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		1
Introduc	tion	9
Analog	System Lab	10
Organiz	ation of the Analog System Lab Course	11
Lab Set	up	12
System	Lab Kit ASLK PRO - An overview	13
	Hardware	13
	Software	13
Getting	to know ASLK PRO	14
Organiz	ration of the Manual	16
Experin	nent 1:	17
Study the ch	aracteristics of negative feedback amplifiers and	
design of an	instrumentation amplifier	
1.1	Brief theory and motivation	18
	1.1.1 Unity Gain Amplifier	18
	1.1.2 Non-inverting Amplifier	19
	1.1.3 Inverting Amplifier	19
1.2	Exercise Set 1	20
1.3	Measurements to be taken	20
1.4	What should you submit	21
1.5	Other related ICs	21
Experim	ent 2:	23
-	rracteristics of regenerative feedback system with design an astable and monostable multivibrator	
2.1	Brief theory and motivation	24

 2.1.2 Astable Multivibrator 2.1.3 Monostable Multivibrator (Timer) 2.2 Exercise Set 2 	25 26
Experiment 3:	27
Study the characteristics of integrators and differentiator circuits	
3.1 Brief theory and motivation	28
3.1.1 Integrators	28
3.1.2 Differentiators	28
3.2 Specifications	28
3.3 Measurements to be taken	28
3.4 What should you submit	29
3.5 Exercise Set 3 - Grounded Capacitor Topologies	
of Integrator and Differentiator	30
Experiment 4:	31
Design of Analog Filters	
4.1 Brief theory and motivation	32
4.2 Specification	33
4.3 Measurements to be taken	33
4.4 What should you submit	33
4.5 Exercise Set 4	34

Experiment 5:			
	elf-tuned filter		
5.1	Brief theory and motivation	36	
	5.1.1 Multiplier as a Phase Detector	36	
5.2	Specification	37	
5.3	Measurements to be taken	37	
	5.3.1 Transient response	37	
5.4	What should you submit	37	
	5.4.1 Exercise Set 5	38	
Experim	ient 6:	39	
Design a function generator and convert it to Voltage-Controlled			
Oscillator/FM			
6.1	Brief theory and motivation	40	
6.2	Specifications	40	
6.3	Measurements to be taken	40	
6.4	What should you submit	41	
6.5	Exercise Set 6	41	
Experim	nent 7:	43	
	Phase Lock Loop (PLL)		
7.1	Brief theory and motivation	44	
7.2	Specifications	44	
7.3	Measurements to be taken	45	
7.4	What should you submit	45	
7.5	Exercise Set 7	45	

Experiment 8:				
Automatic Gain Control (AGC) Automatic Volume Control (AVC)				
8.1	Brief theory and motivation	48		
8.2	Specifications	48		
8.3	Measurements to be taken	48		
8.4	What should you submit	48		
8.5	Exercise Set 8	49		
Experin	nent 9:	51		
DC-DC Conve				
9.1 9.2	Brief theory and motivation Specification	52 52		
9.2 9.3	Measurements to be taken	52 52		
9.5		52		
	9.3.1 Time response 9.3.2 Transfer function	52		
9.4	What should you submit	53		
9.5	Exercise Set 9	53		
5.5		55		
Experim	nent 10:	55		
Design a Low	r Dropout (LDO) regulator			
10.1	Brief theory and motivation	56		
10.2	Specifications	56		
10.3	Measurements to be taken	56		
10.4	What should you submit	57		
10.5	Exercise Set 10	57		

		1
Experin	59	
To study the	parameters of an LDO integrated circuit	
11.1	Brief theory and motivation	60
11.2	Specifications	60
11.3	Measurements to be taken	60
11.4	What should you submit	61
Experin	nent 12:	63 ¦
To study the Evaluation m	parameters of a DC-DC Converter using on-board odule	
12.1	Brief theory and motivation	64
12.2	Specifications	65
12.3	Measurements to be taken	65
12.4	What should you submit	65
Experim	ient 13:	67
Design of a D	igitally Controlled Gain Stage Amplifier	
13.1	Brief theory and motivation	68
13.2	Specifications	68
13.3	Measurements to be taken	68
13.4	What should you submit	68
13.5	Exercise Set 13	69
Experim	nent 14:	71
Design of a D generator/os	igitally Programmable Square and Triangular wave cillator	
14.1	Brief theory and motivation	72

14.2	Specific	ations	72
14.3	•	ements to be taken	72
14.4	What sh	nould you submit	72
14.5	Exercise	e Set 14	73
ICs u	sed ir	n ASLK PRO	75
A.1	TL082:	JFET-Input Operational Amplifier	76
	A.1.1	Features	76
	A.1.2	Applications	76
	A.1.3	Description	76
	A.1.4	Download Datasheet	76
A.2	MPY63	4: Wide Bandwidth Analog Precision Multiplier	77
	A.2.1	Features	77
	A.2.2	Applications	77
	A.2.3	Description	77
	A.2.4	Download Datasheet	77
А.З	DAC 78	21: 12 Bit, Parallel, Multiplying DAC	78
	A.3.1	Features	78
	A.3.2	Applications	78
	A.3.3	Description	78
	A.3.4	Download Datasheet	78
A.4	TPS402	200: Wide-Input, Non-Synchronous Buck	
	DC/DC (Controller	79
	A.4.1	Features	79
	A.4.2	Applications	79
	A.4.3	Description	79
	A.4.4	Download Datasheet	79

Α

			•	
11	17	· ∩ 1	σ	lres
			 ' 6'	

	A.5		0: Micropower Low-Dropout Voltage Regulator	80
		A.5.1	Features	80
		A.5.2	Applications	80
		A.5.3	Description	80
		A.5.4	Download Datasheet	80
	A.6	Transist	ors: 2N3906, 2N3904, BS250	81
		A.6.1	2N3906 Features, A.6.2 Download Datasheet	81
		A.6.3	2N3904 Features, A.6.4 Download Datasheet	81
		A.6.5	BS250 Features, A.6.6 Download Datasheet	81
	A.7	Diode: 1	N4448 Small Signal Diode	82
		A.7.1	Features	82
		A.7.2	Download Datasheet	82
В	Intro	ductio	on to Macromodels	83
	B.1	Micromo	odels	84
	B.2	Macrom	odels	84
~	0			
С	Activ	'ity - C	Convert your	
	PC/la	ptop	into an Oscilloscope	87
	C.1	Introduc	tion	88
	C.2	l imitatio		88
	C.2	Cinitatio	2110	00
D	Analo	ng Sv	stem Lab Kit PRO	
0				00
	COUL	ectio	n Diagrams	89
D ''				~~
Bit	Bibliography 99			

	Signal Chain in an Electronic System	10
	Analog System Lab Kit PRO	13
	Picture of ASLK PRO	15
1.1	An ideal Dual-Input, Single-Output OP-Amp and its I-O	
	characteristic	18
1.2	A Unity Gain System	18
1.3	Magnitude and Phase response of a Unity Gain System	19
1.4	Time Response of an Amplifier for	
	a step input of size Vp	19
1.5	(a) Non-inverting amplifier of gain 2,	
	(b) Inverting amplifier of gain 2	19
1.6	Negative Feedback Amplifiers	19
1.7	Frequency Response of Negative Feedback Amplifiers	20
1.8	Outputs VF1 , VF2 and VF3 of Negative Feedback	
	Amplifiers of Figure 2.6 for Square-wave Input VG1	20
1.9	Instrumentation Amplifiers with (a) three and (b) two	
	operational amplifiers	20
2.1	Inverting Schmitt-Trigger and	
	its Hysteresis Characteristic	24
2.2	Symbol for an Inverting Schmitt Trigger	24
2.3	Non-inverting Schmitt Trigger	
	and its Hysteresis Curve	24
2.4	Astable Multivibrator and its characteristics	25
2.5	Trigger waveform	25
2.6	Monostable Multivibrator and its outputs	25
3.1	Integrator	28
3.2	Differentiator	28
3.3	Frequency Response of integrator and differentiator	29
3.4	Outputs of integrator and differentiator for	
	square-wave and triangular-wave inputs	30

List of figures

3.5	Circuits for Exercise 3	30
4.1	A Second-order Universal Active Filter	32
4.2	Magnitude and Phase Response of	
	LPF, BPF, BSF, and HPF filters	32
5.1	Analog Multiplier	36
5.2	A Self-Tuned Filter based on a Voltage Controlled	
	Filter or Voltage Controlled Phase Generator	36
5.3	Output of the Self-Tuned Filter	
	based on simulation	37
6.1	Function Generator	40
6.2	Function Generator Output	40
6.3	Voltage-Controlled Oscillator (VCO)	41
7.1	Phase Locked Loop (PLL) and its characterisitics	44
7.2	Sample output waveform for	
	the Phase Locked Loop (PLL) Experiment	44
7.3	Block Diagram of Frequency Optimizer	45
8.1	Automatic Gain Control (AGC)/	
	Automatic Volume Control (AVC)	48
8.2	Input-Output Characteristics of AGC/AVC	48
8.3	AGC circuit and its output	49
9.1	DC-DC Converter and PWM waveform	52
9.2	(a) SMPS Circuit (b) Ouptut Waveforms	53
10.1	Low Dropout Regulator (LDO)	56
10.2	A regulator circuit and its simulated outputs - line	
	regulation and load regulation	56
11.1	Schematic diagram of on-board evaluation module	60
11.2(a)	Line regulation	61
11.2(b)	Load regulation	61
12.1	Schematic of the on-board EVM	64

12.2	Simulation waveforms - TP3 is the PWM waveform	
	and TP4 is the switching waveform	65
13.1	Circuit for Digital Controlled Gain Stage Amplifier	68
13.2	Equivalent Circuit for simulation	69
13.3	Simulation output of digitally controlled Oscillator wher	ı
	the input pattern for the DAC	69
	was selected to be 0x800	
14.1	Circuit for Digital Controlled Oscillator	72
14.2	Circuit for Simulation	73
14.3	Simulation Results	73
A.1	TL082 - JFET-Input Operational Amplifier	76
A.2	MPY634 - Analog Multiplier	77
A.3	DAC 7821 - Digital to Analog Converter	78
A.4	TPS40200 - DC/DC Controller	79
A.5	TPS7250 -Micropower Low-Dropout Voltage Regulator	80
A.6	2N3906 PNP General Purpose Amplifier	81
A.7	2N3906 NPN General Purpose Amplifier	81
A.8	BS250 P-Channel Enh. Mode Vertical DMOS FET	81
A.9	1N4448 Small Signal Diode	82
C.1	Buffer circuit needed to interface an Analog Signal to	
	Oscilloscope	88
D.1	OP-Amp 1A connected in Inverting Configuration	90
D.2	OP-Amp 1B connected in inverting configuration	90
D.3	OP-Amp 2A can be used in both inverting	
	and non-inverting configuration	91
D.4	OP-Amp 2B can be used in both inverting	
	and non-inverting configuration	91
D.5	OP-Amp 3A can be used in unity gain configuration	
	or any other custom configuration	92

List of figures

D.6	OP-Amp 3B can be used in unity gain configuration	
	or any other custom configuration	92
D.7	Connections for analog multiplier MPY634 - SET I	92
D.8	Connections for analog multiplier MPY634 - SET II	93
D.9	Connections for analog multiplier MPY634 - SET III	93
D.10	Connections for A/D converter DAC7821 - DAC I	94
D.11	Connections for A/D converter DAC7821 - DAC II	95
D.12	Connections for TPS40200 Evaluation	
	step-down DC/DC converter	96
D.13	Connections for TP7250 low-dropout linear voltage reg	g. 97
D.14	MOSFET socket	97
D.15	Bipolar Junction Transistor socket	97
D.16	Diode sockets	98
D.17	Trimmer-potentiometers	98
D.18	Main power supply	98
D.19	General purpose area (2.54mm / 100mills pad spacing)	98

List of tables

1.1	Plot of Peak to Peak amplitude of output	
	Vpp w.r.t. Input Frequency	21
1.2	Plot of Magnitude and Phase variation	
	w.r.t. Input Frequency	21
1.3	Plot of DC output voltage and phase variation	
	w.r.t. DC input voltage	21
2.1	Plot of Hysteresis w.r.t. Regenerative Feedback	25

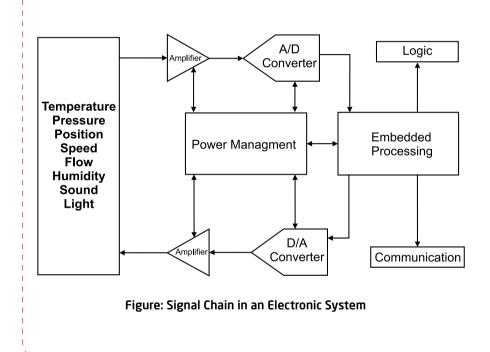
3.1	Plot of Magnitude and Phase w.r.t. Input Frequency	29
3.2	Plot of Magnitude and Phase w.r.t. Input Frequency	29
3.3	Variation of Peak to Peak value of output	
	w.r.t. Peak value of Input	29
4.1	Transfer Functions of Active Filters	32
4.2	Frequency Response of a BPF with $\omega_{0} = 1 kHz$, $Q = 1$	33
4.3	Frequency Response of a BSF with $\omega_{0} = 10 \ kHz$, $Q = 10$	33
5.1	Variation of output amplitude with input frequency	37
6.1	Change in frequency as a function of Control Voltage	41
7.1	Output Phase as a function of Input Frequency	45
7.2	Control Voltage as a function of Input Frequency	45
8.1	Transfer characteristic of the AGC circuit	48
9.1	Variation of output voltage with reference voltage	
	in a DC-DC converter	53
9.2	Variation of duty cycle with reference voltage	
	in a DC-DC converter	53
10.1	Variation of Load Regulation with Load Current	
	in an LDO	56
10.2	Variation of Line Regulation with Input Voltage	
	in an LDO	57
11.1	Line regulation	61
11.2	Load regulation	61
12.1	Variation of the duty cycle of PWM waveform	
	with input voltage	66
12.2	Line regulation	66
12.3	Load regulation	66
13.1	Variation in output amplitude with bit pattern	68
14.1	Varying the bit pattern input to the DAC	72
B.1	Operational Amplifiers available from Texas Instruments	85

Introduction

What you need to know before you get started

Analog System Lab

Although digital signal processing is the most common form of processing signals, analog signal processing cannot be completely avoided since the real world is analog in nature. Consider a typical signal chain (Figure below).



It is evident that analog circuits play a crucial role in the implementation of an electronic system.

The goal of the Analog System Lab Course is to provide students an exposure to the fascinating world of analog and mixed-signal signal processing. The course can be adapted for an undergraduate or a postgraduate curriculum. As part of the lab course, the student will build analog systems using analog ICs and study their macro models, characteristics and limitations. Our philosophy in designing this lab course has been to focus on system design rather than circuit design. We feel that many Analog Design classes

Typical signal chain

A sensor converts the real-world signal into an analog electrical signal. This analog signal is often weak and noisy.

- Amplifiers are needed to strengthen the signal. Analog filtering may be necessary to remove noise from the signal. This "front end" processing improves the signal-to-noise ratio. Three of the most important building blocks used in this stage are (a) Operational Amplifiers, (b) Analog multipliers and (c) Analog Comparators.
- An analog-to-digital converter transforms the analog signal into a stream of 0s and 1s.
 - The digital data is processed by a CPU, such as a DSP, a microprocessor, or a microcontroller. The choice of the processor depends on how intensive the computation is. A DSP may be necessary when realtime signal processing is needed and the computations are complex. Microprocessors and microcontrollers may suffice in other applications.
- Digital-to-analog conversion (DAC) is necessary to convert the stream of Os and 1s back into analog form.
- The output of the DAC has to be amplified before the analog signal can drive an external actuator.

in the colleges focus on the circuit design aspect, ignoring the issues encountered in system design. In the real world, a system designer uses the analog ICs as building blocks. The focus of the system designer are to optimize system-level cost, power, and performance. IC manufacturers such as Texas Instruments offer a large number of choices of integrated circuits keeping in mind the diverse requirements of system designers. As a student, you must be aware of these diverse offerings of semiconductors and select the right IC for the right application. We have tried to emphasize this aspect in designing the experiments in this manual.

Organization of the Course

In designing the lab course, we have assumed that there are about 12 during a semester. We have designed 14 experiments which can be carried out either individually or by groups of two students. The experiments in Analog System Lab can be categorized as follows.

Part I - Learning the basics

In the first part, the student will be exposed to the operation of the basic building blocks of analog systems. Most of the experiments in the **Analog System Lab Course** are centered around the following two components.

- The OP-amp TL082, a general purpose JFETinput operational amplifier, made by Texas Instruments.
- Wide-bandwidth, precision analog multiplier **MPY634** from Texas Instruments.

Using these components, the student will build gain stages, buffers, instrumentation amplifiers and voltage regulators. These experiments bring out several important issues, such as measurement of gain- bandwidth product, slew-rate, and saturation limits of the operational amplifiers.

What is our goal?

Part II - Building analog systems

Part-II concentrates on building analog systems using the blocks mentioned above.

First, we introduce **integrators** and **differentiators** which are essential for implementing filters that can bandlimit a signal prior to the sampling process to avoid aliasing errors.

We then introduce the *analog comparator*, which is a mixed-mode device - its input is analog and output is digital. In a comparator, the rise time, fall time, and delay time are important apart from input offset.

A function generator is also a mixed-mode system that uses an integrator and a regenerative comparator as building blocks. The function generator is capable of producing a triangular waveform and square waveform as outputs. It is also useful in Pulse Width Modulation in DC-to-DC converters, switched-mode power supplies, and Class-D power amplifiers.

The analog multiplier, which is a voltage or current controlled amplifier, finds applications in communication circuits in the form of mixer, modulator, demodulator and phase detector. We use the multiplier in building Voltage Controlled Oscillators, Frequency Modulated waveform generators, or Frequency Shift Key waveform generators in modems, Automatic Gain Controllers, Amplitude Stabilized Oscillators, Self-tuned Filters and Frequency Locked Loop using voltage controlled phase generators and VCOs and multiplier as phase detector are built and their lock range and capture range.

In the Analog System Lab, the frequency range of all applications has been restricted to 1-10 kHz, with the following in mind - (a) The macromodels for the ideal device can be used in simulation, (b) A PC can be used in place of an oscilloscope. We have also included an experiment that can help the student use a PC as an oscilloscope. We also suggest an experiment on the development of macromodels for an OP-Amp.

At the end of Analog System Lab, we believe you will have the following knowhow about analog system design.

- 1. You will learn about the characteristics and specification of analog ICs used in electronic systems.
- 2. You will learn how to develop a macromodel for an IC based on its terminal characteristics, I/O characteristics, DC-transfer characteristics, frequency response, stability characteristic and sensitivity characteristic.
- You will be able to make the right choice for an IC for a given application.
 You will be able to perform basic fault diagnosis of an electronic system.

Lab Setup

The setup for the Analog System Lab is very simple and requires the following.

- ASLK PRO and the associated Lab Manual from Texas Instruments India the lab kit comes with required connectors. Refer to *Chapter 1.4* for an overview of the kit.
- 2
- Oscilloscope. We provide an experiment that helps you build a circuit to directly interface analog outputs to an oscilloscope (See *Chapter C*).
- 3 Dual power supply with the operating voltages of ±10V.
- 4 Function generators which can operate in the range on 1 to 10 MHz and capable of generating sine, square and triangular waves.
- 5 A computer with installed circuit simulation software.

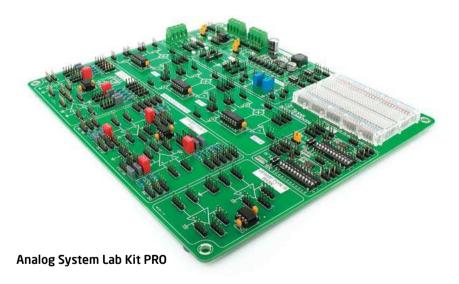
In all the experiments of Analog System Lab, please note the following.

- 1 When we do not explicitly mention the magnitude and frequency of the input waveform, please use 0 to 1V as the amplitude of the input and 1 kHz as the frequency.
- 2 Always use sinusoidal input when you plot the frequency response and use square wave input when you plot the transient response.
- Precaution! Please note that **TL082** is a dual OP-Amp. This means that the IC has two OP-Amp circuits. If your experiment requires only one of the two ICs, do not leave the inputs and output of the other OP- Amp open; instead, place the second OP-Amp in unity-gain mode and ground the inputs.
- Advisory to Students and Instructors. We strongly advise that the student performs the simulation experiments outside the lab hours. The student must bring a copy of the simulation results to the class and show it to the instructor at the beginning of the class. The lab hours must be utilized only for the hardware experiment and comparing the actual outputs with simulation results.

System Lab Kit overview

Hardware

ASLK PRO has been developed at Texas Instruments India. This kit is designed for undergraduate engineering students to perform analog lab experiments. The main idea behind ASLK PRO is to provide a cost efficient platform or test bed for students to realize almost any analog system using general purpose ICs such as OP-Amps and analog multipliers.



ASLK PRO comes with three general-purpose operational amplifiers (**TL082**) and three wide-bandwidth precision analog multipliers (**MPY634**) from Texas Instruments. We have also included two 12-bit parallel-input multiplying digital-to-analog converters **DAC7821**, a wide-input non-synchronous buck-type DC/DC controller **TPS40200**, and a low dropout regulator **TPS7250** from Texas Instruments. A portion of ASLK PRO is left for general-purpose prototyping which can be used for carrying out mini-projects.

The kit has a provision to connect $\pm 10V$ DC power supply. The kit comes with the necessary short and long connectors.

This comprehensive user manual included with the kit gives complete insight of how to use ASLK PRO. The manual covers exercises of analog system design along with brief theory and simulation results.

Refer to *Appendix A* for the details of the integrated circuits that are included in ASLK PRO. Refer to *Appendix D* for additional details of ASLK PRO.

Software

The following software is necessary to carry out the experiments suggested in this manual.

- 1. TINA or PSpice or any powerful simulator based on the SPICE Simulation Engine
- 2. FilterPro A software program for designing analog filters
- 3. SwitcherPro A software program for designing power supplies

We will assume that you are familiar with the concept of simulation and are able to simulate a given circuit.

FilterPro is a program for designing active filters. At the time of writing this manual, **FilterPro** Version 3.1 is the latest. It supports the design of different types of filters, namely *Bessel, Butterworth, Chebychev, Gaussian,* and linear-phase filters. The software can be used to design low-pass filters, high-pass filters, band-stop filters, and band-pass filters with up to 10 poles. The software can be downloaded from [9].

Getting to know ASLK PRO

The Analog System Lab kit ASLK PRO is divided into many sections. Refer to the photo of ASLK PRO when you read the following description.

There are three TL082 OP-Amp ICs labelled 1, 2, 3 on ASLK PRO. Each of these ICs has two amplifiers, which are labelled A and B. Thus 1A and 1B are the two OP-AMps on OP-AMP IC 1, etc. The six OP-amps are categorized as below.

OP-Amp	Туре	Purpose
1A	ΤΥΡΕ Ι	Inverting Configuration only
1B	ΤΥΡΕ Ι	Inverting Configuration only
2A	TYPE II	Full Configuration
2B	TYPE II	Full Configuration
ЗА	TYPE III	Basic Configuration
ЗB	TYPE III	Basic Configuration

Thus, the OP-amps are marked TYPE I, TYPE II and TYPE III on the board. The OP-Amps marked TYPE I can be connected in the inverting configuration only. With the help of connectors, either resistors or capacitors can be used in the feedback loop of the amplifier. There are two such TYPE I amplifiers. There are two TYPE II amplifiers which can be configured to act as inverting or non-inverting. Finally, we have two TYPE III amplifiers which can be used as voltage buffers.

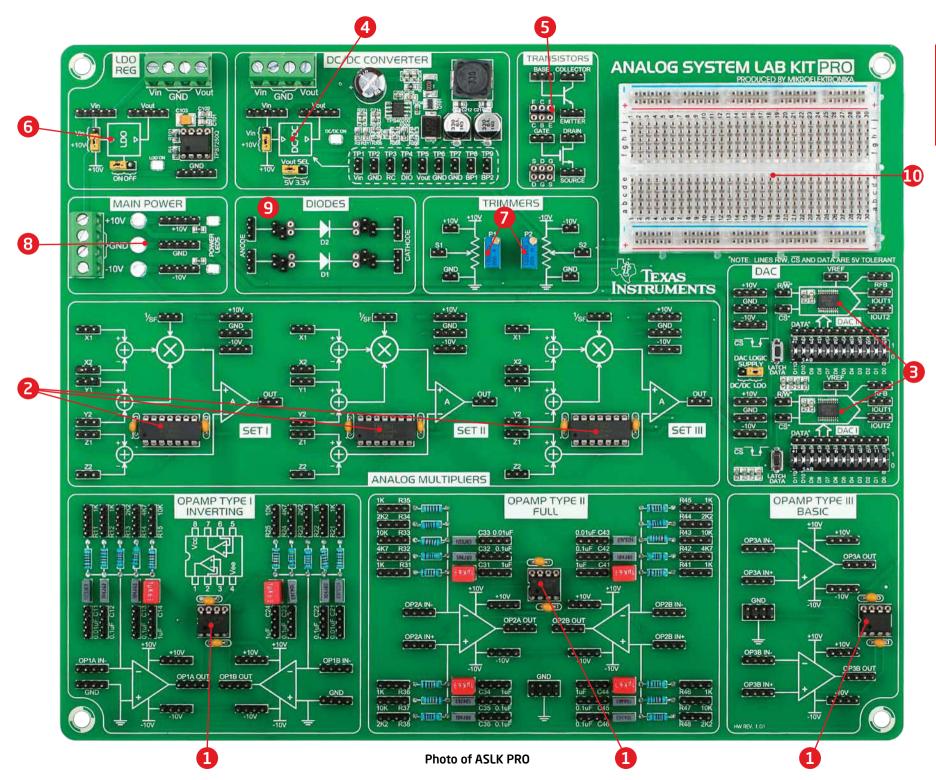
2 Three analog multipliers are included in the kit. These are wide-bandwidth precision analog multipliers from Texas Instruments (**MPY634**). Each multiplier is a 14-pin IC and operates on internally provided ±10V supply.

There are two digital-to-analog converters (DAC) provided in the kit, labeled DAC I and DAC II. Both the DACs are DAC7821 from Texas Instruments. They are 12-bit, parallel-input multiplying DACs which can be used in place of analog multipliers in circuits like AGC/AVC. Ground and power supplies are provided internally to the DAC. DAC Logic Supply Jumper can be used to connect logic power supplies of both DAC I and DAC II to either

LDO or **DC/DC** converter located on the board. Using **Tri-state switches** you can set 12-bits of input data for each DAC to desired value. Click the **Latch Data button** to trigger Digital-to-analog conversion.

- We have included a wide-input non-synchronous DC/DC buck converter TPS40200 from Texas Instruments on ASLK PRO. The converter provides an output of 3.3V over a wide input range of 5.5-15V at output currents ranging from 0.125A to 2.5A. Using Vout SEL jumper you can select output voltage to be either 5V or 3.3V. Another jumper allows you to select whether input voltage is provided from the board (+10V), or externally using screw terminals.
 - We have included **two transistor sockets** on the board, which are needed in designing an LDO regulator (*Experiment 10*), or custom experiments.
- 6 A specialized LDO regulator IC (TPS7250) has been included on the board, which can provide a constant output voltage for input voltage ranging from 5.5V to 11V. Ground connection is internally provided to the IC. Using **ON/OFF jumper** you can enable or disable LDO IC. Another jumper allows you to select whether input voltage is provided from the board (+10V), or externally using screw terminals.
- **There are two 1k**Ω **trimmers** (potentiometer) in the kit to enable the designer to obtain a variable voltage if needed for a circuit. The potentiometers are labeled **P1** and **P2**. These operate respectively in the range OV to +10V, and -10V to 0V.
- 8 The kit has a screw terminals to connect ±10V power supply. All the ICs on the board are internally connected to power supply. Please refer to *Appendix D* for schematics of ASLK PRO.
- 9 We have included **two diode sockets** on the board, which can be used as rectifiers in custom laboratory experiments.
- 10 The top right portion of the kit is a **general-purpose area which can be** used as a proto-board. ± 10V points and GND are provided for this area.

3



introduction

Organization of the Manual

There are 14 experiments in this manual and the next 14 chapters are devoted to them, We recommend that in the first cycle of experiments, the instructor introduces the ASLK PRO and ensure that all the students are familiar with a simulation software. A warm-up exercise can be included, where the students

are asked to use the simulation software. For each of the experiments, we have clarified the goal of the experiment and provided the theoretical background. The Analog System Lab can be conducted parallel to a theory course on Analog Design or as a separate lab that follows a theory course.

The student should have the following skills to pursue Analog System Lab:

- 1. Basic understanding of electronic circuits
- 2. Basic computer skills required to run the simulation tools
- 3. Ability to use the oscilloscope
- 4. Concepts of gain, bandwidth, transfer function, filters, regulators and wave shaping

Chapter 1 Experiment 1

Study the characteristics of negative feedback amplifiers and design of an instrumentation amplifier

Goal of the experiment

The goal of this experiment is two-fold. In the first part, we will understand the application of negative feedback in designing amplifiers. In the second part, we will build an instrumentation amplifier.

1.1 Brief theory and motivation 1.1.1 Unity Gain Amplifier

An OP-Amp **[8]** can be used in negative feedback mode to build unity gain amplifiers, non-inverting amplifiers and inverting amplifiers. While an ideal OP-Amp is assumed to have infinite open-loop gain and infinite bandwidth, real OP-Amps have finite numbers for these parameters. Therefore, it is important to understand some limitations of real OP-Amps, such as finite Gain-Bandwidth Product (*GB*). Similarly, the slew rate and saturation limits of an operational amplifier are equally important. Given an OP-amp, how do we measure these parameters?

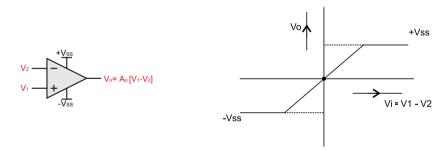


Figure 1.1: An ideal Dual-Input, Single-Output OP-Amp and its I-O characteristic

Since the frequency and transient response of an amplifier are impacted by these parameters, we can measure the parameters if we have the frequency and transient response of the amplifier; you can obtain these response characteristics by applying sinusoidal and square wave inputs respectively. We invite the reader to view the recorded lecture **[16]**.

An OP-Amp can be considered as a Voltage Controlled Voltage Source (VCVS) with the voltage gain tending towards infinity. For finite output voltage, the input voltage is practically zero. This is the basic theory of OP-Amp in the negative feedback configuration. Figure 1.1 shows a differential-input, single-ended-output OP-Amp which uses dual supply $\pm Vss$ for biasing.

$$V_0 = A_0 \cdot (V_1 - V_2) \tag{1.1}$$

$$V_1 - V_2 = \frac{V_0}{A_0}$$
(1.2)

In the above equations, A_o is the open-loop gain; for real amplifiers, A_o is in the range 10⁵ to 10⁶ and hence $V_{_I} \approx V_{_2}$. A unity feedback circuit is shown in the Figure 1.2. It is easy to see that,

$$\frac{V_0}{V_s} = \frac{A_0}{1 + A_0}$$
(1.3)

$$\frac{V_0}{V_s} \to 1 \text{ as } A_0 \to \infty \tag{1.4}$$

In OP-amps, closed loop gain A is frequency dependent, as shown in the equation below, where ω_{d1} and ω_{d2} are called the dominant poles of the OP-amp. This transfer function is typical OP-Amp that has *internal frequency compensation*. Please view the recorded lecture **[17]** to get to know more about frequency compensation.

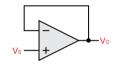


Figure 1.2: A Unity Gain System

$$A = \frac{A_0}{(1 + s/\omega_{d1})(1 + s/\omega_{d2})}$$
(1.5)

We can now write the transfer function T for a unity-gain amplifier as,

$$T = \frac{1}{1 + 1/A}$$
(1.6)
$$= \frac{1}{\left(1 + 1/A_0 + s/A_0\omega_{d1} + s/A_0\omega_{d2} + s^2/A_0\omega_{d1}\omega_{d2}\right)}$$
$$= \frac{1}{\left(1 + \left(s/GB + s/A_0\omega_{d2} + s^2/GB \cdot \omega_{d2}\right)\right)}$$
(1.7)

The term $GB = A_0 \omega_{d1}$, also known as the gain bandwidth product of the operational amplifier, is one of the most important parameters in OP-Amp negative feedback circuit. The above transfer function can be rewritten as

$$T=\frac{1}{1+s/\omega_0Q+s^2/\omega_0^2}$$

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where

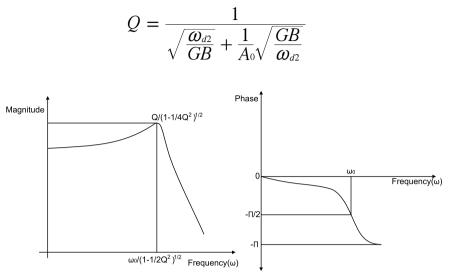


Figure 1.3: Magnitude and Phase response of a Unity Gain System

and

$$\omega_0 = \sqrt{GB \cdot \omega_{d2}}$$

Q is the quality factor and $\xi = \frac{1}{2Q}$ is the damping factor, and ω_0 is the natural frequency of the system. When the frequency response is plotted with magnitude vs ω/ω_0 and phase vs ω/ω_0 , it appears as shown in Figure 1.3.

If one applies a step of peak voltage V_p to the unity gain amplifier, and if $V_p \cdot GB <$ slew rate, then the output appears as shown in Figure 2.4 if $Q > \frac{1}{2}$ or $\xi < 1$.

Q is approximately equal to the total number of visible peaks in the step response and the frequency of ringing is $\frac{\omega_0}{(1-1/4Q^2)}$.

Slew-rate is known as the maximum rate at which the output of the OP-Amps is capable of rising; in other words, slew rate is the maximum value that dVo/dt can attain. In this experiment, as we go on increasing the amplitude of the step input, at some amplitude the rate at which the output starts rising remains constant and no longer increases with the peak voltage of input; this rate is

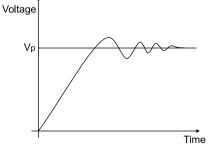


Figure 1.4: Time Response of an Amplifier for a step input of size Vp

called slew rate. It can therefore be determined by applying a square wave of Vp at certain high frequency and increasing the magnitude of the input.

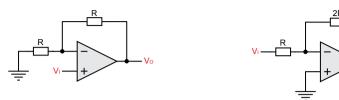


Figure 1.5: (a) Non-inverting amplifier of gain 2, (b) Inverting amplifier of gain 2

1.1.2 Non-inverting Amplifier

A non-inverting amplifier with a gain of 2 is shown in Figure 1.5 (a).

1.1.3 Inverting Amplifier

An inverting amplifier with a gain of 2 is shown in Figure 1.5 (b).

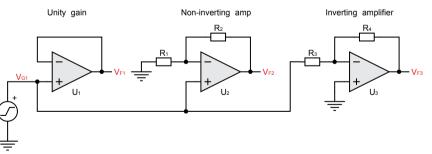


Figure 1.6: Negative Feedback Amplifiers

Figure 1.6 shows all the three negative feedback amplifier configurations. Figure 1.7 illustrates the frequency response (magnitude and phase) of the three different negative feedback amplifier topologies. Figure 1.8 shows the output of the three types of amplifiers for a square-wave input, illustrating the limitations due to slew-rate.

1.2 Exercise Set 1

Design the following amplifiers - (a) a unity gain amplifier, (b) a non-inverting amplifier with a gain of 2 (Figure 1.5(a)) and an inverting amplifier with the gain of 2.2 (Figure 1.5(b)).

Design an instrumentation amplifier using three OP-Amps with a controllable differential-mode gain of 3. Refer to Figure 1.9(a) for the circuit diagram. Assume that the resistors have 1% tolerance and determine the Common Mode Rejection Ratio (CMRR) of the setup and estimate its bandwidth. We invite the reader to view the recorded lecture **[18]**.

Design an instrumentation amplifier using two OP-Amps with a controllable differential-mode gain of 5. Refer to Figure 1.9 for the circuit diagrams of the instrumentation amplifiers and determine the values of the resistors. Assume that the resistors have 1% tolerance and determine the CMRR of the setup and estimate its bandwidth.

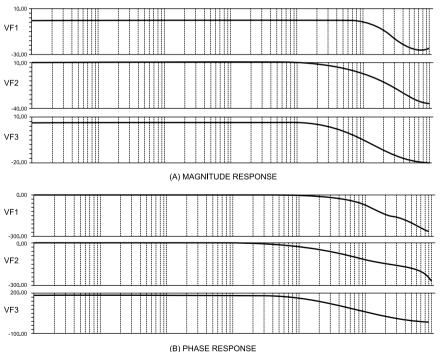


Figure 1.7: Frequency Response of Negative Feedback Amplifiers

1.3 Measurements to be taken

Transient response - Apply a square wave of fixed magnitude and study the effect of slew rate on unity gain, inverting and non-inverting amplifiers.

2 Frequency Response - Obtain the gain bandwidth product of the unity gain amplifier, the inverting amplifier and the non-inverting amplifier from the frequency response.

B DC Transfer Characteristics - Study the saturation limits for an OP-Amp.

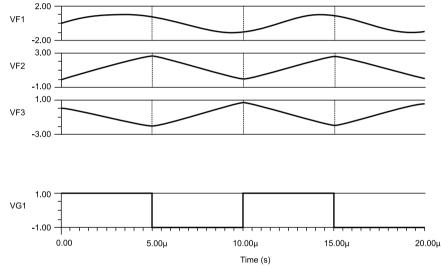


Figure 1.8: Outputs VF1, VF2 and VF3 of Negative Feedback Amplifiers of Figure 1.6 for Square-wave Input VG1

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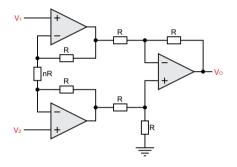
Determine the second pole of an OP-Amp and develop the macromodel for the given OP-Amp IC TL082. See Appendix B for an introduction to the topic of analog macromodels.

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1.4 What should you submit



- Take the plots of Transient response, Frequency response and DC transfer characteristics from the oscilloscope and compare it with your simulation results.
- Apply square wave of amplitude 1V at the input. Change the input frequency and study the peak to peak amplitude of the output. Take the readings in Table 1.1 and compute the slew-rate.



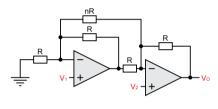


Figure 1.9: Instrumentation Amplifiers with (a) three and (b) two operational amplifiers

S. No.	Input Frequency	Peak to Peak Amplitude of output (Vpp)
1		
2		
3		
4		

Table 1.1: Plot of Peak to Peak amplitude of output Vpp w.r.t. Input frequency

- 4 Frequency Response Apply sine wave input to the system and study the magnitude and phase response. Take your readings in Table 1.2.
 - DC transfer Characteristics Vary the DC input voltage and study its effect on the output voltage. Take your readings in Table 1.3.

1.5 Other related ICs

Specific ICs from Texas Instruments which can be used as instrumentation Amplifiers are INA114, INA118 and INA128. Additional ICs from Texas Instruments which can be used as general purpose OP-Amps are OPA703, OPA357, etc. See CHAPTER 2, EXPERIMENT 1.

S. No.	Input Frequency	Magnitude Variation	Phase Variation
1			
2			
З			
4			

Table 1.2: Plot of Magnitude and Phase variation w.r.t. Input Frequency

S. No.	DC Input Voltage	DC Output Voltage	Phase Variation
1			
2			
З			
4			

Table 1.3: Plot of DC output voltage and phase variation w.r.t. DC input voltage



Further Reading

Datasheets of all these ICs are available at http://www.ti.com. An excellent reference about operational amplifiers is the "Handbook of Operational Amplifier Applications" by Carter and Brown [5].

Notes on Experiment 1:		
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Chapter 2 Experiment 2

Study the characteristics of regenerative feedback system with extension to design an astable and monostable multivibrator

左 Goal of the experiment

The goal of this experiment is to understand the basics of hysteresis and the need of hysteresis in the switching circuits.

2.1 Brief theory and motivation

2.1.1 Inverting Regenerative Comparator

In the earlier experiment we had discussed the use of only negative feedback. Let us now introduce the case of regenerative positive feedback as shown in Figure 2.1. The reader will benefit by listening to the recorded lecture at [20].

$$V_0 = -A_0 \cdot \left(V_i - \beta V_0\right) \tag{2.1}$$

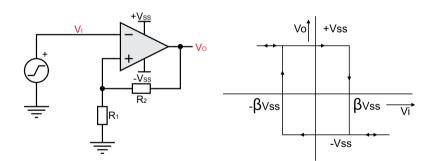


Figure 2.1: Inverting Schmitt-Trigger and its Hysteresis Characteristic

$$\frac{V_0}{V_i} = -A_0 \cdot \frac{1}{1 - A_0 \cdot \beta}$$
(2.2)

$$\beta = \frac{R_1}{R_1 + R_2} \tag{2.3}$$

However, when $|A_0 \cdot \beta| = 1$, it becomes unstable as amplifier as output saturates. When $|A_0 \cdot \beta| \gg 1$ the region of operation of this circuit is regenerative comparator. This is the mixed-mode circuit. Output is stable only in two stages $+V_{ss}$ and $-V_{ss}$. When the input is large negative value output saturates at $+V_{ss}$ as input in increased output remain at $+V_{ss}$ until input reaches $\beta \cdot V_{ss}$ at this point it changes to stable state V_{ss} . Now when the input is decreased it

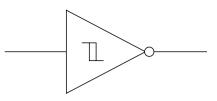
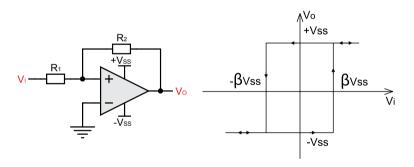


Figure 2.2: Symbol for an Inverting Schmitt Trigger

can change state only at V_{ss} . Thus hysteresis of $2 \cdot \beta \cdot V_{ss}$ is seen around 0. This kind of comparator is a must while driving a MOSFET as a switch in ON-OFF controllers SMPS (Switched Mode Power Supply), pulse width modulators and class-D audio power amplifiers. The symbol for this inverting type Schmitt trigger is shown in Figure 2.2. The non-inverting Schmitt trigger is as shown in Figure 2.3.





2.1.2 Astable Multivibrator

An astable multivibrator is shown in Figure 2.4. The square and the triangular waveforms shown in the figure are both generated using the astable multivibrator. We refer to β as the regenerative feedback. The time period of the multivibrator is given by

$$T = 2 \cdot RC \cdot \ln\left(\frac{1+\beta}{1-\beta}\right) \tag{2.4}$$

experiment 2

2.1.3 Monostable Multivibrator (Timer)

The circuit diagram for a monostable multivibrator is shown in 2.6. The trigger waveform shown in Figure 2.5 is applied to the monostable. The negative edge triggers the monostable, which produces the square waveform shown in Figure 2.6.

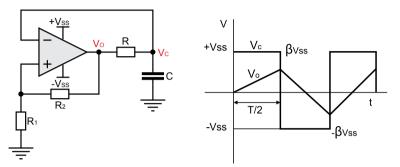


Figure 2.4: Astable Multivibrator and its characteristics

The monostable remains in the "on" state until it is triggered; at this time, the circuit switches to the "off" state for a period equal to τ . The equation for τ is shown below.

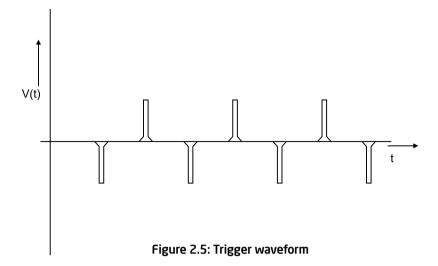
$$\tau = RC \cdot \ln\left(\frac{1}{1-\beta}\right) \tag{2.5}$$

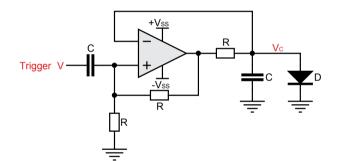
After triggering the monostable at time t, the next trigger pulse must be applied after $t + \tau'$. The formula for τ' is given below.

$$\tau' = RC \cdot \ln\left(\frac{1+\beta}{\beta}\right)$$

S. No.	Regenerative Feedback	Hysteresis
1		
2		
З		
4		

Table 2.1: Plot of Hysteresis w.r.t. Regenerative Feedback





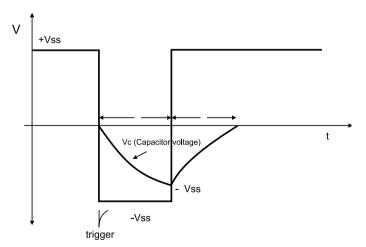


Figure 2.6: Monostable Multivibrator and its outputs