Brandon Wright

ECE 6590

December 14, 2023

**Software Radio Final Project – QPSK Receiver**

**Abstract—For this project, we were tasked with creating a QPSK receiver to demodulate a series of progressively more degraded input signals. Part I implements demodulation, timing acquisition and data extraction. Part II adds a symbol-spaced equalizer to Part I. Part III adds a fractionally-spaced equalizer to Part I. Part IV implements carrier acquisition and tracking to correct for phase and carrier offset. Part V adds symbol rate tracking. By following the textbook and applying topics taught in class, the end result was a receiver that is able to successfully demodulate and extract the data from all samples, despite how degraded or noisy the input signal was.**

The software radio receiver in this project was implemented in five parts using textbook Chapter 12 as a guide. The data packed of the received signal consisted of a 128-symbol cyclic preamble and payload. The preamble consisted of four repetitions of a 32-symbol pilot sequence **cp**, which was followed by a data payload of variable length. The data symbols in the packet were mapped using the QPSK Gray mapping. The sequence **cp** was used to identify the beginning of the payload starting in **Part I**. **Parts I, II** and **IV** decimate the received baseband signal **xBB** by a factor of 100 by finding the correct symbol timing by finding the maximum values of the periodic signal power function **rhot**.

**Parts II** and **IV** use **cp** to implement a symbol-spaced equalizer to correct for noise. For these parts, the absolute value of the signal’s autocorrelation is measured and a peak is found in the beginning of one repetition of the sequence **cp**. The location of this peak is then used to estimate tap weights for the equalizer using the LMS adaptation algorithm \*\*TODO check this to see if it’s true\*\*\*. The tap weights are then used on the packet to adjust for any noise or other error. **Part III** skips the timing phase estimation and instead decimates **xBB** at twice the symbol rate (i.e. L=50) and implements a half symbol-spaced equalizer using **cp**.

**Part IV** introduces carrier acquisition and tracking to estimate and correct for carrier frequency offset (**Dfc)** as well as carrier phase offset (**phic)**. **Dfc** by finding complex number **J** over one period in the cyclic preamble using pilot aided carrier recovery. The angle of **J** is then used to estimate and adjust for carrier offset **Dfc\_est. Phic** is then estimated using a decision-directed phase recovery loop and adjust the baseband signal accordingly. **Part V** implements a method to track the signal’s symbol rate in the event that symbol rate experiences an unknown offset. This is done using a decision-directed timing phase recovery method.

After adjusting for the various sources of error in **Parts I** through **V**, the payload is converted from QPSK to an array of bits and the bits are saved to the file **transmitted\_file.txt** to store final, decoded message. To test the receiver, the class CD contained several .mat files that contained different data messages of various lengths that were affected by noise, error, and different types of offsets. Test files xRF1 through xRF9 were all successfully demodulated and decoded and read with very little error in the final text.

**Part I – Demodulation, timing acquisition, and data extraction**

For the first part of the project, we were tasked with demodulating a signal with very little noise and extracting its data. First, input signal **xRF** was converted to the complex-valued baseband QAM signal **xBB**. Because fc = 105Hz, the out-of-spectrum components were filtered out the baseband by convolving **xBB** with **pT**, which acted as a bandpass filter. The spectrum of **xBB** and filtered baseband signal **xBBf** are shown in **Figure 1(a) and (b)**. As shown in **Figure 1(b)**, the out-of-spectrum components were successfully removed as seen by the single spike in the frequency domain. The eye pattern of **xBBf** is should in **Figure 1(c)**.

Next, the timing phase of **xBBf** was recovered using a non-data aided timing recovery method. In the absence of timing offset, the timing phase that maximizes the signal power **rhot** should be used to get the correct set of symbols. Because of the lack of timing offset, **rhot** should be periodic, and the maximum should repeat every L samples, where L is the decimation factor. Because **rhot** is periodic, the first maximum only needs to be located and the rest of the baseband can be decimated at intervals of L starting at the first maximum, yielding decimated baseband signal **xBBd**. L = 100 for this project.

Finally, after the timing phase was determined, the preamble was identified in **xBBd** by looking for four repeats of the 32-sybmol pilot sequence **cp**. The beginning of the data payload was found by looking for the end of the prelude, and the payload symbols were converted from QPSK to binary using the Gray mapping found in **Table 1**. The eye pattern of the payload is shown in **Figure 1(d)**, and it is apparent that its contents are indeed a QPSK signal considering the values all land at values near to ±1 ± j. The data bits of the payload were saved to a text file, which contained a pun about two math books.

**Part II – Symbol-spaced equalizer**

For the second part of the project, a symbol-spaced equalizer was implemented to adjust for channel distortion and noise in the signal. Firstly, the absolute value of the autocorrelation **ryy** of **xBBd** was calculated to find the beginning of the preamble, as shown in **Figure 2**. As shown in **Figure 2**, there are peaks in **|ryy­|** that correspond to the beginning of the end of one iteration of **cp**. The location of one of the peaks was used as the starting point to get a series of 32 symbols from **xBBd** that were then used to estimate tap weights **w** using the LMS adaptation algorithm with 100,000 iterations and **mu** = 0.0025. After completion of the algorithm, **w** was then shifted to have the highest value in the middle and **w** was used to obtain an equalized baseband signal **xBBe**.

Finally, the preamble was detected in **xBBe** and the payload data was extracted. The receiver was run using sample data **xRF1**-**xRF5** and their corresponding answers, which again yielded text that was a series of puns and answers. The eye patterns of **xRF2**-**xRF5** and their corresponding payloads are found in **Figures 3** through **6.** As seen in these figures, the payload eye patterns become rougher with more variation around the QPSK values, but the equalization worked well enough that none of the data was lost. \*\*\*TODO write section on deviation of timing phase.\*\*\*

**Part III – Fractionally-spaced equalizer**

For **Part III**, the symbol-spaced equalizer of **Part II** was replaced with a half-symbol spaced equalizer and the difference in performance between the two was evaluated. Firstly, because a fractionally-spaced equalizer is insensitive to the timing phase, the timing recovery functionality of **Part I** was removed. Instead, **xBBd** was obtained by decimating the baseband to twice the symbol rate, or by a decimation factor of L = 50.

Next, just as in **Part II**, **|ryy­|** was calculated and one of the peaks in the preamble was picked as a starting point to estimate the tap weight **w**, which were estimated using the LMS adaptation algorithm. The length of **w** was twice the length of the pilot **cp**, i.e. 64 symbols. **xBBd** and **w** were then sent to a fractionally-spaced equalizer of order M = 2 and equalized baseband signal **xBBe** was obtained.

Finally, as in the other parts, the payload was located on **xBBe** and the data extracted into a stream of bits. The half-symbol spaced equalizer was tested with test files **xRF1**-**xRF5**, which yielded the text of the same puns as before. A few characters were changed around in the final text of some of the test files with higher noise, but this proved to only be a small problem and most of the data was perfectly intact. The eye patterns for the payloads in **xRF1-xRF5** using **Part III** are found in **Figure 7**. As seen in the figures, eye patterns show symbols very close to the ideal QPSK Gray mapping. The eye patterns in **Figure 7** are a little rougher than those in the previous two parts, but it seems like the fractionally-space equalizer is still doing a good job of retrieving the data from the signal, even if the timing phase is not being tracked.

\*\*\*Add section discussing comparison of part I and part II, including parts about mean square error and performance of equalizer as timing phase is varied\*\*\*

**Part IV – Carrier acquisition and tracking**

For **Part IV**, carrier acquisition and tracking was added to the symbol-spaced equalizer of **Part II** to estimate and adjust for offsets in the carrier frequency (**Dfc**) and phase (**phic**). Firstly, **Dfc** is estimated by using pilot aided carrier recovery. First, complex-valued sum **J** must be found from interval **N1** to **N2**. **N1** is found by looking at the preamble to find the end off initial transience in the beginning of the signal **xBBd**. Because J must be found in a periodic symbol, **N2** = **N1** + N (length of the pilot **cp** or 32)**. Dfc\_est** is found by using the angle of **J** along with **N** and **Tb**. The offset is corrected for by multiplying **xBBd** by exp(-j\*2\*pi\*Dfc\_est\*t1) to get **xBBo**. \*\*Add more on how this works

Next, **xBBo** is sent though the cyclic equalizer as in **Part II** to yield the equalized baseband signal **xBBe**. The phase offset is estimated from **xBBe** using a decision-directed phase recovery loop. The recovery loop tracks the phase error between the measured input **s1** and an expected value **s2**. The phase error between **s1** and **s2** is continually adjusted until the end of **xBBe** is reached. After **phic** has been estimated, the phase offset is adjusted by multiplying **xBBe** by exp(-j\*phic) to get **xBBp**.

Finally, the data payload of **xBBp** is detected and the QPSK symbols are converted into a stream of bits using Gray mapping. The test data for **xRF6**-**xRF8** includes frequency and phase offset errors. By running the test data through the receiver in **Part IV**, the offsets were successfully adjusted for and the data of the text files was recovered, which all included a series of puns or other jokes. The contents of all the test files were successfully recovered without any loss of information, even in cases like **xRF8** where there was a large amount of frequency and phase offset. **Figures \*\*\*** to **\*\*\*** show the eye patterns of the filtered baseband **xBBf** and the payload portion of **xBBp** for test files **xRF6**-**xRF8**. Although the eye patterns in these figures are messier than before, the payload still just contains QPSK symbols and the data is still able to be successfully retrieved despite all of the noise and errors present.

**Part V – Symbol rate tracking**

For **Part V**, the receiver of **Part I** was adapted to be able to track and recover an unknown frequency offset in the symbol rate introduced in the transmitter using a decision directed timing phase recovery method. Because the timing phase is not constant, it is no longer possible to recover the timing phase by looking for the maximum value in **rhot**. Instead, the symbol phase of **xBBf** was found by running a timing recovery algorithm that attempts to minimize the mean square error of transmitted symbols. \*\*\*include more on this\*\*\* The output of the symbol rate tracker is saved as **xBBd**, and the payload is detected as before and its data symbols converted into a stream of bits.

First, the receiver of **Part V** was tested with **xRF1**, where no timing phase offset is present. The text of the data was recreated without any errors. Next, test data **xRF9** was used, which contains a signal with considerable variance in the symbol rate. The receiver in **Part V** was also able to correctly recreate the data, which this time was a very length collection of jokes. The eye patterns of **xBBf** and the payload of **xBBd** is found in **Figure \*\*\***. As shown in the figure, the payload is comprised of a series QPSK symbols with only a little variation. It appears as if the symbol rate tracking is working as desired.

To compare these results with a receiver without timing phase recovery, **xRF9** was run through the receiver of **Part I,** which was able to successfully generate a QPSK symbol payload. However, although the first few sets of characters were correct in the final text file, the text became unreadable as the text became longer. The offset must have gone back to near zero near the middle of the payload, because the text became recognizable again. However, the text after this point also became increasingly more corrupted again and the rest of the file was illegible. The results of **Part V** show that this symbol rate variation was successfully tracked and adjusted for by the timing recovery algorithm.

**Conclusion**

The QPSK receiver of **Parts I** to **V** was a success. All the test files were able to be successfully demodulated and decoded and all the jokes in the test files were able to be read. There were only some very slight errors in **Part III**, but this resulted in only a changed character or two. The rest of the test files were able to be read without the presence of any errors at all, even when faced with test files with a large amount of noise, distortion, or offsets of various types and sizes.