ECE230X Lectures 10-11

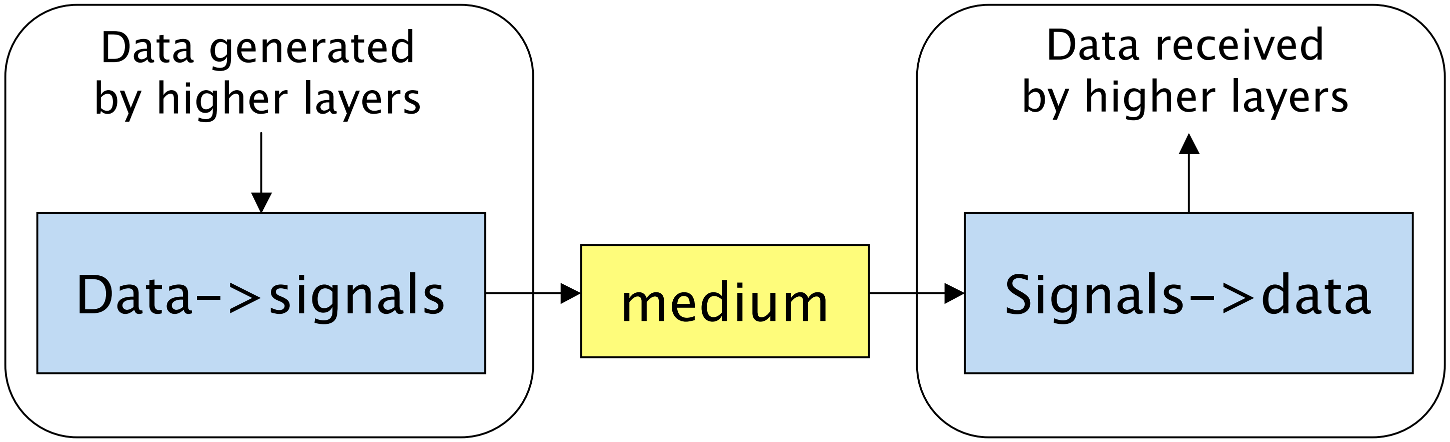
Data and Computer Communications Eighth Edition
By William Stallings
Section 5.2 – "Digital Data, Analog Signals"

D. Richard Brown III
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
Electrical and Computer Engineering Department

Adapted from Prentice Hall instructor resources

Basics of Signal Encoding

- Important function of the physical layer: Convert data (e.g. bits) to signals (e.g. voltages).
- The signal must be designed to **efficiently propagate through the medium**.
- The signal must also be designed so that the receiver can **correctly interpret** it.

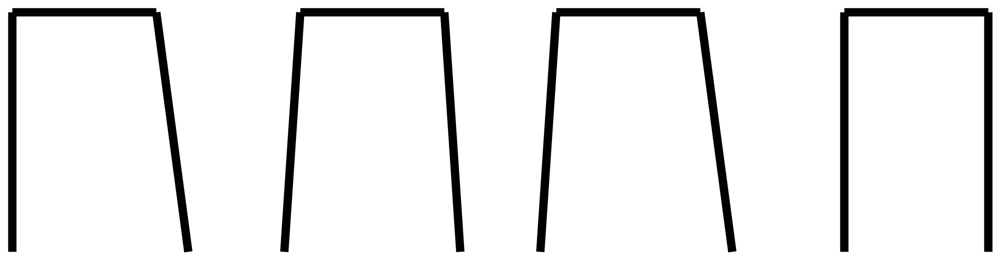


How to convey digital information with signals

- Need two things:
  - A set of 2^N distinct signals
    - Each signal is called a "symbol"
    - The set is called an "alphabet"
  - A unique mapping between blocks of N bits and each signal
- Example (N=2)
  - Signal set = {⊓ ⊔ ∧ ∨} (2^2 = 4 signals)
  - Unique mapping
    - Logical 00 <-> ⊓
    - Logical 01 <-> ⊔
    - Logical 10 <-> ∧
    - Logical 11 <-> ∨

What does this signal mean? 

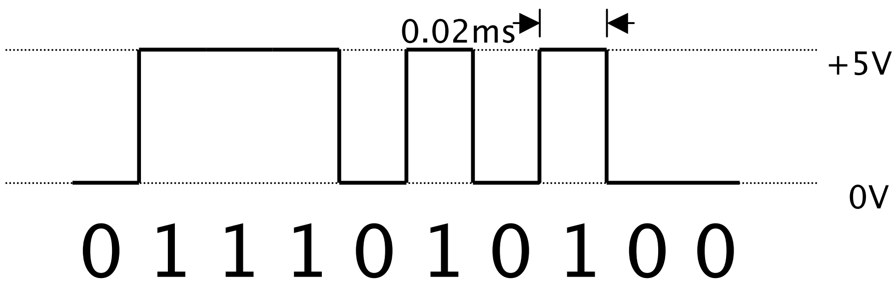
An Example of a Bad Alphabet



Why is this alphabet bad?

"Analog" Signaling Basics

- Recall "digital" signaling, e.g.



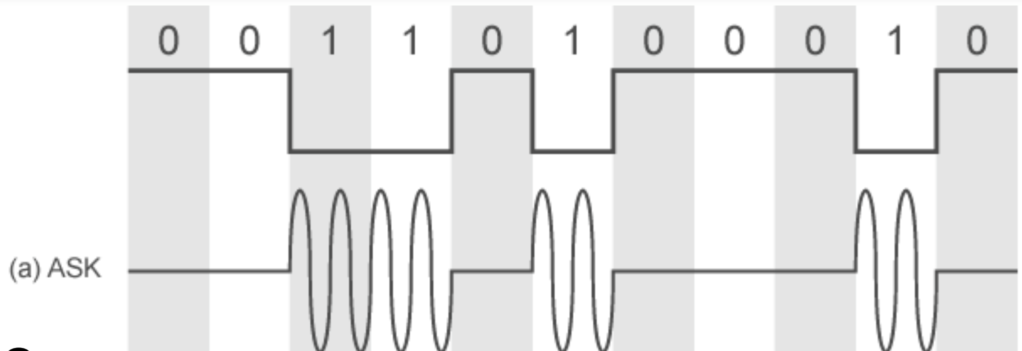
- Digital signaling is inappropriate in many scenarios (interference with other signals or inefficient propagation):
  - Wireless communication
  - Optical communication
  - Cable modems
  - Digital subscriber loops (DSL)
  - Even basic voiceband modems (300Hz–3400Hz channel)
- Need "analog" signals in these cases

Common "Analog" Signals for Communication

- Main idea: Alphabet composed of **sinusoidal** signals with distinct amplitude, frequency, and/or phase shifts
- Sinusoidal signals allow control of signal spectrum
  - Efficient propagation in desired medium
  - Avoid interference with other signals
- Pure methods:
  - Amplitude shift keying (ASK)
  - Frequency shift keying (FSK)
  - Phase shift keying (PSK)
- Hybrid methods:
  - Quadrature amplitude modulation (QAM) (signals distinguished by both amplitude and phase shifts)

Amplitude Shift Keying

- encode data in signal **amplitude**, e.g.
  - Logical 0 -> 0sin(wt)
  - Logical 1 -> Asin(wt)



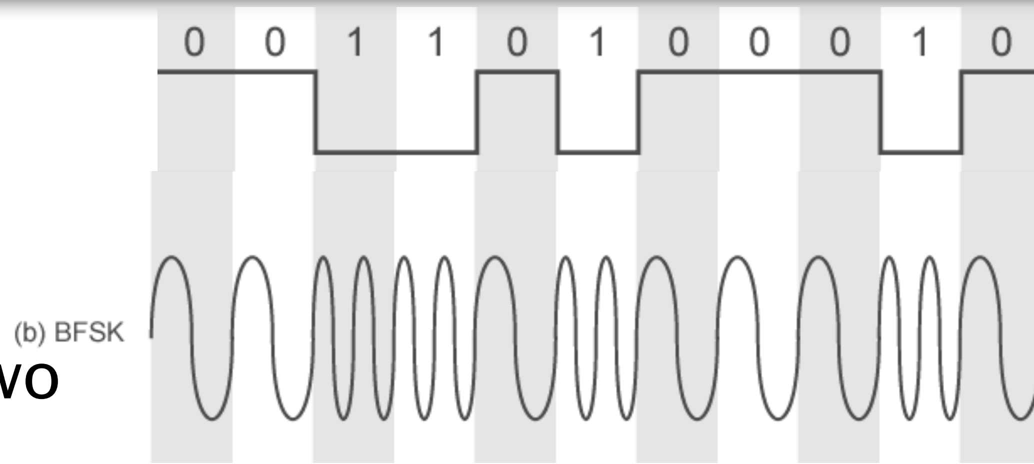
- Can have more than two amplitudes, e.g.
  - Logical 00 -> 0sin(wt)
  - Logical 01 -> Asin(wt)
  - Logical 10 -> 2Asin(wt)
  - Logical 11 -> 3Asin(wt)

Higher data rate but either increased power or likelihood of error at receiver

- Used for
  - up to 1200bps telephone modems
  - optical fiber (light on/off)

Frequency Shift Keying

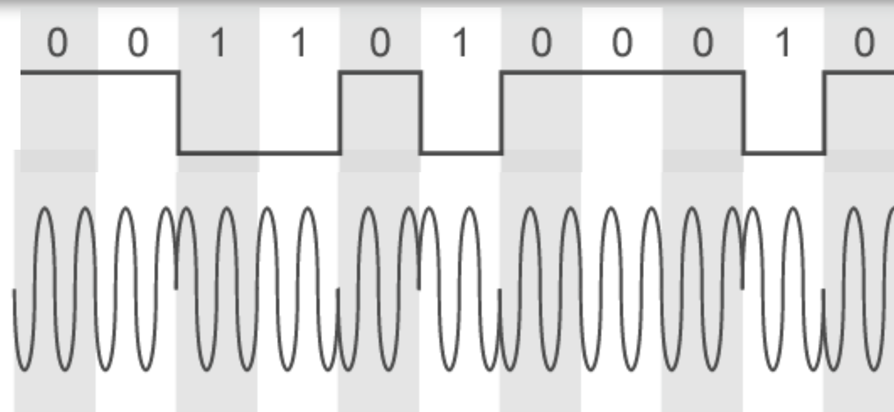
- encode data in signal **frequency**, e.g.
  - Logical 0 -> sin(wt)
  - Logical 1 -> sin(2wt)
- Can have more than two frequencies, e.g.
  - Logical 00 -> sin(wt)
  - Logical 01 -> sin(2wt)
  - Logical 10 -> sin(3wt)
  - Logical 11 -> sin(4wt)
- Better error resistance than ASK
- Used in old voiceband modems (300 bps)



Higher data rate but either increased bandwidth or increased likelihood of error at receiver

Phase Shift Keying

- encode data in signal **phase**, e.g.
  - Logical 0 -> sin(wt+0)
  - Logical 1 -> sin(wt+pi)

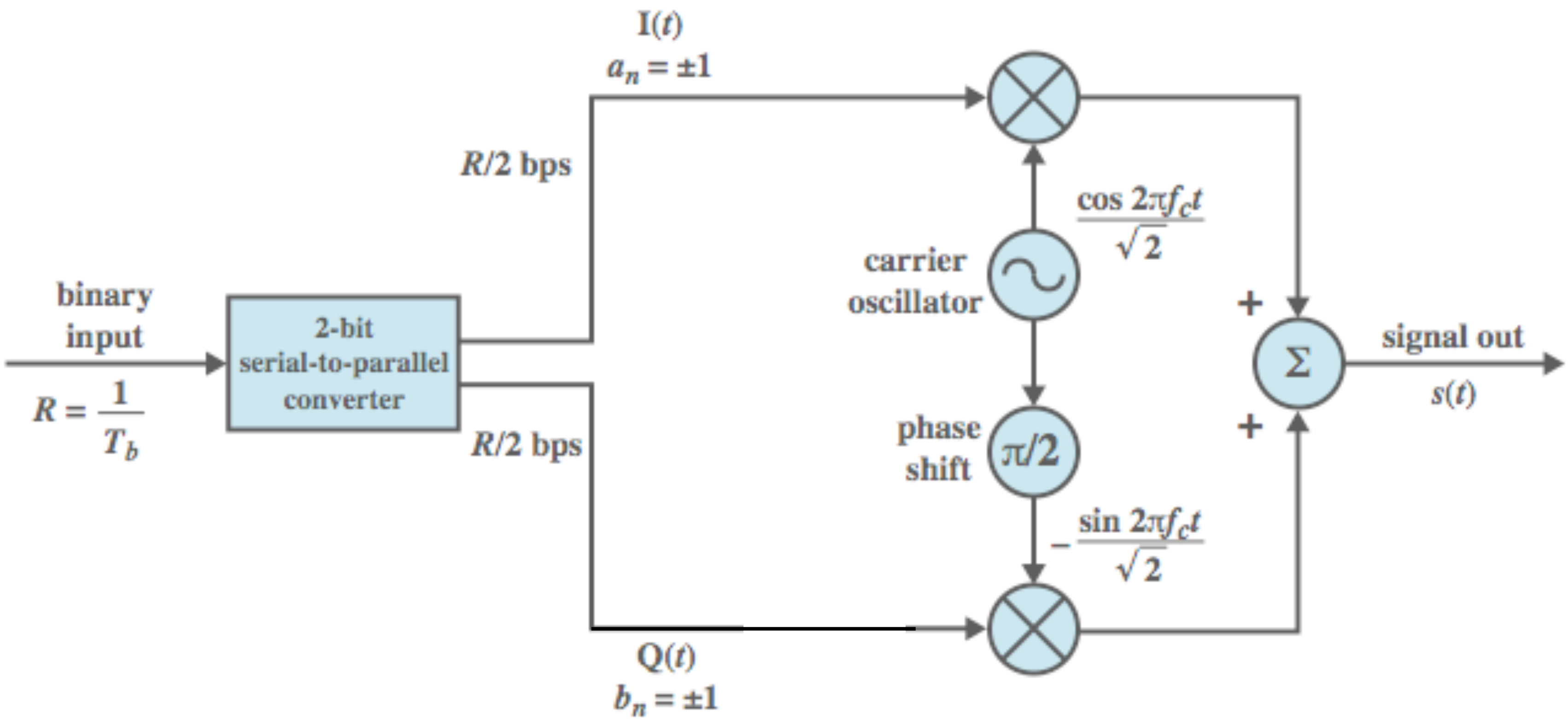


(c) BPSK

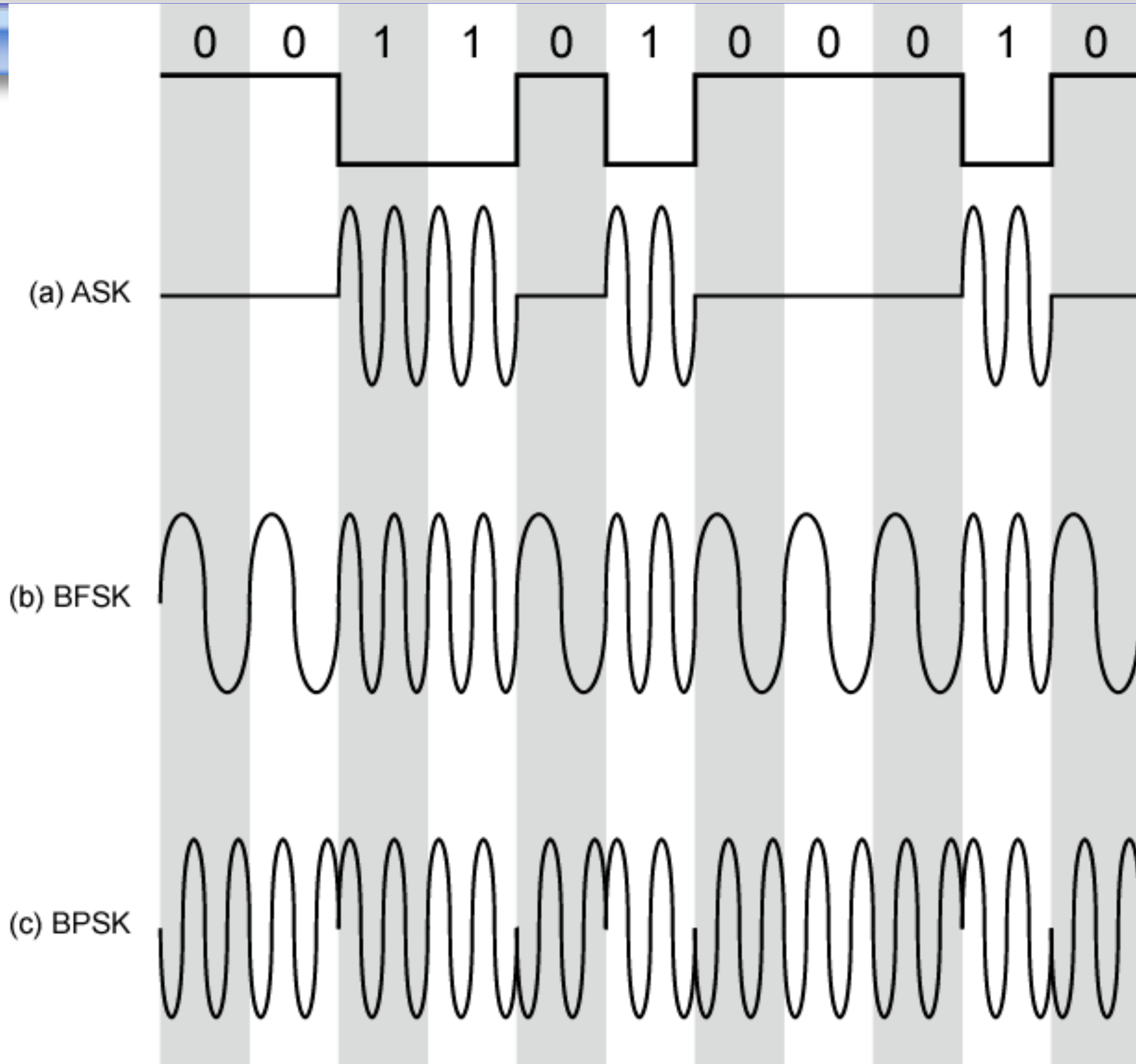
- Can have more than two phases, e.g.
  - Logical 00 -> sin(wt+0)
  - Logical 01 -> sin(wt+pi/2)
  - Logical 10 -> sin(wt+pi)
  - Logical 11 -> sin(wt+3pi/2)
- This is called quadrature PSK (QPSK) – very popular for wireless communication

Higher data rate but increased likelihood of error at receiver

QPSK Modulator Block Diagram



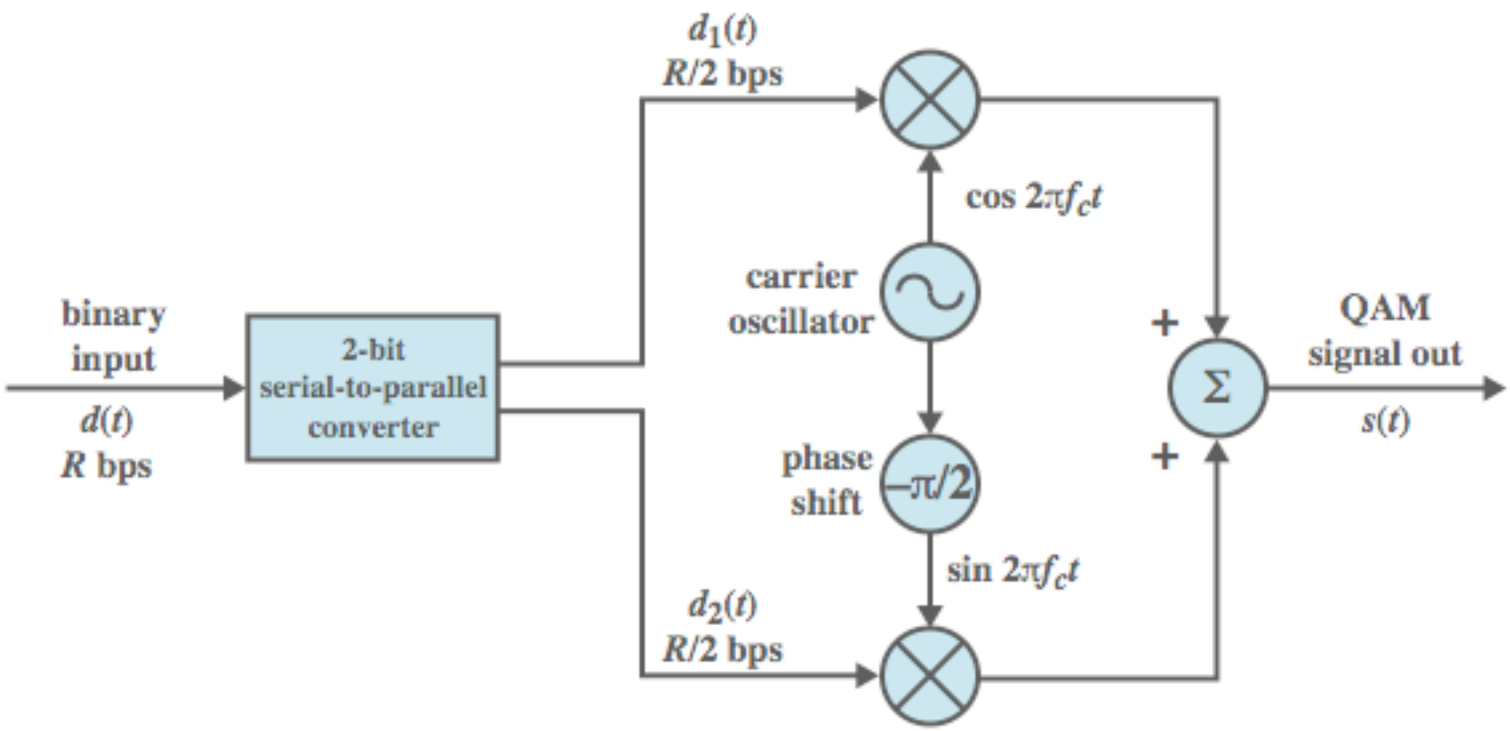
Summary of “Pure” Binary Analog Modulation Techniques



Hybrid method: Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM)

- Basic idea: encode data in both **phase** and **amplitude**, e.g.
  - Logical 00 -> Acos(wt)+Asin(wt)
  - Logical 01 -> Acos(wt)–Asin(wt)
  - Logical 10 -> –Acos(wt)+Asin(wt)
  - Logical 11 -> –Acos(wt)–Asin(wt)
- No binary methods, but lots of higher order QAM:
  - 4QAM (2 bits per signal, like QPSK)
  - 16QAM (4 bits per signal)
  - 64QAM (6 bits per signal)
  - 256QAM (8 bits per signal)
  - …
- Used in applications where spectral efficiency is critical, e.g. DSL and high data rate wireless

QAM Modulator Block Diagram



Which "Analog" Modulation Scheme Should I Use?

- **Power efficiency** important?
  - FSK is energy efficient but not bandwidth efficient
- **Spectral efficiency** important?
  - QAM, PSK, ASK are more bandwidth efficient but less energy efficient
- **Optical** systems?
  - ASK (very difficult to control/detect phase in optical transmisson)
- **Bottom line**: Lots of tradeoffs. Best choice depends on the application.

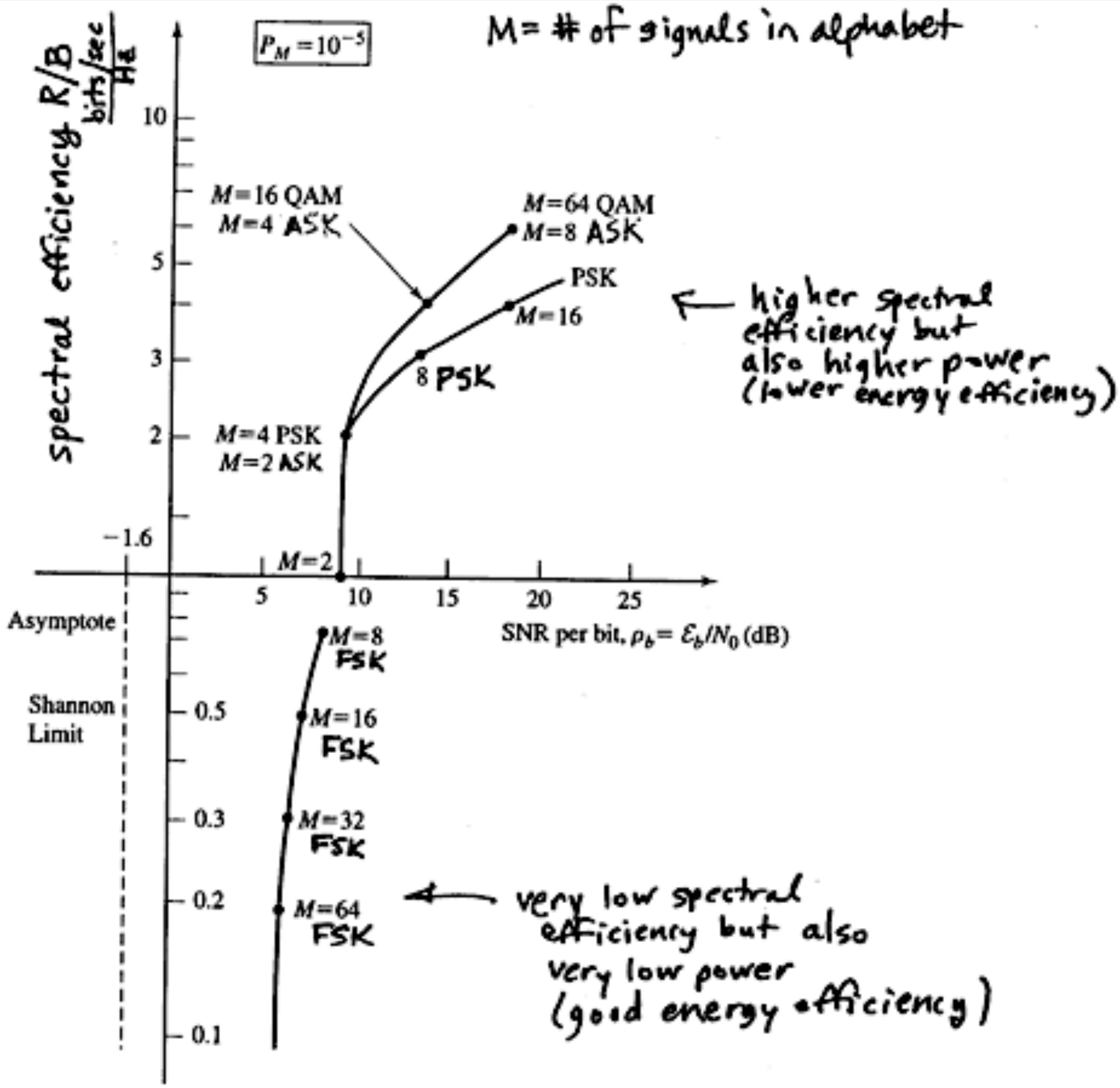


Figure 7.66 Comparison of several modulation methods at 10^{-5} symbol error probability.

From Communication Systems Engineering
Proakis & Salehi