Sound-Activated Light Using NPN Transistor (C828)

Md. Mostafijur Rahman*, Farhan Ishrak†, Raqibul Islam Labonno‡, Mohsina Zabinr§
*22101721, †22101766, ‡22101321 , §22101360
Department of Computer Science and Engineering , BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

***Abstract*—This paper presents the design and implementation of a simple sound-activated light using an NPN transistor (C828) and a condenser microphone. The system detects loud sounds or claps through an electret mic, amplifies the weak audio signal using a transistor-based amplifier, and triggers an LED light in response. The circuit requires no microcontroller or digital processing, making it ideal for beginners exploring analog electronics. The project highlights the basic principles of biasing, AC coupling, and transistor switching and provides a low-cost solution for basic sound detection systems.**

***Index Terms*—Sound detection, NPN transistor, analog circuit, C828, microphone, LED driver, clap switch.**

I. Introduction

Sound-activated systems have wide-ranging applications in automation, sound control, and assistive technologies. While many modern implementations use microcontrollers and digital sensors, this project demonstrates a fully analog alternative using a C828 NPN transistor and an electret condenser microphone.

The goal of this project is to detect loud sound pulses such as a clap and turn on an LED for a short duration. The design serves as an educational tool for learning transistor amplification and AC signal processing in a simple and tangible way.

II. Implementation

A. Component Description

The following components are used in the circuit:

- **Transistor (NPN):** C828 – amplifies the weak signal from the microphone.
- **Condenser Microphone:** Electret type – converts sound to voltage.
- **Capacitor:** 10µF to 100µF – blocks DC and couples the AC signal.
- **Resistors:** 1kΩ, 2.2kΩ, and 450Ω – provide biasing and current control.
- **LED:** Standard 5mm – lights up when sound is detected.
- **Diode (optional):** 1N4007 – protects the circuit from reverse polarity.
- **Power Supply:** 9V battery – provides circuit power.
- **Breadboard:** For prototyping and testing the circuit.

B. Working Principle

The sound-activated light works in the following stages:

1) Microphone Biasing: The electret microphone is biased using a 1kΩ resistor. When a sound is captured, the mic outputs a weak AC signal superimposed on a DC bias.

2) AC Coupling: The 10µF capacitor removes the DC component, allowing only the varying part of the signal (AC) to reach the transistor.

3) Transistor Amplification: The base of the C828 NPN transistor receives the AC signal. If the voltage surpasses the transistor's threshold, it switches on, allowing current to flow from the collector to the emitter.

4) LED Triggering: When the transistor conducts, current passes through the LED, briefly lighting it up. The 450Ω resistor in series with the LED limits current to avoid damage.

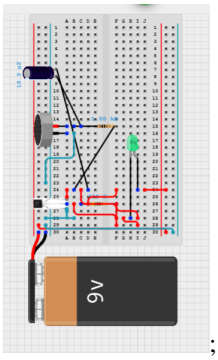

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Fig. 1. Basic circuit of sound-activated light using C828 using circuit lab simulator.

C. Advantages and Limitations

This analog sound detector is inexpensive and does not require any programming or complex circuitry. It demonstrates essential concepts like signal amplification and switching using an NPN transistor. The absence of a microcontroller also makes it suitable for beginners.

However, there are a few limitations:

- The sensitivity and duration of the LED ON time are fixed unless external components (RC timing circuits) are added.
- The circuit can falsely trigger in noisy environments due to lack of noise filtering.
- Component tolerances and microphone quality may affect performance consistency.

Alternative with DTL: Yes, the circuit can be adapted using Diode-Transistor Logic (DTL). DTL circuits utilize diodes for logic gating and a transistor as a switch. For instance, the input signal from the microphone can be passed through a diode logic stage to combine inputs or filter noise,

then fed to a transistor to drive the LED. While DTL can offer logical control and noise immunity, it may increase the component count and design complexity compared to this simple amplification approach. DTL also lacks the gain provided by a proper transistor amplifier, so sound sensitivity may be lower unless additional amplification stages are used.

III. Conclusion

The sound-activated light project demonstrates fundamental electronics principles such as signal amplification, AC coupling, and transistor switching. Using just a few passive and active components, the circuit responds effectively to loud sounds by triggering an LED. This implementation is ideal for electronics hobbyists, students, and beginners exploring analog sound detection circuits. Future enhancements could include timer-based LED hold, sensitivity adjustments, or integration with digital systems.