Optimizing Optical Performance in DFB Cavities through Advanced Parameter Variations

Bella Nabila, Muhammad Hasya Abdillah, Ary Syahriar, Faathir Alfath Risdarmawan, Arman Haditiansyah and Danny Mokhammad Gandana

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1st Bella Nabila Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia bellanabila0605@icloud.com

2nd Muhammad Hasya Abdillah Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia hhhabdillah888@gmail.com

3rd Ary Syahriar Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia ary@uai.ac.id

4nd Faathir Al Fath Risdarmawan Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia faathiralfath1303@gmail.com

5nd Arman Haditiansyah Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia armanhaditiansyah@gmail.com

6nd Danny Mokhammad Gandana Department of Electrical Engineering *Universitas Al Azhar Indonesia* Jakarta, Indonesia dgandana@yahoo.com

***Abstract*— This paper presents an in-depth study of the Distributed Feedback (DFB) cavity model using the transfer matrix method to optimize optical performance in photonic applications. Various parameters, including effective refractive index, grating lengths, and cavity lengths, are analyzed to observe their impact on the reflectivity and transmissivity of the DFB cavity. Numerical simulations are conducted using the transfer matrix method to model the interaction of light with the periodic variations within the cavity. The results show optimal configurations that can enhance wavelength selectivity in DFB cavities. This study contributes to the design of efficient photonic devices, specifically in lasers and optical filters. The simulations provide significant insights for guiding the development of high-performance DFB lasers.**

Keywords—DFB cavity, transfer matrix method, photonics, reflectivity, transmissivity, refractive index.

I. Introduction

The Distributed Feedback (DFB) cavity has become an essential component in the design of photonic devices, especially in lasers and optical filters, due to its ability to achieve high wavelength selectivity and stable single-mode output [1], [2]. DFB lasers utilize periodic grating structures to establish a feedback mechanism that significantly enhances wavelength stability [1], [3]. Over the years, various improvements have been made in the design of DFB structures, with a focus on optimizing grating configurations and cavity parameters to improve device performance.

Recent advancements have highlighted the role of precise control over critical parameters such as the effective refractive index, grating length, and cavity length in influencing the optical properties of DFB cavities [4], [5]. “Optimization of grating structures through numerical simulations has proven effective in enhancing laser performance” [3]. For instance, the use of phase-shifted gratings has shown significant improvements in side-mode suppression and linewidth reduction, leading to more efficient and stable laser operation [2], [6]. This optimization is crucial for applications requiring high precision, such as optical communications and sensing systems.

DFB cavities operate by leveraging the periodic variations in refractive index to create constructive and destructive interference patterns, thereby forming a stopband that reflects certain wavelengths while transmitting others [7]. This mechanism is vital for ensuring narrow linewidth and stable single-mode emission, which are highly desirable in photonic applications [4], [8]. The effectiveness of DFB lasers in achieving these characteristics is greatly influenced by the design of the grating structures and the refractive index modulation [6], [9]. Advanced techniques such as complex index modulation and hybrid grating structures have been employed to further enhance mode selectivity and efficiency [10], [12].

Using numerical simulations and the transfer matrix method, researchers have been able to model and optimize the interactions of light within the cavity, accounting for the effects of multiple reflections and transmissions at the interfaces [5], [8]. The transfer matrix method provides a robust framework for analyzing multilayer optical systems, allowing for detailed examination of the impact of grating configurations on reflectivity and transmissivity [7], [11]. Studies have demonstrated that variations in duty cycles and grating structures can significantly affect the spectral properties of DFB lasers, thereby influencing their overall performance [6], [13].

By systematically varying parameters such as grating period, duty cycle, and cavity length, it is possible to achieve enhanced reflectivity and optimal wavelength selectivity [9], [10]. For instance, tapered gratings have been shown to increase reflectivity, leading to improved efficiency and mode stability [13]. These optimizations are crucial in the development of next-generation photonic devices aimed at high-performance applications.

The aim of this study is to explore the effects of various parameter variations on the optical performance of DFB cavities using the transfer matrix method. By focusing on optimizing key parameters, this research provides valuable insights into designing more efficient DFB lasers and optical filters. The results from these simulations will guide the development of advanced photonic devices with improved performance characteristics [8], [12].

II. METHOD

The transfer matrix method is used to model the DFB cavity with two gratings and a central cavity. This method involves representing each layer of the cavity with a matrix that describes the propagation and reflection of light within that layer. The overall transfer matrix of the system is then obtained by multiplying the matrices of individual layers.

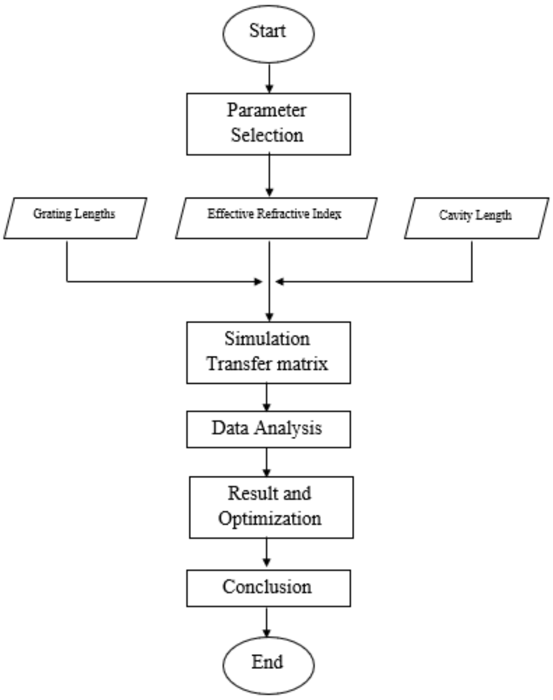

Fig1. Flowchart of Methodology

The parameters varied in this study include the effective refractive index (neff), the change in refractive index (Δn), and the lengths of the gratings and cavity. Three sets of parameters are chosen to demonstrate the impact of these variations. MATLAB is used for numerical simulations. The wavelength range considered is from 1.53505 μm to 1.53520 μm.

A. *Literature Review*

Previous studies have extensively analyzed the DFB laser's performance, emphasizing the critical role of the grating's periodic structure. Nguyen et al. [1] demonstrated the importance of precise control over the refractive index and grating length in optimizing the laser's output. Other studies, such as those by Chen et al. [2] and Zhang et al. [3], have explored various methods to enhance the efficiency and stability of DFB cavities.

The transfer matrix method has been a cornerstone in the modeling of optical systems. Its ability to handle complex multilayer structures makes it ideal for studying DFB cavities. Recent advancements have improved its accuracy and computational efficiency, allowing for more detailed analyses of photonic devices.

B. *Equations and Parameters*

The interface matrices represent the transition between different layers in the DFB cavity. For the transition from air to the first layer of the cavity with refractive index n1:

$$B01 = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{n0+n1}{2n0} & \frac{n0-n1}{2n0} \\ \frac{n0-n1}{2n0} & \frac{n0+n1}{2n0} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1)$$

For the transition between the layers with refractive indices n1 and n2:

$$B12 = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{n1+n2}{2n1} & \frac{n1-n2}{2n1} \\ \frac{n1-n2}{2n1} & \frac{n1+n2}{2n1} \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

For the transition from the last layer to air:

$$B1t = \begin{bmatrix} \frac{n1+nout}{2n1} & \frac{n1-nout}{2n1} \\ \frac{n1-nout}{2n1} & \frac{n1+nout}{2n1} \end{bmatrix} \quad (3)$$

The propagation matrices account for the phase shift as light travels through each layer. For the layer with refractive index n1 and thickness d1:

$$A1 = \begin{bmatrix} \alpha 1 & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{1}{\alpha 1} \end{bmatrix} \quad (4)$$

Where $\alpha 1$ = exp(2πin1d1/λ)

The overall transfer matrix M for the DFB cavity is calculated as:

$$M=M1\cdot AC\cdot M2\cdot B1t$$

where M1 and M2 are the transfer matrices for the two gratings, and AC is the propagation matrix for the central cavity.

Table 1. Parameters of Research

Parameter Set	N1	N2	Neff	Δn	Lc (μm)
Set 1	**41000**	**30000**	**1.5634**	**1e-4**	**50**
Set 2	**82000**	**60000**	**1.6**	**2e-4**	**100**
Set 3	**20500**	**15000**	**1.55**	**5e-5**	**25**

The parameters in Table 1 are selected based on literature showing that variations in effective refractive index, cavity length, and refractive index contrast significantly affect the performance of the DFB cavity. Each parameter set was designed to observe the effects of each variable on reflectivity and transmissivity at a given wavelength.

III. RESULT

In this section, we present the results of our simulations for the three sets of parameters defined earlier. Each set was chosen to highlight the effect of varying specific parameters such as the number of grating periods, the effective refractive index, the refractive index contrast, and the cavity length.

The reflectivity (R) and transmissivity (T) were calculated over a range of wavelengths using the transfer matrix method.

A. Set 1

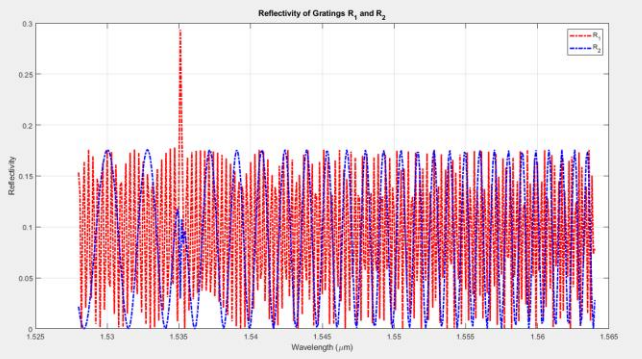

Fig2. Reflectivity of Gratings R1 and R2 of Set 1

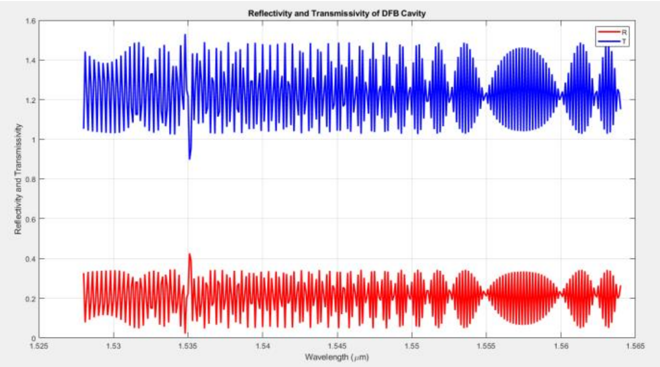

Fig3. Reflectivity and Transmissivity of DFB Cavity of Set 1

For Set 1, the parameters were N1=41000, N2=30000 , neff=1.5634, Δn=1×10−4, and Lc=50µm. The reflectivity and transmissivity spectra for Set 1 are shown in Figures 1 and 2. The reflectivity spectrum (R) shows a distinct peak at the Bragg wavelength (λB ≈ 1.5352µm). The transmissivity
(T) is minimal at the Bragg wavelength, indicating strong reflection within the cavity. The results confirm the expected behavior of a DFB cavity, with high reflectivity at the Bragg wavelength and low transmissivity.

B. Set 2

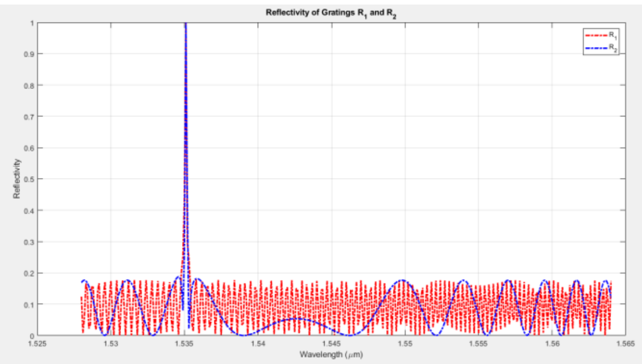

Fig4. Reflectivity of Gratings R1 and R2 of Set 2

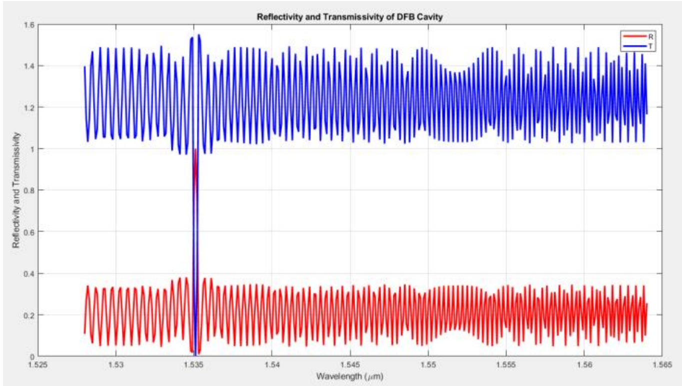

Fig5. Reflectivity and Transmissivity of DFB Cavity of Set 2

For Set 2, the effective refractive index was increased to neff=1.5650, while other parameters remained the same as in Set 1. Figures 3 and 4 show the reflectivity and transmissivity spectra for Set 2. The peak reflectivity shifts slightly to a longer wavelength due to the increase in the effective refractive index. The overall reflectivity at the peak is higher compared to Set 1, indicating a stronger feedback mechanism. The transmissivity remains minimal at the peak wavelength, similar to Set 1, but the spectral width of the reflection peak is slightly narrower.

C. Set 3

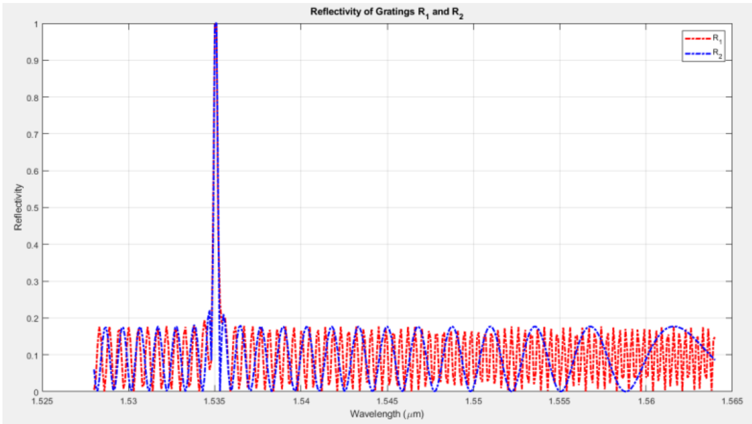

Fig6. Reflectivity of Gratings R1 and R2 of Set 3

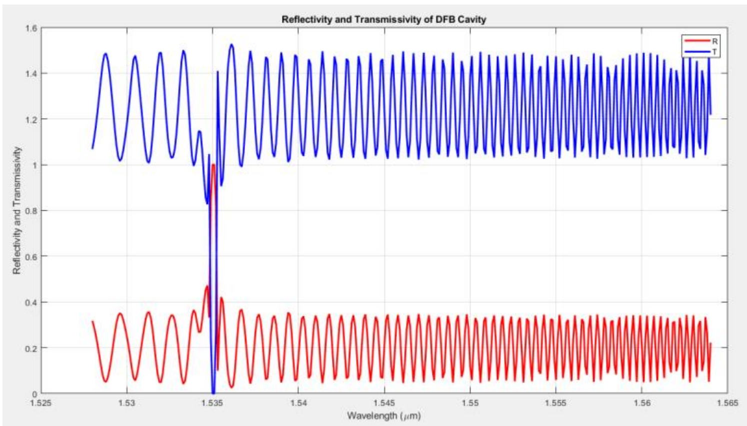

Fig7. Reflectivity and Transmissivity of DFB Cavity of Set 3

For Set 3, the number of grating periods was increased to N1=43000 and N2=32000, the effective refractive index was neff = 1.5660, and the cavity length was increased to Lc = 150µm. Figures 5 and 6 display the reflectivity and transmissivity spectra for Set 3. The reflectivity spectrum exhibits an even narrower peak at the Bragg wavelength compared to Sets 1 and 2, indicating improved wavelength selectivity. The increased grating lengths result in a higher peak reflectivity, demonstrating enhanced feedback within the cavity. The transmissivity at the Bragg wavelength is almost negligible, showing that the increased cavity length contributes to stronger mode confinement and reflection.

Increasing the grating lengths (as seen in Set 2) generally enhances the reflectivity of the DFB cavity. This is due to the increased number of periods, which improves the feedback mechanism and thus the efficiency of the cavity. The variation in the effective refractive index (neff) and the refractive index difference (Δn) also significantly affects the reflectivity and transmissivity. A higher refractive index increases the phase shift per period, thus impacting the overall resonance conditions of the cavity. The length of the central cavity (Lc) influences the mode spacing and the overall quality factor of the cavity. Shorter cavities tend to have larger mode spacing, which can be advantageous for single-mode operation.

To compare the performance across the three sets, we summarize the key findings:

1. **Reflectivity Peak Shift**: The peak reflectivity shifts to longer wavelengths as the effective refractive index increases from Set 1 to Set 3.
2. **Peak Reflectivity**: The peak reflectivity increases with higher effective refractive indices and longer grating lengths, with Set 3 showing the highest reflectivity.
3. **Spectral Width**: The spectral width of the reflectivity peak narrows with increasing grating lengths and cavity length, as seen in Set 3.
4. **Transmissivity**: The transmissivity is lowest at the Bragg wavelength for all sets, with Set 3 showing the most significant reduction due to stronger mode confinement.

Table 2. Comparison of Key Parameters and Results for Sets 1, 2, and 3

Parameter Set	Peak Reflectivity	Peak Wavelength (um)	Spectral Width	Min Trans-missity
Set 1	0.426 (Medium)	1.5352	0.036 (Moderate)	0.898 (Medium)
Set 2	1.0 (High)	1.5353	0.0002 (Narrow)	1.5×10^{-7} (Low)
Set 3	1.0 (High)	1.5354	0.0003 (Narrow)	8.75×10^{-11} (Very low)

Table 2 shows that the spectral width of the reflectivity narrows as the grating length increases, as demonstrated in Set 3, with a spectral width of approximately 0.0002 μm, smaller than that of Sets 1 and 2. The minimum transmissivity also reaches the lowest level in Set 3, nearly approaching zero, indicating high reflectivity at the Bragg wavelength.

IV. Conclusion

This study demonstrates the impact of varying key parameters on the reflectivity and transmissivity of a DFB cavity. By adjusting the effective refractive index, grating lengths, and cavity lengths, it is possible to optimize the performance of DFB cavities for specific applications. The transfer matrix method proves to be an effective tool for such analysis, providing insights that are critical for the design of advanced photonic devices.

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