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EFTEKHAR et al.(10) **Pub. No.: US 2021/0175974 A1**(43) **Pub. Date: Jun. 10, 2021**(54) **OPTICAL COHERENT TRANSMITTER ON A SILICON CHIP****Publication Classification**

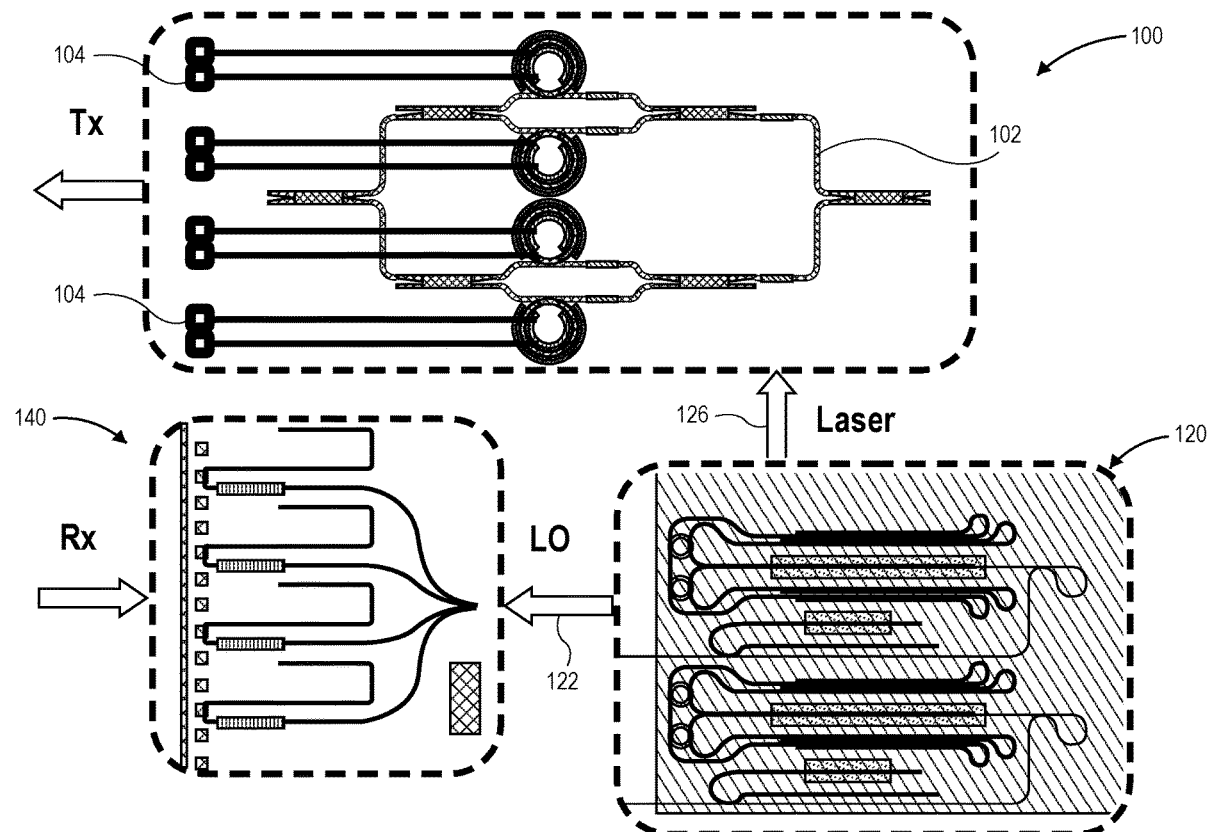
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Embodiments described herein may be related to apparatuses, processes, and techniques related to fully integrated optical coherent modulators on a silicon chip. These coherent modulators may be used to enable transmitters, receivers, transceivers, tunable lasers and other optical or electro-optical devices to be integrated on a silicon chip. In embodiments, the optical coherent modulators may be based on differential microring modulators that may be nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration. Embodiments may also be directed to a miniaturized and fully integrated coherent modulators, which can enable terabit per second (Tbps) transceivers in a small form factor based on coherent modulation on a silicon chip. Other embodiments may be described and/or claimed.

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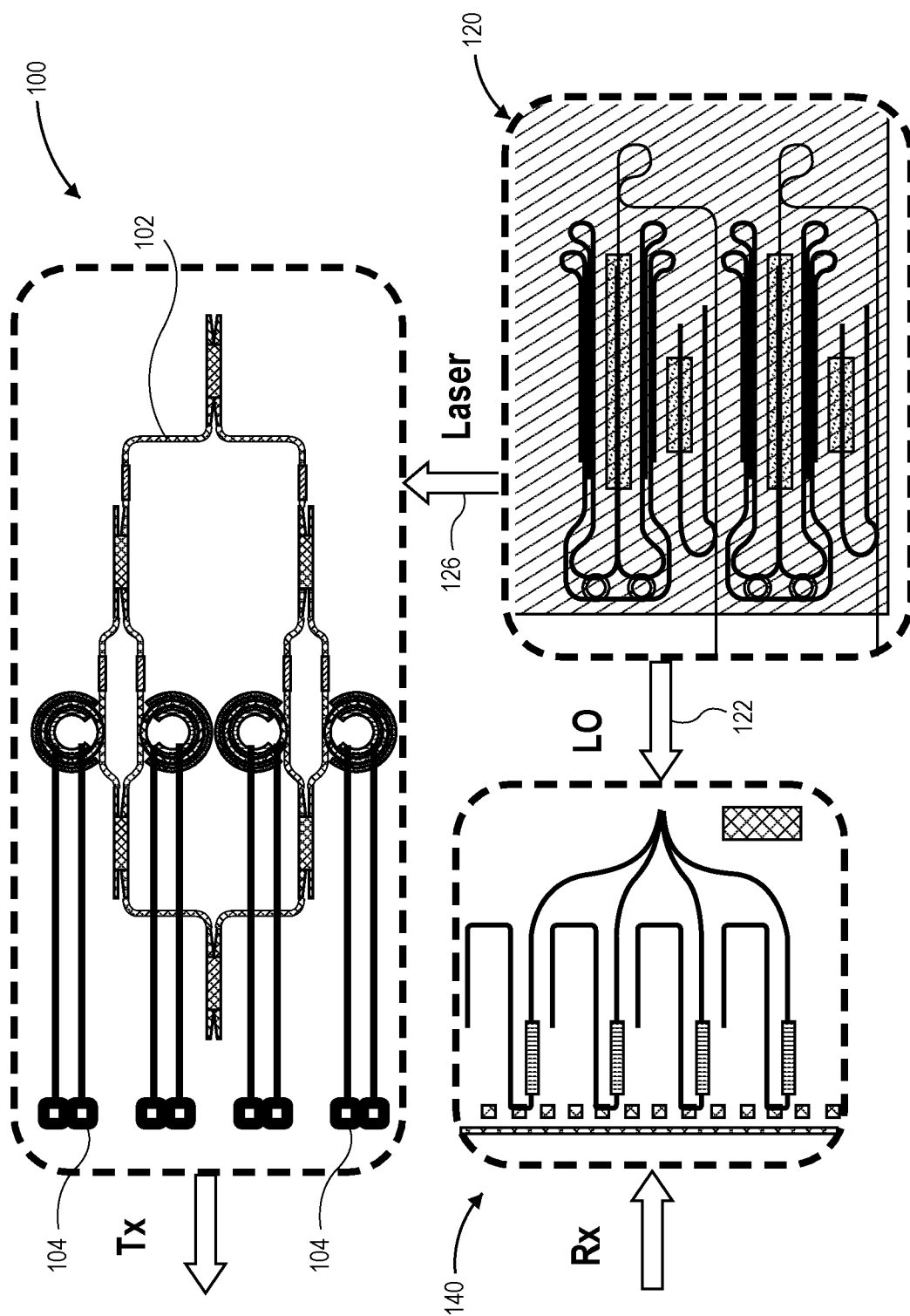


FIG. 1

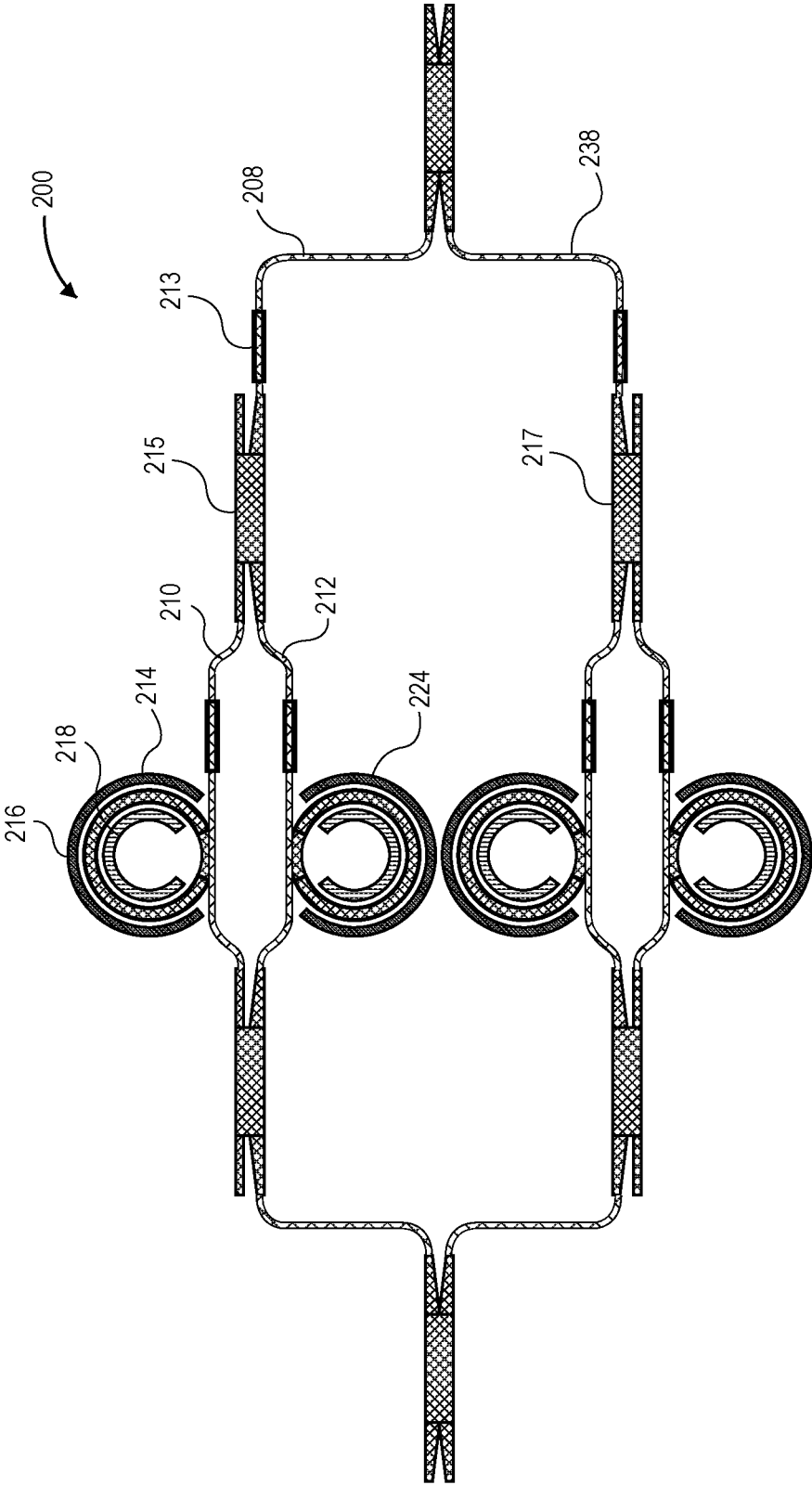


FIG. 2

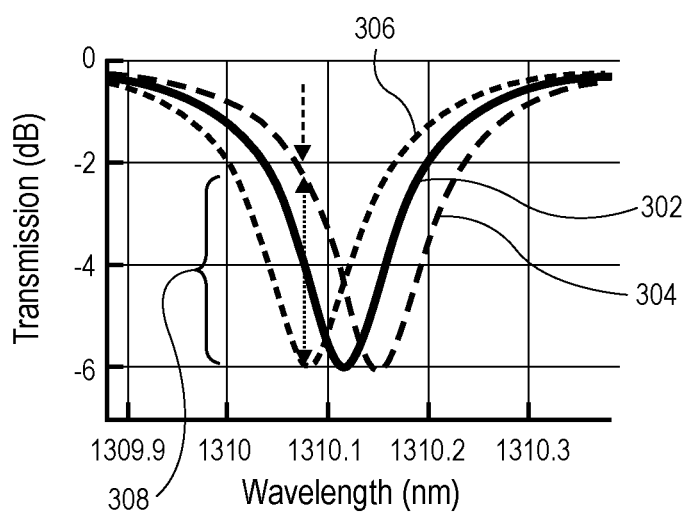


FIG. 3A

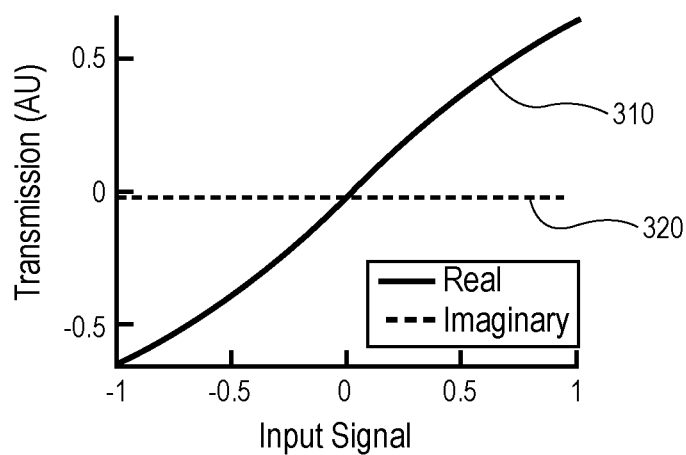


FIG. 3B

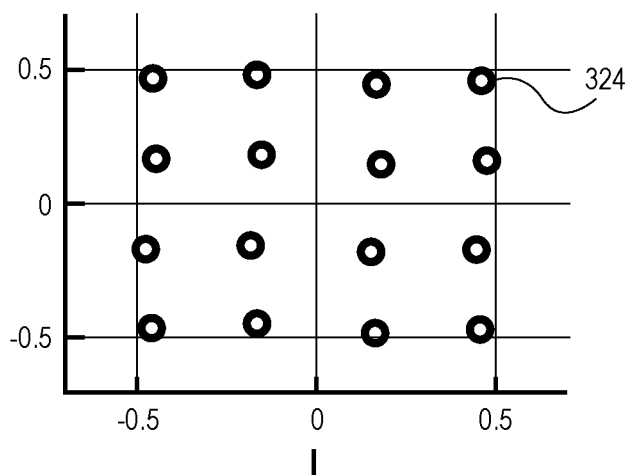


FIG. 3C

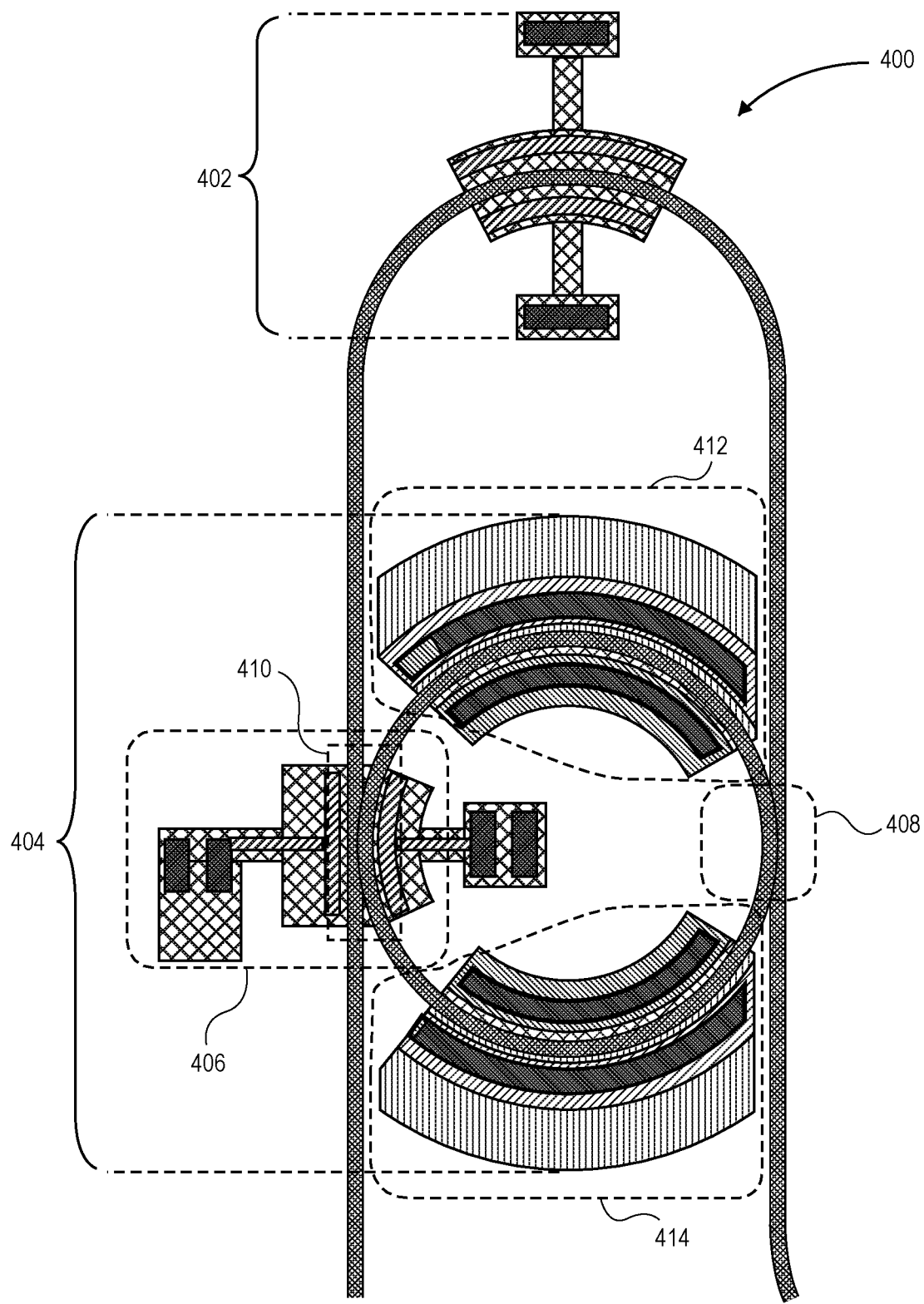


FIG. 4

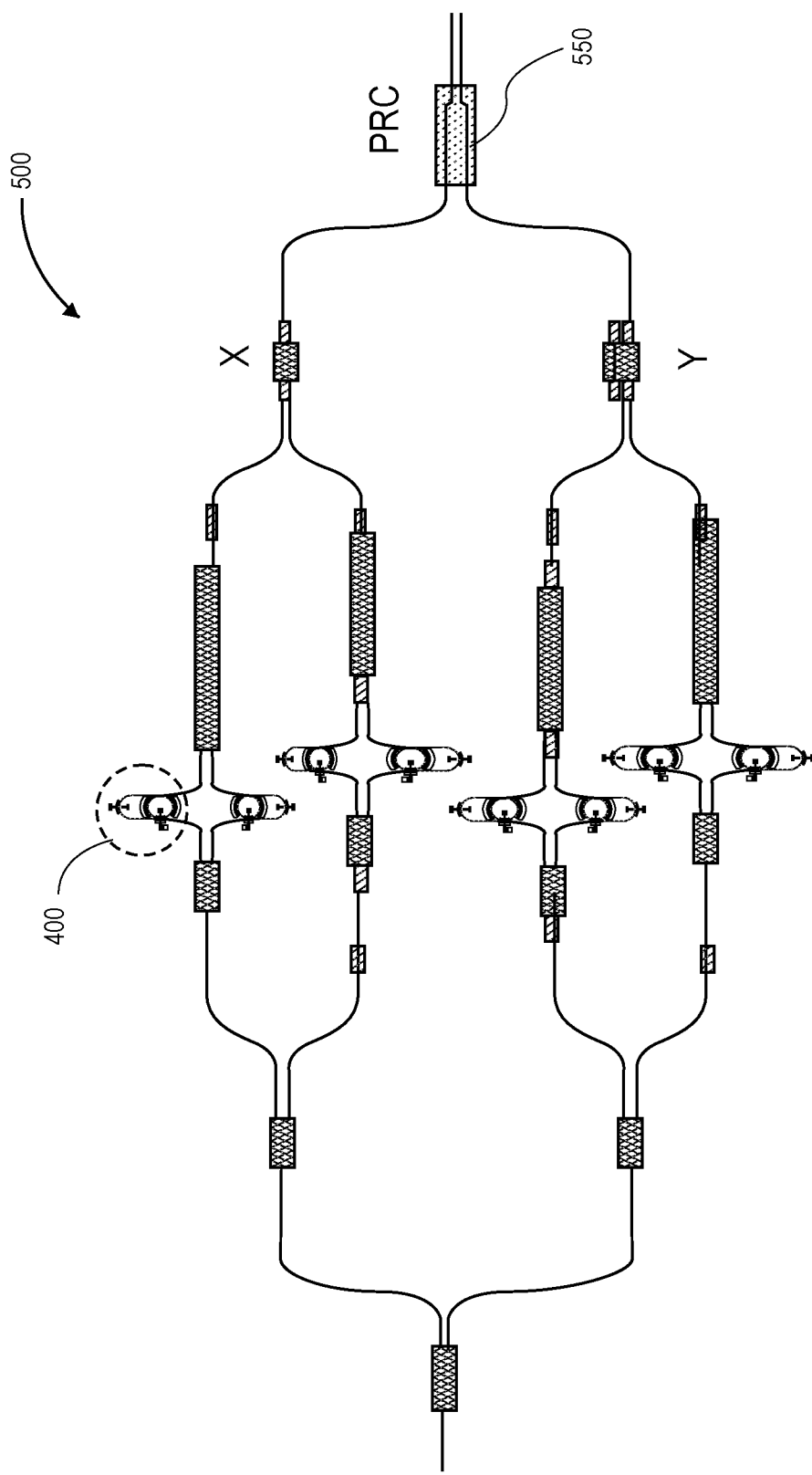


FIG. 5

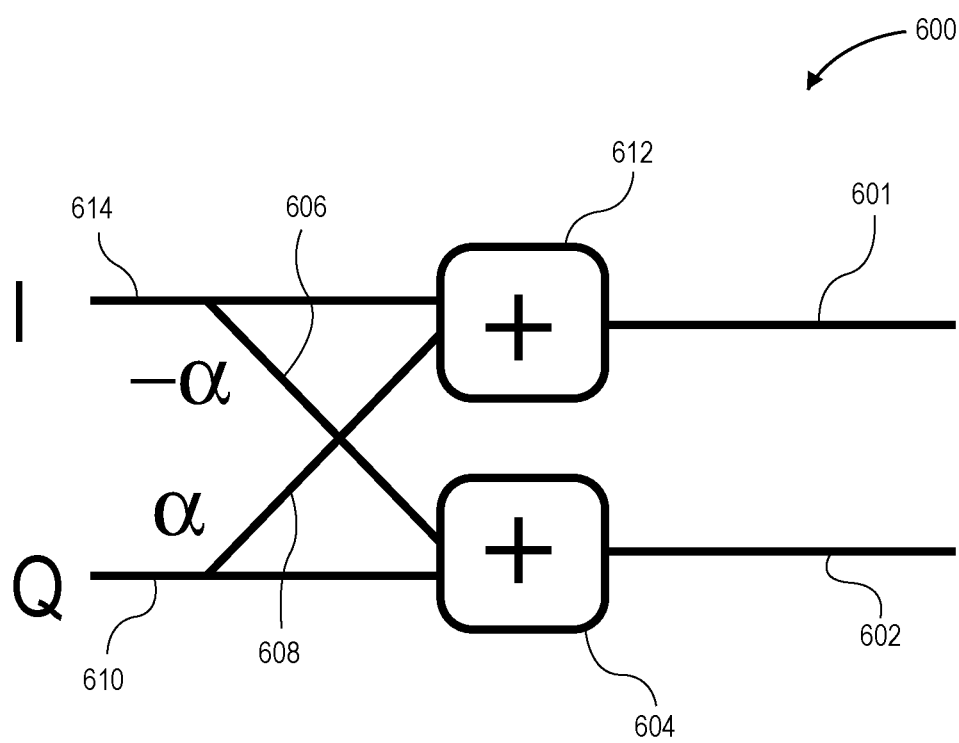
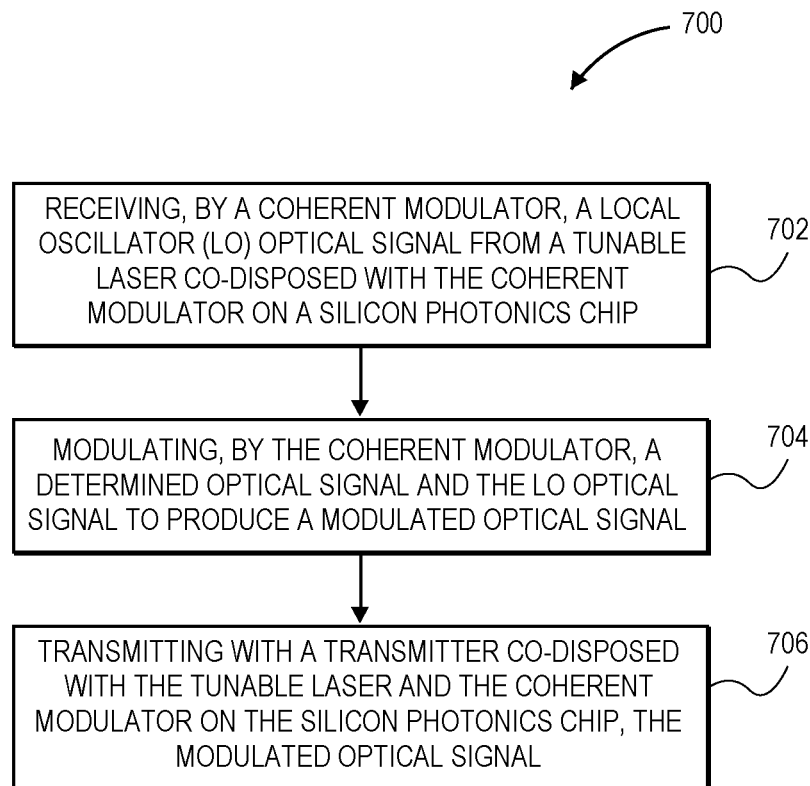


FIG. 6

**FIG. 7**

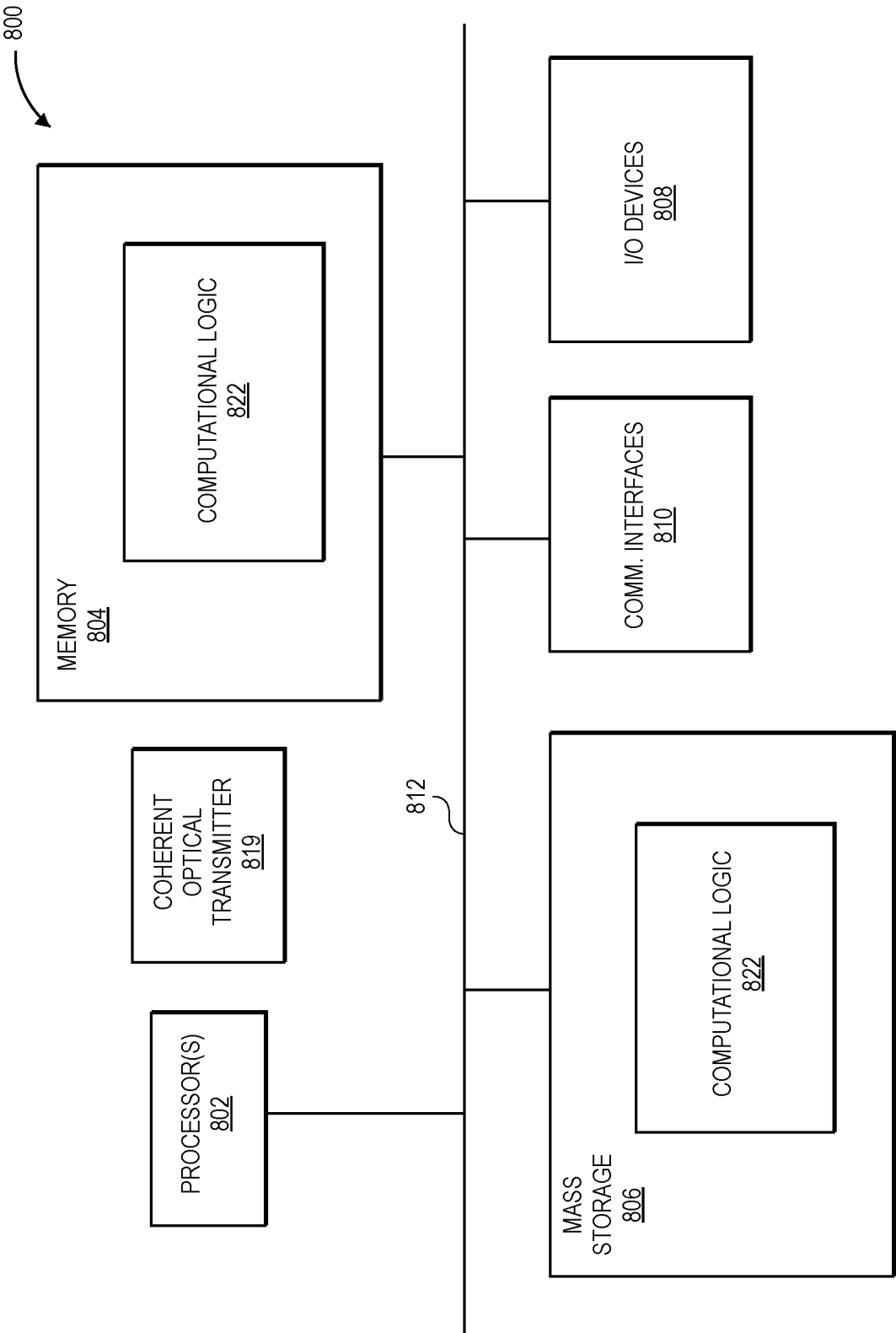


FIG. 8

OPTICAL COHERENT TRANSMITTER ON A SILICON CHIP

FIELD

[0001] Embodiments of the present disclosure generally relate to the field of photonics devices, and in particular to coherent optical transmitters.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Continued growth in virtual machines and cloud computing will continue to increase the demand for increased performance and reduced size of computing devices by integrating photonics-based devices such as optical transmitters.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0003] FIG. 1 is a diagram of a mirroring-based an optical coherent modulator integrated with a transmitter, a receiver, and a tunable laser on a silicon chip, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0004] FIG. 2 is a diagram of a ring-resonator based coherent modulator, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0005] FIGS. 3A-3C are diagrams of two resonator transmission spectra, real and imaginary part of a child modulator as a function of the modulation signal, and an example of a 16-quadrature amplitude modulated (QAM) constellation, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0006] FIG. 4 is a diagram of a reconfigurable modulator, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0007] FIG. 5 is a diagram of a full dual-polarization modulator, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0008] FIG. 6 is a diagram of a chirp pre-correction (equalizer), in accordance with various embodiments.

[0009] FIG. 7 is a process for coherent optical transmission using an optical coherent modulator, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0010] FIG. 8 illustrates an example computing device suitable for having various components of FIG. 1-FIG. 7, in accordance with various embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0011] Embodiments described herein may be directed to fully integrated optical coherent modulators on a silicon chip. These coherent modulators may be used to enable transmitters, receivers, transceivers, tunable lasers and other optical or electro-optical devices to be integrated on a silicon chip. In embodiments, the optical coherent modulators may include integrated III-V gain components with low loss passive and reconfigurable photonics elements based on thermo-optic tuning. In embodiments, the optical coherent modulators may be based on differential microring modulators that may be nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration.

[0012] Legacy modulators bear relatively strong chirp. Chirp is a concurrent change in the output phase by amplitude modulation. In modulator embodiments described herein enable low chirp modulation with high sourced laser suppression without the need for high ring modulator extinction ratio (ER) or biasing the ring at zero wavelength tuning. In embodiments, there may be a tunable coupler between the microring-based modulator and an input bus waveguide to enable multi-rate coherent modulators.

[0013] Embodiments may also be directed to a miniaturized and fully integrated coherent modulators, which can enable terabit per second (Tbps) transceivers in a small form factor based on coherent modulation on a silicon chip. In embodiments, a miniaturized coherent transceiver may integrate with a miniaturized tunable laser source and with a compact coherent in-phase and quadrature (I/Q) modulator based on microring modulator architecture on a silicon chip. Embodiments may substantially reduce the size and power consumption of coherent transmitters, receivers, and/or transceivers in a package.

[0014] Legacy coherent modulators are based on integration of individual off-chip components, for example tunable lasers and modulators, and use large footprint Mach-Zehnder modulators (MZMs) that can be several millimeters in length, for example 3 mm to 6.5 mm. This required long length of legacy MZMs for coherent modulators also limits their bandwidth, since the bandwidth is typically determined by the RF loss of the MZMs travelling-wave electrodes at high frequencies, which increases with the modulator length. This, in addition to high-power consumption of legacy MZMs, considerably limits the legacy ability to develop compact wideband and small form factor coherent modulators beyond the current 400 Gbps and 800 Gbps coherent transceivers.

[0015] In implementations, the coherent transceiver integrates separate components such as tunable lasers and I/Q modulators, which are also mainly based on legacy MZM, which require a large footprint on chip to provide modulation phase efficiency. This large size of legacy implementations also limits the modulation bandwidth and results in relatively high power consumption. In legacy implementations, microring resonators are used as a miniaturized and lower power alternative to MZM for direct modulation applications; however, their application for coherent modulation has been limited because of their inherent coupled amplitude and phase modulation (i.e., chirp), which creates quality problems in coherent modulation applications. Therefore, legacy microring-based coherent modulators suffer from strong chirp, which make them difficult to use for coherent modulation. Ring modulator assisted MZMs also have been previously proposed for spurious free dynamic range (SFDR) for analog modulation, by cancelling out high-order nonlinear harmonics of ring modulator and MZM. However, this legacy implementation does not affect legacy issues with chirp, and is not applicable to coherent modulation.

[0016] In the following detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings which form a part hereof, wherein like numerals designate like parts throughout, and in which is shown by way of illustration embodiments in which the subject matter of the present disclosure may be practiced. It is to be understood that other embodiments may be utilized and structural or logical changes may be made without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. Therefore, the following detailed description is not to be taken in a limiting sense, and the scope of embodiments is defined by the appended claims and their equivalents.

[0017] For the purposes of the present disclosure, the phrase “A and/or B” means (A), (B), or (A and B). For the purposes of the present disclosure, the phrase “A, B, and/or C” means (A), (B), (C), (A and B), (A and C), (B and C), or (A, B and C).

[0018] The description may use perspective-based descriptions such as top/bottom, in/out, over/under, and the like. Such descriptions are merely used to facilitate the discussion and are not intended to restrict the application of embodiments described herein to any particular orientation.

[0019] The description may use the phrases “in an embodiment,” or “in embodiments,” which may each refer to one or more of the same or different embodiments. Furthermore, the terms “comprising,” “including,” “having,” and the like, as used with respect to embodiments of the present disclosure, are synonymous.

[0020] The term “coupled with,” along with its derivatives, may be used herein. “Coupled” may mean one or more of the following. “Coupled” may mean that two or more elements are in direct physical or electrical contact. However, “coupled” may also mean that two or more elements indirectly contact each other, but yet still cooperate or interact with each other, and may mean that one or more other elements are coupled or connected between the elements that are said to be coupled with each other. The term “directly coupled” may mean that two or more elements are in direct contact.

[0021] Various operations may be described as multiple discrete operations in turn, in a manner that is most helpful in understanding the claimed subject matter. However, the order of description should not be construed as to imply that these operations are necessarily order dependent.

[0022] As used herein, the term “module” may refer to, be part of, or include an ASIC, an electronic circuit, a processor (shared, dedicated, or group) and/or memory (shared, dedicated, or group) that execute one or more software or firmware programs, a combinational logic circuit, and/or other suitable components that provide the described functionality.

[0023] Various Figures herein may depict one or more layers of one or more package assemblies. The layers depicted herein are depicted as examples of relative positions of the layers of the different package assemblies. The layers are depicted for the purposes of explanation and are not drawn to scale. Therefore, comparative sizes of layers should not be assumed from the Figures, and sizes, thicknesses, or dimensions may be assumed for some embodiments only where specifically indicated or discussed.

[0024] FIG. 1 is a diagram of a microring-based optical coherent modulator integrated with a transmitter, a receiver, and a tunable laser on a silicon chip, in accordance with various embodiments. The silicon chip represented in FIG. 1 includes a transmitter **100** that includes a microring-based coherent modulator **102**, as described in further detail with respect to FIG. 2. The transmitter **100** includes multiple channels **104** that provide optical signal output based upon the microring-based coherent modulator **102**. In embodiments, a tunable laser **120** may be split into two waveguides that serve as the modulator input laser **126** and the receiver LO **122**. An integrated coherent receiver **140**, comprising of integrated 90-degree hybrid photonic circuit and waveguide-integrated photo detectors is used to mix the input received coherent signal with LO signal and generate the received electrical output I and Q signals. The chip of FIG. 1 may be implemented on a silicon on insulator (SOI) silicon platform or any alternative integrated photonic platform, for example Lithium-niobate on isolator material platform.

[0025] Embodiments may co-integrate the tunable laser **120** the coherent modulator **102** and transmitter based on a

hybrid III-V/Si platform. These embodiments may integrate III/V gain components with low-loss passive and reconfigurable photonic elements using silicon-based thermo-optic tuning and carrier dispersion in forward biased PN junctions to tune the laser wavelength over the target wavelength range. As a result, embodiments may result in both smaller overall footprint and reduced coupling loss between the input laser and coherent modulator through the co-integration of tunable laser with modulator and receiver.

[0026] Embodiments may also enable ring-resonator-based I/Q modulators that may use all advantages of ring modulators in term of small footprint, low-power, and wideband modulations (as compared to legacy MZMs). In addition, embodiments may also provide high quality coherent signal and high source laser suppression. The proposed multi-rate modulator may also provide an adaptive modulator configuration, in which the input-waveguide and microring coupling can be adjusted to achieve optimal ring resonator quality factor for the target modulation baud rate, enabling low-power performance over a range of different transceiver data rates.

[0027] FIG. 2 is a diagram of a microring-resonator based coherent modulator, in accordance with various embodiments. Resonator-based coherent modulator **200**, which may be similar to microring-based coherent modulator **102** of FIG. 1, shows a simplified layout in which a first child modulator **208** and a second child modulator **238**, which may be an I modulator or a Q modulator, use a differential MZI architecture with identical microring modulators.

[0028] The first child modulator **208** may have a first arm **210** and a second arm **212**. The first arm **210** may include a microring **214** coupled with the first arm **210**, and the second arm **212** may include a microring **224** coupled with the second arm **212**. In embodiments, the first child modulator **208** may use a differential MZI architecture where the microring modulators **214** and **224** are identical. In embodiments, the microring modulators **214**, **224** may be initially biased at the same detuning, where the resonators resonate a wavelength based upon an input laser, such as input laser **126** of FIG. 1. Subsequently, the biasing of the microring modulators **214**, **224** may be derived differentially by the input RF signal for I and Q modulations **208**, **238**.

[0029] In embodiments, the microring modulator **214** may be integrated with a heater to tune each microring resonator resonance wavelength to bias it at the desired detuning in respect to the input laser wavelength. An outer ring **216** and an inner ring **218** may be split rings that may be electrodes for the modulator and/or contacts for the PN-junction integrated with the ring modulator.

[0030] Embodiments may represent a new architecture for coherent modulation based on differential microring modulators **214**, **224** nested in a MZI configuration, which enables low chirp modulation with high source laser suppression without the need for high ring modulator extinction ratio (ER) or biasing the ring at zero wavelength detuning. In embodiments, this architecture may also use a tunable coupler **213** between a microring modulator **214**, **224** and input bus waveguide **208**, to enable multi-rate coherent modulators. This may be used to control the microring resonator and the waveguide coupling through interferometric coupling. This way, the microring overall quality factor can be adjusted to achieve best performance for different modulation rates.

[0031] FIGS. 3A-3C are diagrams of two resonator transmission spectra, real and imaginary part of a child modulator as a function of the modulation signal, and an example of a 16-quadrature amplitude modulated (QAM) constellation, in accordance with various embodiments. FIG. 3A shows a graph of transmission in dB against wavelength in nanometers. In particular, the two resonator transmission spectra at zero applied RF signal 302, and when they are differentially derived 304, 306. In addition, the distance 308 shows the differential output of the modulator generated by detuning of the two differentially-drive ring modulators.

[0032] The differential configuration of the I and Q modulators allows a high-source laser suppression to be achieved while biasing each resonator at the desired blue detuned wavelength. This mitigates the challenge of the thermal instability with high power input laser when the input laser is biased very close to the microring resonance wavelength as the differential output provides high input laser suppression even at large detuning from the resonance.

[0033] FIG. 3B shows the response of the real 310 and imaginary 320 part of the child modulator as the function of the modulation signal to the input modulation signal, which shows very small modulation of the output imaginary part, for example small phase modulation, indicating low chirp of the modulator. In embodiments, the coherent modulator can also be accompanied with an equalizer, such as shown in FIG. 6, which in embodiments can effectively remove the residual chirp and lead to a chirp-free coherent modulator. FIG. 3C is an example of a 16 QAM constellation showing an EVM<0.0015 (without equalization). Point 324 on the graph shows an example of the constellation point in the 16-QAM constellation which shows small deviation from ideal 16-QAM constellation. As shown in these figures, high quality coherent modulation with low modulation distortion, for example EVM<0.0015, can be achieved using this modulator architecture.

[0034] FIG. 4 is a diagram of a reconfigurable modulator, in accordance with various embodiments. Reconfigurable modulator 400 shows a schematic of an embodiment of an architecture for a reconfigurable modulator. The tunable waveguide-resonator coupler includes two segment coupling between the microring and the bus waveguide 404, with a thermal phase shifter 402 between two coupling segments 408, 410, which may also be referred to as coupling sections. In addition, PN junctions 412, 414 may be embedded with the ring resonator. Heater 406 may be used for tuning the microring resonator resonance wavelength. As a result, coherent modulators may be enabled with tunable bandwidth to improve microring quality. In embodiments, the reconfigurable modulator 400 may be implemented in silicon or using silicon components.

[0035] FIG. 5 is a diagram of a full dual-polarization modulator, in accordance with various embodiments. FIG. 5 shows a schematic 500 of a full dual-polarization modulator based on two modulators that may be similar to the tunable modulator 200 of FIG. 2. A polarization rotator and combiner (PRC) 550 may be used to add the output of the two modulators corresponding to the X and Y polarization to the single output. Reconfigurable modulator 400 may be coupled with the full dual-polarization modulator in one embodiment.

[0036] FIG. 6 is a diagram of a chirp pre-correction, in accordance with various embodiments. Diagram 600 shows chirp pre-correction, which may also be referred to as an

equalizer, which can compensate for residual chirp of the microring-based coherent modulator by adding some chirp with opposite sign to the I and Q input signal of the coherent modulator. The input I (614) and Q (610) signals are mixed to generate pre-chirp I and Q 601, 602 input signal for the differential microring coherent modulator, to achieve an overall chirp-less output signal. The chirp pre-correction equalizer coefficients 606, 608 are calculated based on the microring modulator parameters.

[0037] FIG. 7 is a process for coherent optical transmission using an optical coherent modulator, in accordance with various embodiments. Process 700 may be performed using apparatus, processes, techniques, systems, or other disclosures herein, and in particular with respect to FIGS. 1-6.

[0038] At block 702, the process may include receiving, by a coherent modulator, a LO optical signal from a tunable laser co-disposed with the coherent modulator on a silicon photonics chip. In embodiments, the microring modulator may be similar to microring-based coherent modulator 102 of FIG. 1, or resonator-based coherent modulator 200 of FIG. 2. In embodiments, the tunable laser may be similar to tunable laser 120 of FIG. 1.

[0039] At block 704, the process may further include modulating, by the coherent modulator, a determined optical signal and the LO optical signal to produce a modulated optical signal. In embodiments, the LO optical signal may be similar to the modulator input laser 126 of FIG. 1.

[0040] At block 706, the process may further include transmitting with a transmitter co-disposed with the tunable laser and the coherent modulator on the silicon photonics chip, the modulated optical signal. In embodiments, the transmitter may be similar to transmitter 100 of FIG. 1.

[0041] FIG. 8 illustrates an example computing device suitable for having various components of FIGS. 1-5, in accordance with various embodiments.

[0042] As shown, computing device 800 may include one or more processors or processor cores 802, system memory 804, mass storage 806, communication interfaces 810 and I/O devices 808, coupled with each other via one or more buses/interconnects 812. In various embodiments, at least one of the buses/interconnects 812 is an optical bus/interconnect optically coupling/interconnecting at least two of processors 802, system memory 804, mass storage 806, communication interfaces 810 and I/O devices 808. That is, the at least two of processors 802, system memory 804, mass storage 806, communication interfaces 810 and I/O devices 808 being optically coupled include coherent optical transmitter 819 having one of the embodiments of the coherent optical transmitter earlier described with references to FIGS. 1-5.

[0043] For the purpose of this application, including the claims, the terms “processor” and “processor cores” may be considered synonymous, unless the context clearly requires otherwise. The processor 802 may include any type of processors, a microprocessor, and the like. The processor 802 may be implemented as an integrated circuit having multi-cores, e.g., a multi-core microprocessor.

[0044] Mass storage devices 806 may be one of diskette, hard drive, volatile memory (e.g., dynamic random-access memory (DRAM), compact disc read-only memory (CD-ROM), digital versatile disk (DVD), and so forth. In general, system memory 804 and/or mass storage devices 806 may be temporal and/or persistent storage of any type, including, but not limited to, volatile and non-volatile memory, optical,

magnetic, and/or solid state mass storage, and so forth. Volatile memory may include, but is not limited to, static and/or dynamic random access memory. Non-volatile memory may include, but is not limited to, electrically erasable programmable read-only memory, phase change memory, resistive memory, and so forth.

[0045] I/O devices **808** may be a display (e.g., a touch-screen display), keyboard, cursor control, remote control, gaming controller, image capture device, a camera, one or more sensors, and so forth and communication interfaces **810** may include network interface cards, serial buses, modems, infrared receivers, radio receivers (e.g., Bluetooth), and so forth).

[0046] The communication interfaces **810** may include communication chips (not shown) that may be configured to operate the device **800** in accordance with a Global System for Mobile Communication (GSM), General Packet Radio Service (GPRS), Universal Mobile Telecommunications System (UMTS), High Speed Packet Access (HSPA), Evolved HSPA (E-HSPA), or Long-Term Evolution (LTE) network. The communication chips may also be configured to operate in accordance with Enhanced Data for GSM Evolution (EDGE), GSM EDGE Radio Access Network (GERAN), Universal Terrestrial Radio Access Network (UTRAN), or Evolved UTRAN (E-UTRAN). The communication chips may be configured to operate in accordance with Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA), Time Division Multiple Access (TDMA), Digital Enhanced Cordless Telecommunications (DECT), Evolution-Data Optimized (EV-DO), derivatives thereof, as well as any other wireless protocols that are designated as 3G, 4G, 5G, and beyond.

[0047] System buses/Interconnects **812** may include, for example, PCIe buses. In other words, selected ones of processors **802**, memory **804**, mass storage **806**, communication interfaces **810** and I/O devices **808** may be PCIe devices or other serial bus-based devices. In particular, they may be PCIe devices incorporated with the teachings of the present disclosure to couple with or include an optical coherent transmitter on a chip. In the case of multiple buses, they may be bridged by one or more bus bridges (not shown).

[0048] Each of these elements may perform its conventional functions known in the art. In particular, system memory **804** and mass storage devices **806** may be employed to store a working copy and a permanent copy of the programming instructions for the operation of various components of computing device **800**, including but not limited to an operating system of computing device **800**, one or more applications, and/or system software/firmware in support of practice of the present disclosure, collectively referred to as computing logic **822**. The various elements may be implemented by assembler instructions supported by processor(s) **802** or high-level languages that may be compiled into such instructions.

[0049] The permanent copy of the programming instructions may be placed into mass storage devices **806** in the factory, or in the field through, for example, a distribution medium (not shown), such as a compact disc (CD), or through communication interface **810** (from a distribution server (not shown)). That is, one or more distribution media having an implementation of the agent program may be employed to distribute the agent and to program various computing devices.

[0050] The number, capability, and/or capacity of the elements **802**, **804**, **806**, **808**, **810**, and **812** may vary, depending on whether computing device **800** is used as a stationary computing device, such as a set-top box or desktop computer, or a mobile computing device, such as a tablet computing device, laptop computer, game console, or smartphone. Their constitutions are otherwise known, and accordingly will not be further described.

[0051] In embodiments, at least one of processors **802** may be packaged together with computational logic **822** configured to practice aspects of embodiments described herein to form a System in Package (SiP) or a System on Chip (SOC).

[0052] In various implementations, the computing device **800** may be one or more components of a data center, a laptop, a netbook, a notebook, an ultrabook, a smartphone, a tablet, a personal digital assistant (PDA), an ultra mobile PC, a mobile phone, a digital camera, or an IoT user equipment. In further implementations, the computing device **800** may be any other electronic device that processes data.

[0053] Note that Coherent transmitters as described herein may be used within a datacenter or between multiple data centers.

[0054] Various embodiments may include any suitable combination of the above-described embodiments including alternative (or) embodiments of embodiments that are described in conjunctive form (and) above (e.g., the “and” may be “and/or”). Furthermore, some embodiments may include one or more articles of manufacture (e.g., non-transitory computer-readable media) having instructions, stored thereon, that when executed result in actions of any of the above-described embodiments. Moreover, some embodiments may include apparatuses or systems having any suitable means for carrying out the various operations of the above-described embodiments.

[0055] The above description of illustrated embodiments, including what is described in the Abstract, is not intended to be exhaustive or to limit embodiments to the precise forms disclosed. While specific embodiments are described herein for illustrative purposes, various equivalent modifications are possible within the scope of the embodiments, as those skilled in the relevant art will recognize.

[0056] These modifications may be made to the embodiments in light of the above detailed description. The terms used in the following claims should not be construed to limit the embodiments to the specific implementations disclosed in the specification and the claims. Rather, the scope of the invention is to be determined entirely by the following claims, which are to be construed in accordance with established doctrines of claim interpretation.

[0057] The following paragraphs describe examples of various embodiments.

EXAMPLES

[0058] Example 1 is an apparatus comprising: a tunable laser to output a light beam; a coherent modulator optically coupled with the tunable laser to modulate the light beam; an optical transmitter optically coupled with the coherent modulator to transmit the modulated light beam; and wherein the tunable laser, the coherent modulator, and the optical transmitter are integrated on a silicon photonics chip.

[0059] Example 2 includes the apparatus of example 1, further including an optical receiver coupled with the tun-

able laser to receive another modulated light beam from another silicon photonics chip.

[0060] Example 3 includes the apparatus of example 1, wherein the silicon photonics chip is a hybrid III-V/Si photonics chip.

[0061] Example 4 includes the apparatus of example 1, wherein the tunable laser is tuned using thermo-optic tuning.

[0062] Example 5 includes the apparatus of example 1, wherein the coherent modulator includes differential microring modulators.

[0063] Example 6 includes the apparatus of example 5, wherein the differential microring modulators are nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration.

[0064] Example 7 includes the apparatus of example 1, wherein the coherent modulator includes an I/Q modulator.

[0065] Example 8 includes the apparatus of example 7, wherein the I/Q modulator includes a ring-resonator-based I/Q modulator.

[0066] Example 9 includes the apparatus of example 1, further includes a tunable coupler optically coupled with and disposed between the modulator and an input bus waveguide to enable multi-rate coherent modulation.

[0067] Example 9A includes the apparatus of any one of examples 1-9, wherein the apparatus or a portion of the apparatus is implemented via silicon.

[0068] Example 10 is a method for coherent optical transmission, the method comprising: receiving, by a coherent modulator, a local oscillator (LO) optical signal from a tunable laser co-disposed with the coherent modulator on a silicon photonics chip; modulating, by the coherent modulator, a determined optical signal and the LO optical signal to produce a modulated optical signal; and transmitting with a transmitter co-disposed with the tunable laser and the coherent modulator on the silicon photonics chip, the modulated optical signal.

[0069] Example 11 includes a method of example 10, further comprising tuning the tunable laser using thermo-optic tuning.

[0070] Example 12 includes the method of example 11, wherein the coherent modulator is a resonator-based coherent modulator with each I or Q modulator using a differential MZI architecture.

[0071] Example 13 includes the method of example 12, wherein the differential MZI architecture uses identical microring modulators in each arm.

[0072] Example 14 includes the method of any one of examples 10-13, wherein identical microring modulators include two microring resonators.

[0073] Example 15 is a system comprising: an apparatus comprising: a tunable laser to output a light beam; a coherent modulator optically coupled with the tunable laser to modulate the light beam; an optical transmitter optically coupled with the coherent modulator to transmit the modulated light beam; and wherein the tunable laser, the coherent modulator, and the optical transmitter are integrated on a silicon photonics chip; and an optical waveguide coupled with an optical output of the optical transmitter to transmit the modulated light beam to another device.

[0074] Example 16 includes the system of example 15, wherein the optical waveguide is a selected one of: one or more optical fibers or a silicon waveguide.

[0075] Example 17 includes the system of example 15, wherein the coherent modulator includes differential microring modulators.

[0076] Example 18 includes the system of example 17, wherein the differential microring modulators are nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration.

[0077] Example 19 includes the system of example 15, wherein the coherent modulator includes an I/Q modulator.

[0078] Example 20 includes the system of example 19, wherein the I/Q modulator includes a ring-resonator-based I/Q modulator.

[0079] Example 21 includes the system of any one of examples 15-20, wherein the coherent modulator is a dual polarization coherent modulator.

[0080] Example 22 includes a system of any one of examples 15-20, wherein the system further includes a chirp pre-correction I/Q equalizer to further reduce overall modulator chirp.

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus comprising:

a tunable laser to output a light beam;
a coherent modulator optically coupled with the tunable laser to modulate the light beam;
an optical transmitter optically coupled with the coherent modulator to transmit the modulated light beam;
wherein the tunable laser, the coherent modulator, and the optical transmitter are integrated on a silicon photonics chip; and

wherein the coherent modulator includes differential microring modulators.

2. The apparatus of claim 1, further including an optical receiver coupled with the tunable laser to receive another modulated light beam from another silicon photonics chip.

3. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the silicon photonics chip is a hybrid III-V/Si photonics chip.

4. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the tunable laser is tuned using thermo-optic tuning.

5. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the differential microring modulators are nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration.

6. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the coherent modulator includes an I/Q modulator.

7. The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the I/Q modulator includes a ring-resonator-based I/Q modulator.

8. The apparatus of claim 1, further includes a tunable coupler optically coupled with and disposed between the modulator and an input bus waveguide to enable multi-rate coherent modulation.

9. A method for coherent optical transmission, the method comprising:

receiving, by a coherent modulator, a local oscillator (LO) optical signal from a tunable laser co-disposed with the coherent modulator on a silicon photonics chip;

modulating, by the coherent modulator, a determined optical signal and the LO optical signal to produce a modulated optical signal;

transmitting with a transmitter co-disposed with the tunable laser and the coherent modulator on the silicon photonics chip, the modulated optical signal; and
wherein the coherent modulator includes a microring modulator.

10. The method of claim 9, further comprising tuning the tunable laser using thermo-optic tuning.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein the coherent modulator is a resonator-based coherent modulator with each I or Q modulator using a differential MZI architecture.

12. The method of claim **11**, wherein the differential MZI architecture uses identical microring modulators in each arm.

13. The method of claim **12**, wherein identical microring modulators include two microring resonators.

14. A system comprising:

an apparatus comprising:

a tunable laser to output a light beam;

a coherent modulator optically coupled with the tunable laser to modulate the light beam;

an optical transmitter optically coupled with the coherent modulator to transmit the modulated light beam; and

wherein the tunable laser, the coherent modulator, and the optical transmitter are integrated on a silicon photonics chip;

an optical waveguide coupled with an optical output of the optical transmitter to transmit the modulated light beam to another device; and

wherein the coherent modulator includes differential microring modulators.

15. The system of claim **14**, wherein the optical waveguide is a selected one of: one or more optical fibers or a silicon waveguide.

16. The system of claim **14**, wherein the differential microring modulators are nested in a Mach-Zehnder Interferometer (MZI) configuration.

17. The system of claim **14**, wherein the coherent modulator includes an I/Q modulator.

18. The system of claim **17**, wherein the I/Q modulator includes a ring-resonator-based I/Q modulator.

19. The system of claim **14**, wherein the coherent modulator is a dual polarization coherent modulator.

20. The system of claim **14**, wherein that apparatus further includes a chirp pre-correction I/Q equalizer to further reduce overall modulator chirp.

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