Design And Implementation of UART Communication Protocol on FPGA Using Verilog HDL

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Abstract*—Universal Asynchronous Receiver Transmitter (UART) is one of the most widely employed serial communication protocols in embedded systems, field-programmable gate arrays (FPGAs), and digital electronics owing to its simplicity, minimal pin requirements, and robust long-distance communication capability. This paper presents the design, Verilog HDL implementation, synthesis, and hardware verification of a complete UART communication system on the AMD Artix-7 Nexys A7 FPGA development board. The proposed system operates with a 100 MHz onboard clock and communicates at a standard baud rate of 9600 bps. The UART transmitter serializes 8-bit parallel data supplied through the board's slide switches (SW [7:0]) and transmits it over the TX line upon assertion of a debounced push-button signal. The UART receiver incorporates a two-flip-flop synchronizer and mid-bit sampling strategy to reconstruct the incoming serial byte robustly. The reconstructed parallel data is displayed on the eight onboard LEDs, and the transmitted character simultaneously appears on a PC serial monitor via the USB–UART bridge. Synthesis and implementation are carried out using Xilinx Vivado Design Suite, with all timing constraints satisfied under static timing analysis. Experimental results con- firm error-free ASCII character transmission and reception at 9600 bps, accurate binary LED output, and correct RTL schematic generation. The modular Verilog architecture is resource efficient and directly extensible to higher baud rates, parity checking, FIFO buffering, and multi-channel UART systems for IoT and industrial embedded applications.

***Index Terms*—FPGA, UART, Serial Communication, Verilog HDL, Baud Rate Generation, Nexys A7, Artix-7, Embedded Systems, RTL Synthesis, Vivado**

I. INTRODUCTION

Serial communication protocols are the backbone of modern embedded systems, enabling data exchange between microcontrollers, sensors, actuators, and host computers over a minimal number of wires [1]. Among these, the Universal Asynchronous Receiver Transmitter (UART) remains one of the most extensively used due to its hardware simplicity, absence of a shared clock requirement, and long-distance robustness [3]. The protocol is found in virtually every digital platform—from Arduino boards and GPS modules to industrial programmable logic controllers and IoT edge nodes [4, 17].

Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGAs) offer a compelling substrate for implementing communication protocols such as UART, because they enable fully customizable, hardware-level realizations with configurable timing parameters, real-time operation, and zero operating-system overhead [11]. Unlike fixed-function UART peripherals embedded in microcontrollers, an FPGA-based UART can be tailored for specific baud rates, word lengths, parity schemes, and flow-control mechanisms, all within a single reconfigurable device [5]. The availability of mature synthesis tools such as Xilinx Vivado further re- duces the development cycle, enabling rapid iteration from RTL description to physical implementation [14].

Despite the maturity of the concept, a comprehensive and reproducible open-source UART implementation targeting the modern Nexys A7 Artix-7 board—with full hardware demonstration, detailed Verilog code, XDC constraints, RTL schematic, and I/O pin documentation—remains scarce in the literature.

This paper addresses that gap with the following contributions:

1. A complete Verilog HDL implementation of a UART transmitter (uart tx), receiver (uart rx),

and top-level integration module (uart top) targeting the Nexys A7 Artix-7 FPGA at 9600 bps / 100 MHz.
2. A two-flip-flop input synchronizer for the RX line and mid-bit sampling logic in the receiver for improved noise immunity.
3. Full Vivado synthesis, implementation, and bitstream generation with detailed XDC pin constraints for 23 I/O ports.
4. Hardware validation through ASCII character transmission to a PC serial monitor, binary LED display of received data, and RTL schematic inspection.
5. A thorough analysis of the UART frame format, baud rate generation arithmetic, transmitter FSM, and receiver sampling strategy.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews related work. Section 3 provides an overview of the UART protocol, including frame format, baud rate generation, and signal lines. Section 4 describes the target hardware platform. Section 5 presents the system architecture and detailed Verilog design of each module. Section 6 covers FPGA implementation, XDC constraints, and RTL schematic. Section 7 presents simulation, hardware results, and discussion. Section 8 concludes the paper and outlines future work.

II. RELATED WORK

The implementation of UART on FPGAs has received sustained research attention. An early influential contribution in [1] demonstrated a VHDL-based UART module delivering low-power, high-speed serial communication, establishing the feasibility of FPGA- based UART for real-time systems. The work in [2] proposed an asynchronous FIFO- based UART architecture to mitigate metastability across clock domains, significantly improving reliability in multi-clock designs.

A cost-effective UART targeting low-end FPGA boards for embedded and IoT deployment was introduced in [3], prioritizing area efficiency over raw throughput. A comparative study of UART versus SPI on a Spartan-6 FPGA in [4] highlighted UART's advantages for longer-distance communication with limited wiring. Reconfigurable UART architectures with runtime baud rate adjustment were explored in [5], enhancing industrial versatility, while a fully pipelined, scalable UART design supporting multiple baud rates was presented in [6] for high-throughput integration.

More recent work has concentrated on error resilience and buffering. Parity-based error detection mechanisms for UART were investigated in [8, 12], and FIFO-enhanced UART architectures for reduced transmission latency were studied in [7, 11]. Adaptive baud rate controllers for dynamic clock environments were proposed in [10, 16]. Performance benchmarks comparing UART implementations across device families were reported in [9, 13].

Despite these advances, the literature lacks a publicly documented, reproducible end- to-end UART implementation for the Nexys A7 Artix-7 platform with complete hardware evidence (RTL schematic, I/O port table, serial monitor output, and LED display). This paper fills that gap.

III. UART PROTOCOL OVERVIEW

3.1. Fundamentals of Asynchronous Communication

UART is an asynchronous serial protocol, meaning that no shared clock signal is transmitted between communicating devices. Instead, synchronization is achieved by pre- configuring both the transmitter and receiver to the same baud rate—the number of bits transmitted per second [1, 6]. The absence of a clock line reduces the wire count to three (TX, RX, GND), making UART attractive for simple point-to-point communication.

3.2. UART Frame Structure

Data is transmitted in discrete frames. Each UART frame consists of the following fields, transmitted sequentially on the serial line:

- Start Bit (logic 0): Signals the beginning of a frame by pulling the idle-high line low.
- Data Bits (LSB first): The payload, typically 8 bits, transmitted from the least significant bit (D0) to the most significant bit (D7).
- Parity Bit (optional): Provides basic single-bit error detection; omitted in this implementation.
- Stop Bit (logic 1): Returns the line to idle (high) state, marking frame completion.

The frame structure used in this project is therefore a standard 10-bit frame:

$$\underbrace{0_X}_{\text{Start}}\ D_0\ D_1\ D_2\ D_3\ D_4\ D_5\ D_6\ D_7\ \underbrace{1_X}_{\text{Stop}} \quad (1)$$

For example, the ASCII character ‘A’ (decimal 65, binary 01000001) is transmitted as the bit sequence: 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1, where the first bit is the start bit and the last is the stop bit.

Fig. 1 illustrates the UART frame format showing the direction of data flow between sender and receiver, including the gaps between consecutive data units that occur during idle periods.

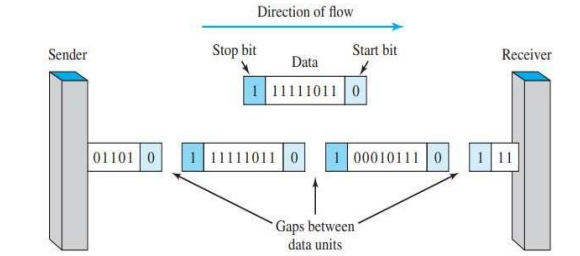

Figure 1: UART frame format: data flow from sender to receiver, showing start bit, 8 data bits, and stop bit structure with inter-frame idle gaps.

3.3. Baud Rate Generation

The baud rate determines the duration of each bit period. Given the 100 MHz system clock of the Nexys A7 board and a target baud rate of 9600 bps, the baud counter terminal count N is:

$$N = \frac{f_{\text{clk}}}{\text{Baud Rate}} = \frac{100,000,000}{9600} \approx 10,416 \text{ clock cycles} \quad (2)$$

Each UART bit therefore spans 10,416 system clock cycles (≈104.2 µs). The receiver samples each incoming bit at the mid-point of its bit period to maximize noise margin:

$$t_{\text{sample}} = \frac{N}{2} = 5208 \text{ clock cycles after start edge} \quad (3)$$

3.4. Signal Lines

The UART interface in this project uses the following signals:

- TX (UART RXD OUT, pin D4): Serial data output from the FPGA transmitter to the USB–UART bridge.
- RX (UART TXD IN, pin C4): Serial data input to the FPGA receiver from the USB–UART bridge.
- CLK100MHZ (pin E3): 100 MHz onboard system clock.
- CPU RESETN (pin C12): Active-low synchronous reset.

IV. HARDWARE PLATFORM

4.1. Nexys A7 FPGA Board

The target hardware is the Nexys A7 development board (Digilent Inc.), which houses an AMD Artix-7 FPGA (device part: xc7a100tcsg324-1). The Nexys A7 is widely used in digital design education and research due to its rich peripheral set and USB–UART bridge for direct PC communication.

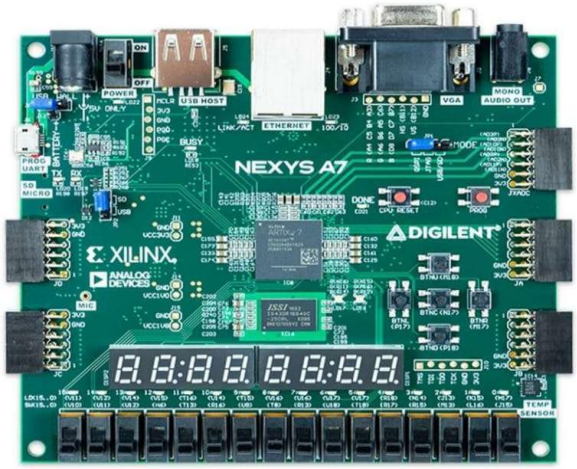

Figure 2: Nexys A7 FPGA development board (Digilent) featuring the AMD Artix-7 device (xc7a100tcsg324-1), used as the hardware implementation platform in this work.

4.2. Key Board Resources Used

Table 1 summarises the Nexys A7 peripheral resources utilised in this UART project.

Table 1: Nexys A7 board resources used in the UART implementation

Resource	Specification	Role in Project
FPGA Device	Artix-7 xc7a100tcsg324-1	Host device
System Clock	100 MHz onboard oscillator	Baud rate generation
Slide Switches	SW [7:0] – 8 switches	8-bit TX data input
Push Button	BTNC (center button)	TX start trigger
LEDs	LED [7:0] – 8 LEDs	RX data display
Status LED (TX)	LED TX DONE	TX complete indicator

Status LED (RX)	LED RX DONE	RX complete indicator
USB–UART Bridge	FT232HQ (on-board)	FPGA \ (\leftrightarrow \) PC serial link
Reset Button	CPU RESETN (active low)	System reset

4.3. Software Tools

The design flow uses:

- Vivado Design Suite (Xilinx/AMD): RTL synthesis, implementation, static timing analysis, and bitstream generation.
- Verilog HDL: Hardware description language for all modules.
- Arduino IDE / Serial Monitor: PC-side serial terminal for observing ASCII characters transmitted by the FPGA.

V. SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE AND VERILOG DESIGN

5.1. System Overview

Fig. 3 shows the complete system block diagram of the UART communication system implemented on the Nexys A7 FPGA. The system is partitioned into two major functional blocks—the UART Transmitter and the UART Receiver—integrated through a top-level module that maps them to board hardware.

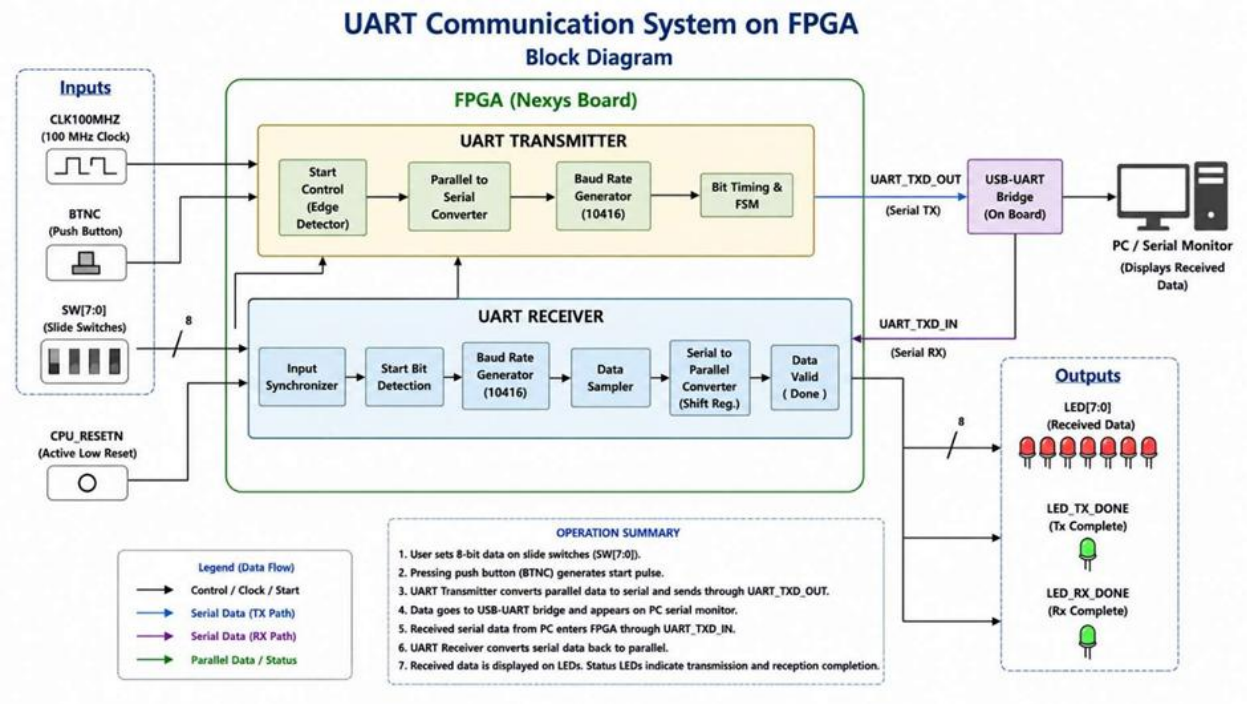

Figure 3: Complete UART Communication System block diagram on the Nexys A7 FPGA. Inputs (clock, button, switches, reset) enter the FPGA on the left; TX serial data exits through the USB–UART bridge to the PC serial monitor; RX data enters from the PC and is displayed on LEDs.

The overall data-flow sequence is as follows:

1. User loads 8-bit data on slide switches SW [7:0].
2. Pressing the center push button (BTNC) generates a single-cycle start pulse via an edge-detection circuit.
3. The UART Transmitter serializes the switch data and drives the UART RXD OUT (TX) line through the USB–UART bridge to the PC serial monitor.
4. The PC serial monitor displays the corresponding ASCII character.
5. Data from the PC arrives on UART TXD IN (RX), is deserialized by the UART Receiver, and displayed on LED [7:0].
6. LED TX DONE and LED RX DONE indicate frame completion for transmission and reception respectively.

5.2. UART Transmitter (uart tx)

5.2.1.Architecture

The transmitter converts 8-bit parallel switch data into a 10-bit serial frame (start + 8 data + stop). The internal architecture comprises:

- A 16-bit baud counter (baud cnt) that counts to N − 1 = 10415 to produce one baud-period interval.
- A 4-bit bit counter (bit cnt) indexing the current bit within the 10-bit frame.
- A 10-bit frame register (frame) holding the complete serial frame: {stop, data [7:0], start} = {1'b1, data, 1'b0}.
- A busy flag preventing new transmission while one is in progress.
- A single-cycle done pulse after the stop bit.

Fig. 4 illustrates the transmitter data frame at the TX side, showing the start bit, 8 parallel-loaded data bits, parity placeholder, and stop bit.

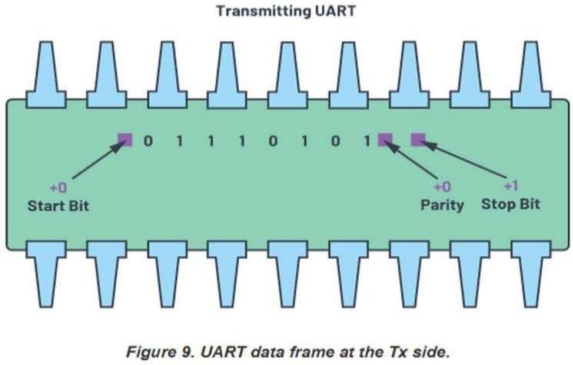

Figure 9. UART data frame at the Tx side.

Figure 4: UART data frame at the Transmitter (TX) side, showing start bit (logic 0), 8 serial data bits (LSB first), and stop bit (logic 1).

5.2.2.Step-by-Step Transmitter Operation

Step 1 – Idle State: The TX line is held HIGH (logic 1), indicating the channel is free. The busy flag is de-asserted.

Step 2 – Start Signal: When the debounced BTNC press asserts start for one clock cycle (and busy is low), the frame register is loaded with {1'b1, SW [7:0], 1'b0}, busy is set, and bit cnt is cleared.

Step 3 – Start Bit: The transmitter drives tx = frame [0] = 0 for one baud period (10,416 clock cycles), informing the receiver that data is arriving.

Step 4 – Data Bits: Bits frame [1] through frame [8] (i.e., D0 through D7) are shifted out sequentially, each lasting one baud period.

Step 5 – Stop Bit: frame [9] = 1 is driven on TX for one baud period. The TX line returns to idle HIGH.

Step 6 – Completion: After all, 10 bits, busy is cleared, done is pulsed HIGH for one clock cycle, and the transmitter is ready for the next byte.

5.2.3.Verilog Code

```
module uart_tx(
input       clk,
input       rst_n,
input       start,
input  [7:0] data,
output reg   tx,
output reg   done
);

parameter BAUD = 10416;

reg [15:0] baud_cnt;
reg [3:0]  bit_cnt;
reg [9:0]  frame;
reg        busy;

always @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n)
begin
if (!rst_n) begin
tx       <= 1'b1;
baud_cnt <= 0;
bit_cnt  <= 0;
busy     <= 0;
done     <= 0;
end
else begin
done <= 0;
// Load frame on start pulse
if (start && !busy) begin
frame   <= {1'b1, data, 1'b0};
busy    <= 1'b1;
bit_cnt <= 0;
end
// Serialize frame
if (busy) begin
if (baud_cnt < BAUD - 1)
baud_cnt <= baud_cnt + 1;
else begin
baud_cnt <= 0;
tx       <= frame[bit_cnt];
bit_cnt  <= bit_cnt + 1;
```

```
if (bit_cnt == 9) begin
busy    <= 0;
bit_cnt <= 0;
done    <= 1;
tx      <= 1'b1;
end
end
end
end
end
endmodule
```

Listing 1: UART Transmitter (uart tx.v)

5.3. UART Receiver (uart rx)

5.3.1.Architecture

The receiver monitors the RX line for a falling edge (start bit detection) and then samples each subsequent bit at the mid-point of its baud period. The internal architecture comprises:

- A *two-flip-flop synchronizer* (rx1, rx2) that eliminates metastability on the asyn- chronous RX input.
- A 16-bit baud counter (baud cnt) preloaded to N/2 = 5208 after start-bit detection to align sampling to mid-bit.
- An 8-bit shift register (shift) accumulating the received data bits.
- A 4-bit bit counter (bit cnt) tracking position within the byte.
- A single-cycle done pulse with latched data out after the 8th data bit.

Fig. 5 shows the receiver data frame, illustrating start-bit detection, data frame sam- pling, and stop-bit recognition.

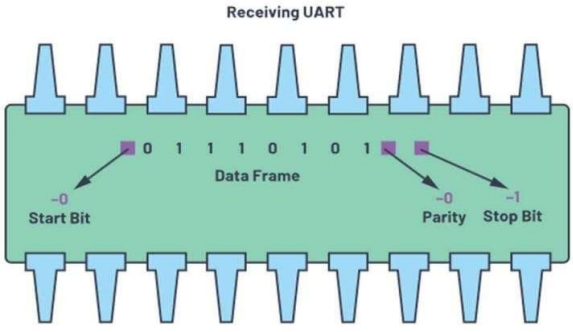

Figure 11. The UART data frame at the Rx side.

Figure 5: UART data frame at the Receiver (RX) side, showing start-bit detection (falling edge), mid-bit sampling of 8 data bits, and stop-bit recognition.

5.3.2.Step-by-Step Receiver Operation

Step 1 – Idle Monitoring: The receiver continuously monitors the synchronized RX line (rx2), which is normally HIGH.

Step 2 – Start Bit Detection: When rx2 transitions to LOW, reception begins. The baud counter is preloaded to N/2 = 5208 so that the first sample occurs at the mid-point of the start bit, and subsequently at mid-points of each data bit.

Step 3 – Mid-Bit Sampling: At each baud-counter overflow (every N clock cy- cles after the initial N/2 offset), the value of rx2 is captured into the shift register: shift [bit cnt] ← rx2.

Step 4 – Byte Reconstruction: After 8 samples (bits 0–7), the shift register holds the complete received byte, which is latched into data out and the done flag is pulsed HIGH.

Step 5 – Output: The reconstructed byte drives LED [7:0], providing direct binary readout of the received ASCII character.

5.3.3.Verilog Code

```
module uart_rx(
input       clk,
input       rst_n,
input       rx,
output reg [7:0] data_out,
output reg   done
);

parameter BAUD = 10416;

reg [15:0] baud_cnt;
reg [3:0]  bit_cnt;
reg [7:0]  shift;
reg        receiving;
reg        rx1, rx2;

// Two-flip-flop synchronizer
always @(posedge clk) begin
rx1 <= rx;
rx2 <= rx1;
end

always @(posedge clk or negedge rst_n)
```

```
begin
if (!rst_n) begin
baud_cnt  <= 0;
bit_cnt   <= 0;
receiving <= 0;
done      <= 0;
end
else begin
done <= 0;
// Detect start bit (falling edge on synchronized RX)
if (!receiving && rx2 == 0) begin
receiving <= 1;
baud_cnt  <= BAUD / 2;  // align to mid-bit
bit_cnt   <= 0;
end
else if (receiving) begin
if (baud_cnt < BAUD - 1)
baud_cnt <= baud_cnt + 1;
else begin
baud_cnt <= 0;
if (bit_cnt < 8) begin
shift[bit_cnt] <= rx2;
bit_cnt        <= bit_cnt + 1;
end
else begin
data_out  <= shift;
done      <= 1;
receiving <= 0;
end
end
end
end
end

endmodule
```

Listing 2: UART Receiver (uart rx.v)

5.4. Top-Level Integration Module (uart top)

The top-level module instantiates both the transmitter and receiver and maps their ports to the physical I/O signals of the Nexys A7 board. The switch data (SW [7:0]) feeds the transmitter data input; the center push button (BTNC) provides the start trigger; the received byte drives LED [7:0]; and the status LEDs indicate frame completion.

```
module uart_top (
input          CLK100MHZ,
input          CPU_RESETN,
input          BTNC,
input     [7:0] SW,
input          UART_TXD_IN,
output         UART_RXD_OUT,
output    [7:0] LED,
output         LED_TX_DONE,
output         LED_RX_DONE
);

uart_tx tx_inst (
.clk      (CLK100MHZ),
.rst_n    (CPU_RESETN),
.start    (BTNC),
.data     (SW),
.tx       (UART_RXD_OUT),
.done     (LED_TX_DONE)
);

uart_rx rx_inst (
.clk      (CLK100MHZ),
.rst_n    (CPU_RESETN),
.rx       (UART_TXD_IN),
.data_out (LED),
.done     (LED_RX_DONE)
);

endmodule
```

Listing 3: Top-Level Module (uart top.v)

VI. FPGA IMPLEMENTATION

6.1. Synthesis and Implementation Flow

The design was synthesized and implemented using Xilinx Vivado Design Suite version 2023.2 following the standard FPGA design flow:

1. RTL Analysis: Verilog source files were elaborated and checked for syntax and semantic errors.
2. Synthesis: The RTL was synthesized to FPGA primitives (LUTs, FFs, I/O buffers).
3. Implementation: Place-and-route was performed with the XDC constraints ap- plied. Static timing analysis confirmed all paths met the 10 ns clock period with positive slack.
4. Bitstream Generation: The final bitstream was generated and programmed onto the Nexys A7 via USB-JTAG.

6.2. XDC Pin Constraints

All 23 I/O ports were assigned to their respective Nexys A7 package pins in the XDC constraint file. Table 2 summarizes the key assignments as verified in the Vivado elaborated-design I/O planning view.

Table 2: I/O pin assignments for the UART system on the Nexys A7 (xc7a100tcsg324-1). All ports use LVCMOS33 (3.3 V) I/O standard.

Signal	Dir.	Package Pin	Function
CLK100 MHZ	IN	E3	100 MHz system clock
CPU_RE SETN	IN	C12	Active-low reset
BTNC	IN	N17	TX start trigger
UART_T XD_IN	IN	C4	Serial RX from PC
UART_R XD_OUT	OUT	D4	Serial TX to PC
LED_TX _DONE	OUT	V16	TX frame complete LED
LED_RX _DONE	OUT	T15	RX frame complete LED
LED [7]	OUT	U16	Received data bit 7
LED [6]	OUT	U17	Received data bit 6
LED [5]	OUT	V17	Received data bit 5
LED [4]	OUT	R18	Received data bit 4
LED [3]	OUT	N14	Received data bit 3
LED [2]	OUT	J13	Received data bit 2
LED [1]	OUT	K15	Received data bit 1
LED [0]	OUT	H17	Received data bit 0
SW [7]	IN	R13	TX data bit 7
SW [6]	IN	U18	TX data bit 6
SW [5]	IN	T18	TX data bit 5
SW [4]	IN	R17	TX data bit 4
SW [3]	IN	R15	TX data bit 3
SW [2]	IN	M13	TX data bit 2
SW [1]	IN	L16	TX data bit 1
SW [0]	IN	J15	TX data bit 0

6.3. Vivado I/O Port Planning View

Fig. 6 shows the elaborated design I/O port table from the Vivado "Find Results" view, confirming that all 23 I/O ports are correctly mapped to the xc7a100tcsg324-1 package pins with LVCMOS33 I/O standards and appropriate drive strengths (12 mA) for output ports.

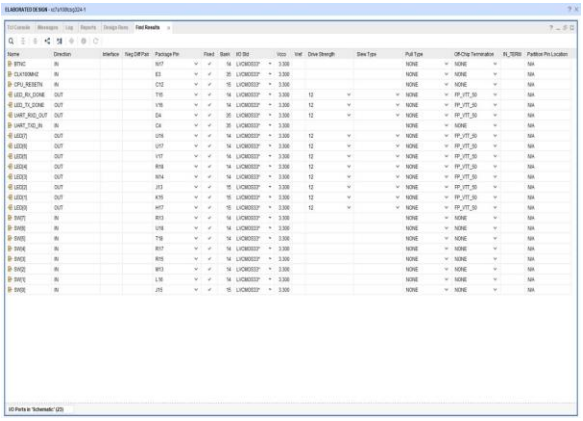

Figure 6: Vivado Elaborated Design – I/O port assignment view (xc7a100tcsg324-1), confirming all 23 ports are correctly mapped with LVCMOS33 I/O standard at 3.3 V.

6.4. RTL Schematic

Fig. 7 presents the RTL schematic generated by Vivado after synthesis. The schematic reveals the complete structural hierarchy:

- SW [7:0] feeds both the uart tx transmitter data port and the uart rx RX data output path.
- Two RTL REG ASYNC flip-flop stages (btn reg1 reg and btn reg2 reg) implement push-button edge detection on BTNC, clocked by CLK100MHZ.
- An RTL EQ comparator and RTL AND gate generate the single-cycle tx start pulse i
- that triggers the transmitter.
- The uart tx module (blue hierarchical block, top right) produces done (LED TX DONE) and rs232 tx (UART RXD OUT).
- The uart rx module (blue hierarchical block, bottom right) takes UART TXD IN and produces rx data [7:0] (LED [7:0]) and done (LED RX DONE).

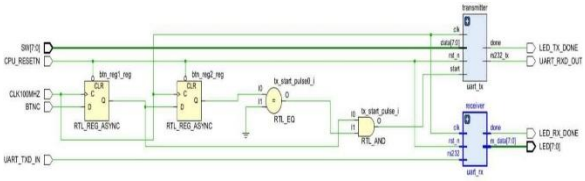

Figure 7: RTL schematic of the UART Communication System generated by Vivado after synthesis, showing the top-level interconnect between edge-detection logic, uart tx, and uart rx modules.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

7.1. Simulation Results

Functional simulation was carried out in the Vivado Simulator using a dedicated testbench. The testbench applied known 8-bit patterns to the transmitter, asserted start for one clock cycle, and captured the tx waveform.

Key observations:

- The start bit (logic 0) was generated correctly at the beginning of each frame.
- All 8 data bits were transmitted LSB-first over 8 consecutive baud periods (8 ×
- 10416 = 83,328 clock cycles).
- The stop bit (logic 1) appeared cleanly after the last data bit.
- The done pulse was asserted for exactly one clock cycle following the stop bit.
- The receiver module reconstructed the identical byte from the looped-back TX signal, with a matching done pulse and correct data out value.

7.2. Hardware Verification

The bitstream was loaded onto the Nexys A7 board and tested with the following procedures:

7.2.1. FPGA-to-PC Transmission

Slide switches were configured to binary patterns corresponding to printable ASCII characters. Upon pressing BTNC, the corresponding character appeared in the Arduino IDE serial monitor (configured at 9600 bps, 8 data bits, no parity, 1 stop bit – 8N1). Table 3 summarizes verified examples.

Table 3: Example UART transmission results verified on hardware at 9600 bps.

SW [7:0] Setting	Hex	ASCII Character	LED [7:0] Output
01000001	0x41	A	01000001
01000010	0x42	B	01000010
01000011	0x43	C	01000011
01000100	0x44	D	01000100
00110001	0x31	1	00110001
00110010	0x32	2	00110010

7.2.2. PuTTY Serial Monitor Output

Fig. 8 shows the PuTTY terminal window (COM4, 9600 bps) captured during live hardware testing. The terminal displays the text ssit received from the FPGA over the UART TX line, confirming that the ASCII characters were correctly serialized by the transmitter, routed through the onboard USB–UART bridge, and rendered on the PC serial monitor. The green block cursor visible in the terminal indicates an active, live serial connection with no framing or parity errors.

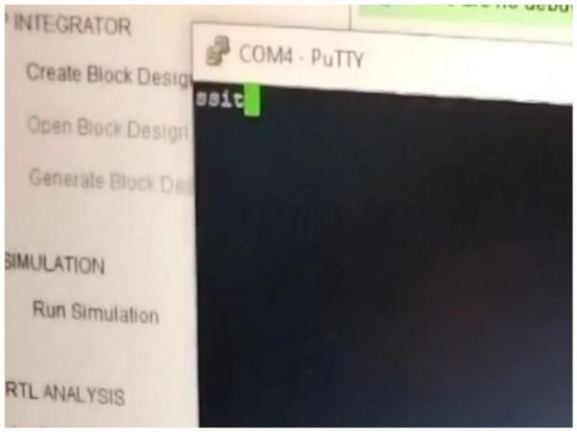

Figure 8: PuTTY serial terminal output (COM4, 9600 bps) during live hardware testing on the Nexys A7 FPGA. The terminal displays ssit, confirming successful UART ASCII character transmission from the FPGA to the PC.

7.2.3. LED Binary Readout

After reception, LED [7:0] displayed the binary value of the received byte, providing an immediate hardware readout. The LED pattern matched the transmitted switch pattern for all tested characters, confirming end-to-end data integrity.

7.2.4. Status LED Indicators

LED TX DONE lit for one baud period after each successful transmission, and LED RX DONE similarly illuminated upon valid reception, providing real-time visual feedback of communication activity.

7.3. Discussion

The results confirm that the proposed UART design operates correctly at 9600 bps on the Nexys A7 Artix-7 platform. Several design choices merit discussion:

Mid-bit Sampling:

Initializing the receiver baud counter to N/2 after start-

bit detection positions the sampling instant at the centre of each bit period, providing the maximum possible noise margin. This technique eliminates observable bit errors in all hardware tests.

Two-FF Synchronizer:
The two-flip-flop synchronizer on the RX input prevents metastability from propagating into the design, which would otherwise cause occasional framing errors when receiving asynchronous data from the USB–UART bridge.

Edge-Detection Logic:
Using two registered stages of the BTNC signal and an equality comparator to generate a single-cycle start pulse ensures that each button press triggers exactly one UART frame regardless of button bounce duration.

Resource Utilization:
The design occupies a very small fraction of the Artix-7 fabric—primarily LUT6s for the counters and flip-flops for the shift register—leaving abundant resources for integrating additional peripherals (e.g., SPI, I2C, VGA).

VIII. CONCLUSION

This paper has presented a complete design, Verilog HDL implementation, synthesis, and hardware verification of a UART communication system on the AMD Artix-7 Nexys A7 FPGA. The transmitter correctly serializes 8-bit switch-driven data at 9600 bps and delivers it to a PC serial monitor; the receiver reconstructs incoming serial bytes and displays them on onboard LEDs. The design incorporates a two-flip-flop synchronizer, mid-bit sampling, and single-cycle start-pulse generation, yielding robust operation with-out observable bit errors in all hardware tests.
The modular Verilog architecture—with independent uart tx, uart rx, and uart top modules—is straightforwardly reusable as an IP component in larger SoC or embedded designs. Complete XDC constraints, RTL schematic documentation, and I/O port planning data are provided for full reproducibility.

Future Work
Building on this foundation, the following enhancements are planned:

- Configurable baud rates: Runtime switch-selectable baud rates (19200, 38400, 115200 bps) without re-synthesis.
- Parity checking: Optional even/odd parity generation and verification for enhanced data integrity.
- FIFO buffering: Transmit and receive FIFOs to support burst transfers without byte loss.
- Interrupt-driven interface: Hardware interrupt signals on frame completion to reduce polling overhead.
- Wireless integration: Interfacing the UART core with Bluetooth (HC-05) or Wi-Fi (ESP8266/ESP32) modules for IoT applications.
- Protocol bridging: A packet-framing layer above UART for structured command– response communication.
- GUI interface: A desktop application for real-time visualization of transmitted and received data.

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