Radio-Wave Communication With Chaos

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Abstract Chaotic signals require very wide bandwidth to be transmitted in a practical channel, which is difficult for the practical transducer or antenna to convert such a broadband signal. To address this problem, in this work, Chaotic Shape-forming Filter (CSF) is used to obtain the baseband signal, and the corresponding matched filter is used at the receiver to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio. At the same time, the symbol judgment threshold determined by the chaos properties is used to reduce the Inter-Symbol Interference (ISI) effect. Simulations and virtual channel experiments show that the radio-wave communication system using chaos is inferior to the conventional radio-wave communication system using Square Root Raised Cosine (SRRC) shape-forming filter in a single path channel. This is because SRRC eliminates ISI in single path, but CSF does not. However, the chaos-based communication with anti-multipath decoding algorithm shows significantly better Bit Error Rate (BER) performance than the traditional communication system using SRRC and a minimum mean square error (MMSE) channel equalization in a multipath channel. This work shows the potential application prospect of chaos-based communication in future 5G or 6G engineering communication systems.

Index Terms Chaotic communication, decoding, multipath channels, radio-wave communication.

I. INTRODUCTION

Chaos, having a random like deterministic dynamics, has many properties suitable for communication applications, such as wide spectrum, sensitivity to initial data and pulse-like auto-correlation. The realization of chaos control [1] and synchronization [2] has laid the foundation for the application of chaotic signals. Hayes et al. used perturbation control to encode information sequence into chaotic signals that were used in communication [3]. Since then, many communication methods have been proposed, such as Chaos Masking [4], [5], Chaos Modulation [6], [7], Chaos Spread Spectrum [8], [9], Chaos Shift Keying [10], [11] and their improvements [12]–[16].

The research of chaotic communication was originally focused on the security performance in ideal channels with white noise. With further developments, the research hotspot has gradually turned to the use of chaos to improve the performance of traditional communication systems. Since Argyris et al. used chaotic signals to improve the bit transmission rate in the optical fiber communication system [17], the research on communication with chaos shifted from ideal channels to practical communication channels. Compared with the ideal channel, the wireless channel is a practical channel subjected to more complex constraints, such as multi-path propagation and Doppler shift [18]. Whether chaos could be applied to wireless channel became a basic and practical problem. Recent work showed that the information in chaotic signal is preserved after transmitted through wireless channel [19]. At the same time, experimental circuit encoding and decoding methods for wireless communication were designed to validate the theoretical predictions [20]. Besides these advances, other advantages for using chaos into communication have been reported recently, including the use of simple matched filter to achieve the maximum signal to noise ratio [21], [22], and a decoding threshold using chaos property to relief Inter-Symbol Interference (ISI) caused by multi-path propagation [23], [24]. All these progresses pushed the research forward to the practical application of chaos in communication systems. However, it is very difficult for the current available transducers or antennas to convert the chaotic signal into the media waveform (radio-wave or...
acoustic signal). This is because the chaotic signal possesses wide spectrum bandwidth, while the transducers, antennas and the associate amplifiers have relatively narrow bandwidth. This fact prevents the chaos application in practical communication systems. The coping with this obstacle is the key for future research work on communication with chaos.

In this paper, we show that the simplest way to solve the above obstacle is by using a Chaotic Shape-forming Filter (CSF) to replace the conventional shape-forming filter. Using radio-wave communication system as example, we compare the performance of the radio wave communication system using the chaotic shape-forming filter and the corresponding matched filter with the conventional radio wave communication system. In such a way, we capitalize on the advantages that chaotic signal provides to improve the practical performance of conventional communication system. The features and contributions of this work are: (1) In the proposed communication system framework, a chaotic shape-forming filter is used to replace the conventional shape forming filter and a corresponding matched filter is used to replace the traditional low-pass filter in the Costas Phase Locked Loop (PLL). It is completely compatible with the traditional radio wave communication system hardware. (2) This work validates the chaotic baseband wireless communication method in a radio wave communication test platform, combining with the anti-multipath decoding algorithm in [23]. The system achieves higher reliability than the conventional radio wave communication system. (3) It is the first time being reported and demonstrated experimentally that the chaotic shape-forming filter is inferior to the conventional Square Root Raised Cosine (SRRC) filter in single path radio wave communication.

The remaining of the paper is organized as follows. The radio-wave communication system configuration using chaos is presented in Sec. II. The system working principle of the proposed method is reported in Sec. III. In Sec. IV, the decoding threshold is introduced. Simulation and experimental results are reported in Sec. V, verifying the validity and superiority of the proposed method. Finally, some concluding remarks are given in Sec. VI.

FIGURE 1. Block diagram of radio wave communication system.

II. RADIO-WAVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM CONFIGURATION

In digital communication systems, the time-domain waveform of the transmitted information is treated as a rectangular pulse, which is difficult to transmit because of the broadband requirement. The shape-forming filter is used to compress the input signal bandwidth, and to convert the information bit into a baseband signal waveform suitable for the channel transmission. In this work, a chaotic shape-forming filter replaces the conventional shape-forming filter to generate the baseband signal. The baseband signal spectrum is moved to the bandwidth range by linear modulation so that it is fit for the radio wave channel transmission. Figure 1 shows the radio wave communication system block diagram, where $G_T(\omega)$, $C(\omega)$, and $G_R(\omega)$ represent the shape-forming filter, wireless transmission channel, and the matched filter, respectively; the binary information bits $s_m$ pass through the chaotic shape-forming filter to form the baseband signal $u(t)$, and the modulated carrier is used to modulate the baseband signal $u(t)$ to obtain the radio frequency band signal $m(t)$. After the transmitted signal passes through the wireless channel, the frame synchronization and channel estimation are conducted using the Synchronization (Sync) probe signal; the carrier synchronization is implemented by using a Costas PLL to obtain demodulation signal $d(t)$ and filter output signal $y(t)$. Then, the decode threshold $\theta$ is obtained by sending the filter output signal and the parameters of the channel estimation to the anti-multipath threshold calculation algorithm. Finally, the decoder is used to decode the information bits $\hat{s}_m$ from the calculated threshold $\theta$.

III. SYSTEM WORKING PRINCIPLE

From Fig. 1, we recognize that the system configuration of chaos wireless communication is precisely the conventional radio wave communication system configuration. Therefore, we simply replace the shape-forming filter with the chaotic one and also replace the matched filter accordingly. In the following, the principle of radio wave communication system using the properties of chaos is elaborated.
In our proposed radio-wave communication system, a basis function is displayed in Eq. (1) and its time domain waveform is shown in Fig. 2. In fact, the basis function given by Eq. (1) is used to encode the source code stream (information) by using the convolution of the basis function with the bipolar information bit [25]. By this way, the information is encoded into the chaotic baseband signal.

\[
p(t) = \begin{cases} 
(1 - e^{-\frac{t}{T}}) e^{\beta t} \left( \cos(\omega t) - \frac{\beta}{\omega} \sin(\omega t) \right), & t < 0 \\
1 - e^{\beta(t-\frac{1}{f})} \left( \cos(\omega t) - \frac{\beta}{\omega} \sin(\omega t) \right), & 0 \leq t < \frac{1}{f} \\
0, & t \geq \frac{1}{f}, 
\end{cases} 
\]  

(1)

where \( \omega = 2\pi \cdot f \) and \( \beta = f \cdot \ln 2 \) are parameters, and \( f \) is the base frequency of the chaotic signal used to adjust the data transmission rate in the baseband signal. The basis function is decaying fast in the backward direction and \( N_p \), a positive integer, denotes the time instant at which the basis function amplitude can be neglected, that is, if \( t < -N_p \), then \( p(t) \approx 0 \). From Fig. 2, the requirement is satisfied for \( N_p = 6/f = 10ms \). The chaotic baseband signal is generated as Eq. (2) by convoluting the information bit, \( s_m \), with the basis function, as depicted by \( G_T(\omega) \) in Fig. 1. The shape-forming filter output, \( u(t) \), is given by

\[
u(t) = \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_m \cdot p(t - \frac{m}{f}), \quad s(t) = s_{[t \cdot f]} 
\]  

(2)

where \( s_m = \pm 1 \), \( [t \cdot f] \) is the closest integer in the downward direction. It means that the chaotic baseband waveform can be generated by a convolution between the information bits and the basis function in Eq. (2) rather than by the integration of the differential equation, as equation (1) in [16]. The filter in Eq. (2) is not only compatible with the practical communication equipment without an extra electronic circuit, but it is also easy to implement yielding an improved communication performance. Given a symbol sequence,

\[1 - 11 - 11, 11 - 111, -111 - 1 - 1, 1 - 11 - 11, -111 - 11, -1 - 1 - 1 - 11,\]

the shape-forming filter output is shown in Fig. 3(a), where the red dash line shows the information sequence and the blue solid line is the shape-forming filter output. Figure 3(b) shows the spectrum of the shape-forming filter output. Figure 3(c) is the three dimensional phase space plot of the states and the information. As can be seen from Fig. 3(b), the chaotic signal has a rich low-frequency component. In order to meet the bandwidth requirement of the radio wave channel transmission, the spectrum of the baseband signal is shifted to the required channel bandwidth range using linear modulation (referred to as Double Side Band Suppression Carrier, DSB-SC) to obtain the transmitted signal, \( m(t) \), as

\[m(t) = u(t) \cdot \cos(2\pi f_c t), \]

(3)

where \( f_c \) is the carrier frequency.

The wireless channel mathematical model [26] is given by

\[h(t) = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \alpha_l \delta(t - \tau_l) + n(t), \]

(4)

where \( \delta(\cdot) \) is Dirac function, \( \alpha_l \) and \( \tau_l \) are the attenuation coefficient and the delay-time for the \( l \)th multi-path in the channel, respectively, and \( n(t) \) is the Gaussian noise.

At the receiver, the frame synchronization is identified by using a correlation operation between the received signal and the Sync probe signal. We can find from the PLL in Fig. 1 that the low-pass filters are replaced by the matched filters \( G_R(\omega) \). Therefore, the demodulation signal and the filter output signal are obtained by passing through the received signal into the Costas PLL. The demodulation signal is given by

\[d(t) = m(t) \cos(2\pi f_c t) - \frac{1}{2} u(t) + \frac{1}{2} u(t) \cos(4\pi f_c t). \]

(5)

The corresponding matched filter, with impulse response given by \( g(t) = p(-t) \), is used to filter out the high frequency term of Eq. (5), due to its low-pass characteristic, and to maximize the signal-to-noise ratio, as shown by

\[y(t) = g(t) \ast d(t), \]

(6)

where ‘\( \ast \)’ denotes convolution. The matched filter output signal waveform \( y(t) \) and its spectrum are shown in Fig. 4. Subplots (a) and (c) in Fig. 4 are the matched filter output in the single-path and the double-path channels, respectively; the subplots (b) and (d) in Fig. 4...
are the corresponding spectra of the filter output signal in
subplots (a) and (c), respectively. The sampled value using
the signal in (a); (c) The filter output for the two paths; (d) The spectrum of
the signal in (c).

IV. THE ANTI-MULTIPATH ALGORITHM

In wireless channel, ISI caused by multi-path propagation is
unavoidable. In traditional wireless communication systems,
the ISI effect is decreased by using complicated channel
equalization methods. Due to a property of the chaotic signal,
ISI effect can be decreased by using the proper decoding
threshold [23]. Here, the method is briefly explained as
follows.

In our proposed communication system, the signal received
by the receiver is given by

\[ r(t) = h(t) * u(t) + n(t) \]
\[ = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \alpha_l \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(-\tau)r(t-\tau)\,d\tau \]
\[ = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \alpha_l \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_m \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(\tau)p(\tau-t+\tau_l+m/f)\,d\tau + n(t), \]

where \( n(t) \) is Gaussian noise. Then the matched filter output is
given by

\[ y(t) = g(t) * r(t) \]
\[ = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(-\tau)r(t-\tau)\,d\tau \]
\[ = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \alpha_l \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_m \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(\tau)p(\tau-t+\tau_l+m/f)\,d\tau \right) + n(t) \]

Sampling \( y(t) \) at frequency \( f \), yields

\[ y_n = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \alpha_l \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_m \left( \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(\tau)p(\tau-t+\tau_l+m/f)\,d\tau \right) + n(t) \]

\[ = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_m C_{l,m} + W \]

where \( P \) is the sum of the multi-path power for \( s_n \), \( I \) is the
interference from other symbols in the multi-path, and \( W \) is
the noise effect. \( C_{l,j} \) is the sampled value of the \( l \)th multi-path
at the \( j \)th instant, given by

\[
C_{l,j} = \begin{cases} \alpha_l D \left( 2 - e^{-\frac{\beta}{\tau}} - e^{\frac{\beta}{\tau}} \right) \left( A \cos(\omega \tau_l) + B \sin(\omega \tau_l) \right), & \tau_l + \frac{j}{f} \geq 1 \frac{\beta}{f} \\ 0, & 0 \leq \tau_l + \frac{j}{f} < 1 \frac{\beta}{f} \end{cases}
\]

where \( A = \frac{(\omega^2 - 3\beta^2)}{4\beta(\omega^2 + \beta^2)} \), \( B = \frac{(3\omega^2 - \beta^2)}{4\omega(\omega^2 + \beta^2)} \) and \( D = e^{-\beta} |\tau_l + \frac{j}{f}|. \)

If there would be no \( I \) in Eq. (9), then the symbol \( s_n \) could
be decoded by comparing the sampled point \( y_n \) with the mean
of \( W \) that is equal to 0. However, due to \( I \), \( s_n \) has to be decoded
to compare with \( I \), which is just the Inter-Symbol Interference
(ISI) [23] calculated by

\[
I = \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \sum_{m=-\infty}^{\infty} s_{n+l+C_{l,i}}
\]

\[
= \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \sum_{i=1}^{L-1} s_{n+l+C_{l,i}} + \sum_{l=0}^{L-1} \sum_{i=1}^{L-1} s_{n+l+C_{l,i}}
\]

\[ = I_{past} + I_{future}. \]

The use of \( I \) as the decoding threshold is to eliminate ISI.
As can be seen from Eq. (11), \( I \) is decided by both the past
symbols transmitted and the future symbols to be transmitted,
and, as well as, by the channel parameters. For the practical
communication system, the future symbols cannot be predicted,
so, the \( I_{past} \) is used as the suboptimal threshold to
decide the information. The channel information can be identified
using channel estimation from the Sync probe signal in
practical communication situation. The \( n \)th information bit is
recovered by

\[ \hat{b}_n = \begin{cases} 1, & y_n > I_{past} \\ 0, & y_n \leq I_{past} \end{cases} \]
where $\tilde{b}_n$ is the $n$th recovered bit at the receiver, and $y_n$ is the $n$th sampling point with maximal signal-to-noise ratio from the filtered output signal at $t$. This operation eliminates the ISI caused by the past transmitted symbols. Although this operation does not remove all ISI, it does improve the communication performance when it is compared with the conventional one, as shown by the following simulations.

V. THE EXPERIMENTAL CONFIGURATION AND PERFORMANCE COMPARISON

In this Section, the conventional radio wave communication system is compared with the proposed chaotic radio wave communication system. As we have mentioned in the Introduction, one of the main aims of this work is to use chaos in conventional wireless communication system with minimal change to the system configuration. We only replace the shape-forming filter and the matched filter in the conventional wireless communication system with the chaotic shape-forming filter given in Eqs. (1) and (2); at the same time, we replace the matched filter at the receiver with the corresponding matched filter given by Eq. (6). In the conventional radio wave communication system, the square root raised cosine shape-forming filter and its corresponding matched filter are used [27], [28], as given by

$$P_b(t) = 4y \frac{\cos \left( \frac{(1+\gamma)t}{T_s} \right) + \sin \left( \frac{(1-\gamma)t}{T_s} \right)}{\pi \sqrt{T_s \left( 1 - (4\gamma T/T_s)^2 \right)}}, \quad (13)$$

where $\gamma$ is roll-off factor and $T_s$ is the symbol period. The time domain waveform and the filter output for the symbol sequence $[1 - 11 - 11, 11 - 111, -111 - 1 - 1, 1 - 1 - 1 - 11, -111 - 11, -1 - 1 - 1 - 11]$ are shown in Fig. 5.

In the simulation, we use continuous-time manner to calculate Eqs. (1) and (2), in order to get continuous time baseband signal. The baseband signal is upconverted to the transmitted signal by using the DSBSB in Eq. (3). At the receiver, the continuous time demodulation signal and the continuous time filter output signal are obtained by passing the received signal through the Costas PLL, and then the discrete-time sampling points (with the maximum signal to noise ratio) from the filter output signal are used to compare with the suboptimal threshold in Eq. (11) in order to recover the information bit. In the experiment, the above process is implemented by two TMS320C6713 Digital Signal Processor (DSP) to test the practical communication performance. In order to draw the effective Bit Error Rate (BER) curves for performance comparison, the practical wireless channel is replaced by a Rockwell hardware channel simulator, which is used to adjust the Signal-to-Noise Ratio (SNR) and the Doppler frequency shift. The baseband signal frequency range allowed by hardware equipment is limited from 300Hz to 3.3kHz and the sampling frequency of the analog-to-digital converter is $f_s = 9.6kHz$. The experimental setup is given in Fig. 6. At the transmitter, the bit transmission rate is 600 bits/s and the transmitted signal are grouped into frames, as shown in Fig. 7. The frame structure contains a Sync probe signal with 1024 bits and data information with 7170 bits, where the data information in each frame includes the baseband signal of 3585 bits generated by the CSF and SRRC.

Figure 8 shows the BER comparison under the single path wireless channel. Subplots (a) and (b) in Fig. 8 show the simulation and experimental results, respectively. Because it is the single path channel, no equalization is used in both methods. We can see from Fig. 8 that both simulation and experimental results are consistent, and both indicate that: firstly, the proposed CSF using suboptimal threshold achieves better BER performance than using zero as threshold; secondly, the BER performance of the CSF is inferior to the SRRC about 0.5dB in the single path channel. The reason is as follows. The ISI of CSF can be observed in the autocorrelation of the basis function, given by $y(t) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p(\tau) p(t - \tau)d\tau$, as shown in Fig. 9. The normalized autocorrelation of CSF and SRRC are shown by blue solid line and red dashed line, respectively. The sampling point at the instant $nT_s$ is the ISI of the current symbol to the $n$th ($n = \pm 1, \pm 2, \ldots$) symbol. It can be seen that the sampling points of the autocorrelation generated by SRRC at all instants $nT_s$ are always zero, because it is designed to eliminate the ISI in single path channel. However, the ISI can be found in the autocorrelation of CSF at the same instant. It means that in a chaotic wireless communication system, although the receiver can also yield the maximum signal-to-noise ratio through the matched filter, the chaotic shape-forming filter itself cannot remove ISI influence in the single-path channel. For the first time, we point out and state that the chaotic baseband wireless communication is inferior to the conventional one in the single path channel. But we can see from Fig. 8 that the BERs of the proposed method and the conventional one are quite similar in the single path channel, because the suboptimal threshold is employed in the proposed method.

Figure 10 gives the two-path channel simulation and experimental BER comparison. The black line with down triangular mark and the green line with dot mark in the subplot (a) represent the simulation BER of the SRRC with and without the channel equalization using the minimum mean square error (MMSE) equalizer [29], respectively. The pink line with diamond mark, the blue line with up triangular
FIGURE 6. Experimental setup.

FIGURE 7. The frame structure of the transmitted signal.

FIGURE 8. Simulation and experimental performance comparison of chaotic and conventional communication systems in single path channel, where the base frequency is $f = 0.6$ kHz, sampling frequency is $f_s = 9.6$ kHz, carrier frequency is $f_c = 1.8$ kHz, and roll-off factor is $\gamma = 0.35$.

FIGURE 9. Normalized autocorrelation of CSF and SRRC.

mark and the red line with rectangular mark, respectively, represents the simulation BER of the CSF using 0 as threshold, at the same time using the MMSE equalization, and using $I_{past}$ as threshold without any equalization. Subplot (b) in Fig. 10 is the experimental BER corresponding to Fig. 10(a). As can be seen from Fig. 10, under the multi-path channel, the simulation and the experimental test show that, when using $I_{past}$ as the threshold, even without equalization, the BER of the chaotic one is lower than that of the SRRC even with MMSE. The chaotic communication system demonstrates better performance in the multi-path channel. For the other multi-path channel parameters, the results are similar to the results in Fig. 10. A point to be noticed here is that the channel parameters in the experiment are set as constant due to the Rockwell hardware device limitation, and the same channel parameters are set in the simulation to ensure a consistency between the simulations and the experiments. This setting is reasonable, because the radio channel is a slow time-varying channel. The channel parameters can be considered as constant in the coherence time, that is, in a frame signal. Moreover, various fast
time-varying multi-path channels parameters are also used to test the communication performance, as shown in Fig. 11. In the simulation, a three-ray multipath channel is considered, in which the attenuation coefficient follows a normal distribution with the mean values as [0.6, 0.3, 0.1], the variance of 0.05 and the delay time follows a uniformly distributed random process from 0 to $2\pi$, respectively. It can be seen that the BER performance comparison in the fast time-varying channel shows similar conclusions as the simulation results in Fig. 10.

VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, in order to look for a better way to use chaos properties in the radio wave communication system with minimum modification to the conventional communication system, we propose to use the chaotic shape-forming filter and its corresponding matched filter to replace the conventional shape-forming filter. This new wireless communication system achieves maximum SNR, and the use of a simple suboptimal threshold improves the BER performance in multi-path channel, and improves the system performance in a simple way by removing the complicated channel equalization algorithm, thus simplifying the software of the system. In this work, an application of wireless communication with chaos are implemented in two DSPs with hardware channel simulator, exploring the engineering application of chaotic communication. Moreover, the chaotic shape-forming filter and the matched filter can be easily used in the 5G or 6G communication systems, because the shape-forming of the baseband signal is essential in a communication system. This work focus on improving the communication performance in complex channel in the sense of providing a lower BER as compared to the conventional one. The use of chaos in the proposed method cannot directly improve the communication security. However, it can be extended to spread spectrum communication to achieve a higher communication security [30].

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