and Related Parameters

For a quantum-well laser lasing from only the first quantized electron and hole subbands, we use the empirical logarithmic formula for the peak gain-current density relation

\[ g_w(J) = g_0 \left(1 + \ln \frac{J_w}{J_0}\right) \]

where \( J_w \) and \( g_w \) are the injected current density and the peak gain coefficient of a single-quantum-well (SQW) structure.

The transparency current density occurs at \( J_{tr} = J_0 e^{-1} \)
Figure 10.24. (a) Gain ($g_w$) vs. injection current density ($J_w$) relation for a single-quantum-well structure; (b) gain ($n_w g_w$) vs. injection current density ($n_w J_w$) relation for a multiple-quantum-well structure with $n_w$ wells.
Multiple-Quantum-Well Laser

For an MQW structure with quantum wells $n_w$ gain($n_w g_w$) vs. the injection current density($n_w J_w$)

$$n_w g_w = n_w g_0 [\ln\left(\frac{n_w J_w}{n_w J_0}\right) + 1]$$

(well to well coupling can be ignored for simplicity)

Obviously, the horizontal intersection is shifted to the right by a factor 2.
For $n_w$ quantum wells, the threshold current density

\[ J_{th} = \frac{n_w J_w}{\eta} = \left(\frac{n_w J_0}{\eta}\right) \exp\left(\frac{g_w}{g_0}\right) - 1 \]

where $\eta$ is the internal quantum efficiency of the injection current.
The threshold current density is found to vary with temperature $T$ as

$$J_{th} = J_0 \exp\left[\frac{T}{T_0}\right]$$

where $J_0$ is a constant and $T_0$ is a characteristic temperature often used to express the temperature sensitivity of threshold current density.
Temperature Dependence of Threshold Current Density

![Graph showing temperature dependence of threshold current density for InGaAsP with λ = 1.3 μm.]
Characteristic Temperature $T_0$

Higher values of $T_0$ imply that the threshold current density and the external differential quantum efficiency of the device increase less rapidly with increasing temperatures, i.e. the laser is more thermally stable.

The high temperature sensitivity of the threshold current density of InGaAsP lasers limits their performance under high-temperature operation.
$J_{th}$ vs the $T$ on a logarithmic scale

From above equation, we can get the characteristic temperature $T_0$

$$\ln(J_{th}) = \frac{T}{T_0} + \ln(J_0)$$

$$T_0 = \frac{\Delta T}{\Delta \ln(J_{th})}$$
Figure 11. Graph showing the variations of the threshold current density $J_{th}$ with increasing temperature. The inverse of the slope of the linear fit to this set of data points is the characteristic temperature $T_0$ value. Instead of plotting the $J_{th}$ points one can alternatively use $I_{th}$ data points, the outcome will be the same.