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Far-detuned parametric sidebands via multiple intermodal four-wave mixing in communication fiber

Sudip K Chatterjee¹ and R Vijaya²

¹*Department of Physics, Bennett University, Greater Noida-201 310, India*

²*Department of Physics and Centre for Lasers and Photonics,
Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur, Kanpur-208 016, India*

Dedicated to Professor Bishnu P Pal for his enormous contributions to the advancement of research and education in science and technology through his unique vision and outstanding dedication

We present a detailed investigation of multiple intermodal four-wave mixing (IMFWM) in the standard communications-grade fiber when it is pumped in the deep normal dispersion regime with Q-switched nanosecond pulses at 532 nm. A brief theoretical analysis based on coupled nonlinear Schrödinger equation under quasi-cw approximation, considering different modes for pumping, is carried out to identify all the allowed phase-matched Stokes and anti-Stokes waves having degenerate and non-degenerate mode configurations. With the first-order anti-Stokes thus generated as the secondary pump, the cascaded IMFWM can produce discrete emission in the ultraviolet range near 390 nm. © Anita Publications. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Four-wave mixing, Parametric Process, Nonlinear Schrödinger equation, Phase-matching.

1 Introduction

Studies on the nonlinear phenomenon of four-wave mixing (FWM) in optical fibers are known since the first demonstration by Stolen *et al* in 1974 [1]. An efficient conversion of pump power to the energy and phase-matched Stokes (red-shifted) and anti-Stokes (blue-shifted) lines in FWM has led to its wide range of applications in supercontinuum (SC) generation, parametric amplification, entangled photon pair generation, and quantum-state-preserving frequency conversion [2-5]. In conventional fiber-optic FWM, which is studied in single-mode fibers, multimode fibers, and the specialty photonic crystal fiber (PCF), it is commonly seen that the pump, Stokes and anti-Stokes waves propagate in the same fiber mode [6,7]. In these cases, the pump wavelength is chosen close to the zero-dispersion wavelength (ZDW) in the anomalous dispersion regime, and the wavelength of the photons in FWM lie close to the pump [8]. Hence, the presence of discrete Stokes and anti-Stokes waves would be severely contaminated by ZDW-dependent SC generation [2]. While utilizing the single-mode FWM for correlated photon pair generation, the coincidental counts of the entangled photons at the detectors would also be affected due to residual pump photons and spontaneous Raman scattered photons (bandwidth ~50 THz) [9]. One way of resolving this issue is by pumping near the ZDW in the normal dispersion regime of specially designed PCF [10,11]. An alternate way is to pump in the deep normal dispersion (no SC contamination) and fulfill the phase-matching condition using different fiber modes in a multimode fiber via a process known as intermodal four-wave mixing (IMFWM) [12-19]. In this process, the generated spectral components would be widely separated from the pump owing to the difference of propagation constants of participating modes. The large spectral shift also makes this technique suitable for the production and control of pure photon pair from highly entangled to factorable state [18].

Corresponding author

e mail: rvijaya@iitk.ac.in (R Vijaya)

Interestingly, the generation of an ensemble of wavelengths and modes through IMFWM has implications for building hyper-entangled sources for quantum communications [20]. In fact, experimental demonstration of far-detuned, frequency converted source in the ultraviolet regime via an advanced cascaded-IMFWM (C-IMFWM) process has been reported in the recent past. Double-clad higher order mode fiber [20], graded-index multimode fiber [21] and photonic crystal fiber [22] are among the host fibers which have been utilized to observe the above phenomenon. However, the combination of high-power mode-locked pump source and specialty host fiber makes the system complex, costly and difficult to integrate in all-fiber configuration. In this paper, we explore the occurrence of multiple IMFWM in a commercial-grade communication fiber by pumping in the deep normal dispersion regime. A brief theoretical analysis that governs all possible intermodal phase matching conditions considering the same or different pump-mode excitation, is discussed. The cascaded intermodal four wave mixing phenomena under secondary pumping scheme to generate a source in the ultraviolet band is also discussed.

2 Our earlier experimental work on IMFWM

Fascinated with this intermodal phase matching phenomena, we have explored the feasibility of generating multiple wavelengths experimentally by utilizing the commercial grade communication fibers [23,24]. Figure 1 depicts the experimental setup for investigating the IMFWM in SMF-28 fiber under Q-switched frequency-doubled Nd:YAG pumping. The laser pulse duration of 7 ns and repetition rate of 10 Hz is used in the experiment. The second harmonic pump at 532 nm is first passed through a variable attenuator (comprising of two polarizers P_A & P_B) and a half-wave plate (HWP). Then, the pump pulses are coupled through a 20 \times microscope objective (MO) into a Corning SMF-28e+ fiber. The output of the fiber is connected to a spectrometer (USB-4000, Ocean Optics) in the range of 200-900 nm. The modal content of the output beam profile is extracted by using a set of 10 nm band-pass filters (BPF) and a CCD camera. The fiber supports four modes ($V \sim 5.7$) at the pump wavelength. However, as an essential condition of observing IMFWM, a careful alignment of pump into only the fundamental mode (LP_{01}) of the fiber is achieved by altering the injection conditions. From a series of experiments with various segments of fiber and pump power, the optimized segment of 51 cm SMF-28e+ shows the generation of multiple wavelengths distinctly separated from the pump wavelength.

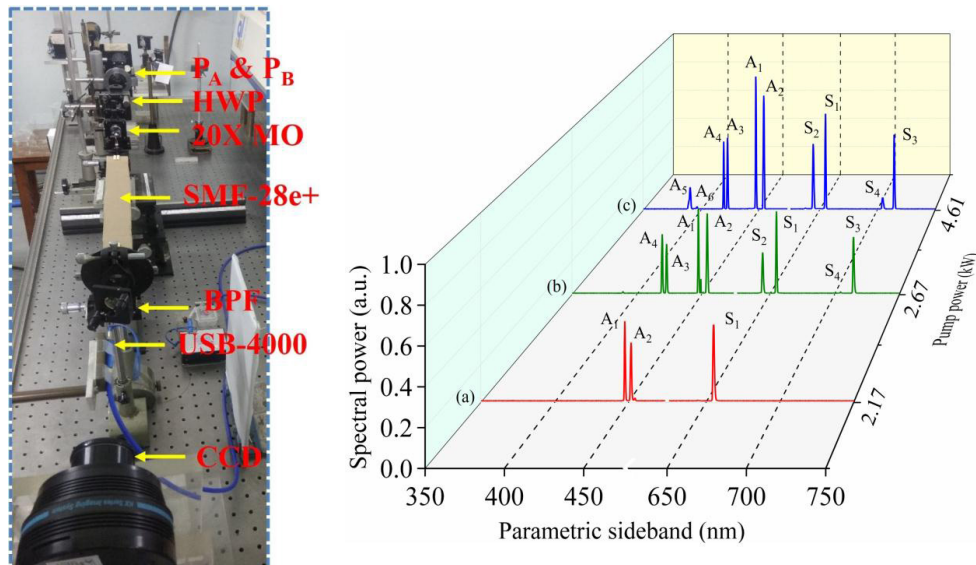


Fig 1. (a) Experimental setup (b) Observed output spectra of 51 cm SMF-28e+ under deep normal dispersion pumping.

Figure 1b depicts three spectra measured from a 51 cm long fiber sample at pump powers (P_p) of 2.17 kW, 2.67 kW and 4.61 kW. Interestingly, here we have witnessed the appearance of four pairs of spectral peaks (A_1 – A_4 , S_1 – S_4). At P_p of 2.17 kW, two anti-Stokes (A_1 , A_2) and one Stokes (S_1) sidebands are obtained. At P_p of 2.67 kW, new discrete peaks at 419.7 nm (A_4) and 704.7 nm (S_4) have been observed. Narrow sidebands in the ultra-violet range at 390.7 nm (A_5) and 396.7 nm (A_6), far-detuned from the pump (~ 204 THz), have also been observed for the first time in SMF-28e + fiber at a PP of 4.61 kW. The possible explanation of such phenomena along with the theoretical predictions have been discussed extensively in our previous publication [23]. The further blue-shifting of the ultra-violet peak has also been achieved while exploring the IMFWM in a low-slope dispersion shifted fiber (HIPOSH, YOFC Ltd.) in a separate study by us [24]. The small core diameter, high index contrast and nonlinear mode coupling between the pump beams and the anti-Stokes wavelengths were found to be the reason for obtaining the UV peak at 341 nm at an input power of 3.89 kW. In the next section, we theoretically analyze the conditions for obtaining multiple IMFWM, and the spectral positions of the generated wavelengths under degenerate and non-degenerate pumping configurations.

3 Intermodal phase matching in communication fiber: Theoretical formulation

The SMF-28 fiber has a core diameter of 8.4 μm and is mainly used in long haul communication. The core (n_c) and cladding (n_{cl}) refractive indices are related as, $n_c^2 \approx n_{cl}^2 [1 + 2\Delta]$ with $\Delta \approx 0.3\%$. Although the fiber is single-moded for $\lambda \geq 1.31$ μm , it supports four spatial modes (excluding the polarization degeneracies) i.e. LP_{01} , LP_{11} , LP_{21} and LP_{02} at the operating wavelength of frequency-doubled Nd:YAG laser ($\lambda = 532$ nm). In this section, we present the theoretical formulations for obtaining multiple intermodal four-wave mixing processes in such a fiber considering pump pulses in the nanosecond regime. One may note that the earlier papers had focused on the use of mode-locked pump pulses in the sub-picosecond regime [15]. However, the Q-switched lasers with nanosecond pulses, used in our work is much simpler, enabling savings in size and cost [6].

In IMFWM process, two pump photons propagate in different fiber modes simultaneously to generate one Stokes and one anti-Stokes photon either in the fundamental or in the higher order modes. The wavelength of the pump (λ_p), Stokes (λ_s) and anti-Stokes (λ_a) waves satisfy the energy conservation and phase matching (PM) conditions [8]:

$$\frac{2}{\lambda_p} = \frac{1}{\lambda_s} + \frac{1}{\lambda_a} \quad (1)$$

$$\Delta\beta = \beta_s^{l''m''}(\lambda_s) + \beta_a^{l''m''}(\lambda_a) - \beta_p^{lm}(\lambda_p) - \beta_p^{l'm'}(\lambda_p) = 0 \quad (2)$$

Here, $\beta_p^{lm}(\lambda_p)$, $\beta_p^{l'm'}(\lambda_p)$, $\beta_s^{l''m''}(\lambda_s)$ and $\beta_a^{l''m''}(\lambda_a)$ are the propagation constants of the pump, Stokes and anti-Stokes waves which belong to the LP_{lm} , $LP_{l'm'}$, $LP_{l''m''}$ and $LP_{l''m''}$ modes of the fiber. The evolution of the amplitudes of pump (A_{P_1} , A_{P_2}), Stokes (A_S) and anti-Stokes (A_A) fields is obtained by solving the coupled nonlinear Schrödinger equations as:

$$A_{P_1}(z) = A_{P_1}(0) \exp(i\gamma_{PP}(P_1 + 2P_2)z) \quad (3a)$$

$$A_{P_2}(z) = A_{P_2}(0) \exp(i\gamma_{PP}(P_2 + 2P_1)z) \quad (3b)$$

$$A_S(z) = \left[A_S(0) \left\{ \cosh(gz) + i \frac{\kappa}{2g} \sinh(gz) \right\} + i \frac{\gamma_{SA}}{g} A_A^*(0) \sqrt{P_1 P_2} \sinh(gz) \right] \exp i \left[\gamma_{SS}(P_1 + P_2) + \frac{\kappa}{2} \right] z \quad (3c)$$

$$A_A(z) = \left[A_A(0) \left\{ \cosh(gz) + i \frac{\kappa}{2g} \sinh(gz) \right\} + i \frac{\gamma_{AS}}{g} A_S^*(0) \sqrt{P_1 P_2} \sinh(gz) \right] \exp i \left[\gamma_{AA}(P_1 + P_2) + \frac{\kappa}{2} \right] z \quad (3d)$$

Here, P_1 and P_2 are the pump powers in LP_{lm} and $LP_{l'm'}$ modes, respectively, $\kappa = \Delta\beta - (P_1 + P_2) [2(\gamma_{SS} + \gamma_{AA}) - 3\gamma_{PP}]$, and

$$g = \sqrt{\gamma_{SA} \gamma_{AS} P_1 P_2 - (\kappa/2)^2}$$

$$\gamma_{ij} = \frac{3\omega_i \chi^{(3)}}{4\epsilon_0 n_i^2 c^2} \eta_{PPij}^{l'l''l''''}$$

where, ω_P , ω_S and ω_A are frequencies of the pump, Stokes and anti-Stokes waves, respectively, n_i is the propagation constant at ω_i , $\chi^{(3)}$ is the third order susceptibility, and the nonlinear coupling η_{PPij} , that determines the conversion efficiency is defined as [8]:

$$\eta_{PPij}^{l'l''l''''} = \int dA F_P^{lm} F_P^{l'm'} F_i^{l''m''} F_j^{l''''m''''} \quad (4)$$

$F_i^{lm}(r, \varphi)$ indicates the normalized field distribution of LP_{lm} fiber mode at λ_i and can be expressed as: $F_i^{lm}(r, \varphi) = F_i^{lm}(r) \exp(il\varphi)$. From the angular part of the overlap integral in Eq (4), one can obtain the following selection rule about the possible IMFWM processes [25]:

$$\eta_{PPij}^{l'l''l''''} = 0 \quad \text{for} \quad l + l' - l'' - l'''' \neq 0 \quad (5)$$

For these physically feasible IMFWM processes, the wavelength of the Stokes and anti-Stokes waves can be found by considering the Taylor series expansion of the propagation constants of Stokes and anti-Stokes waves i.e. $\beta_S^{l''m''}(\lambda_S)$ and $\beta_A^{l''''m''''}(\lambda_A)$ in Eq (2) around the pump frequency up to the second order as [19]:

$$\Delta\beta = \delta\beta^{(0)} + \delta\beta^{(1)}\Omega + \sum \beta^{(2)}\Omega^2 = 0 \quad (6)$$

where the spectral shifts Ω (in cm^{-1}), $\delta\beta^{(0)}$, $\delta\beta^{(1)}$ and $\Sigma\beta^{(2)}$ are defined as:

$$\Omega = \frac{1}{\lambda_P} - \frac{1}{\lambda_S} = \frac{1}{\lambda_A} - \frac{1}{\lambda_P} \quad (7)$$

$$\delta\beta^{(0)} = \beta_S^{l''m''}(\lambda_P) + \beta_A^{l''''m''''}(\lambda_P) - \beta_P^{lm}(\lambda_P) - \beta_P^{l'm'}(\lambda_P) \quad (8)$$

$$\delta\beta^{(1)} = 2\pi c [\beta_A^{l''''m''''(1)}(\lambda_P) - \beta_S^{l''m''(1)}(\lambda_P)] \quad (9)$$

$$\sum \beta^{(2)} = 2\pi^2 c^2 [\beta_S^{l''m''(2)}(\lambda_P) + \beta_A^{l''''m''''(2)}(\lambda_P)] \quad (10)$$

Here, $\beta_i^{lm(n)}(\lambda_P) = \frac{\partial^n}{\partial \omega^n} \beta_i^{lm}(\lambda_P)$. The linear phase matching shift ($\Omega_{0\pm}$) can be expressed as the solution to Eq (6):

$$\Omega_{0+} = \frac{1}{2} \sqrt{\left(\frac{\delta\beta^{(1)}}{\Sigma\beta^{(2)}}\right)^2 - 4 \frac{\delta\beta^{(0)}}{\Sigma\beta^{(2)}} - \frac{\delta\beta^{(1)}}{2\Sigma\beta^{(2)}}} \quad (11a)$$

$$\Omega_{0-} = -\frac{1}{2} \sqrt{\left(\frac{\delta\beta^{(1)}}{\Sigma\beta^{(2)}}\right)^2 - 4 \frac{\delta\beta^{(0)}}{\Sigma\beta^{(2)}} - \frac{\delta\beta^{(1)}}{2\Sigma\beta^{(2)}}} \quad (11b)$$

For our work, $\Sigma\beta^{(2)}$ in Eq (10) is positive as the pump lies in the deep normal dispersion for all the supporting modes. The $\delta\beta^{(1)}$ in Eq (9) has small value (positive or negative) as both the modes possess identical β vs ω (or, λ) curves at λ_P . So, $\delta\beta^{(0)}$ in Eq (8) has to have significant negative values in order to achieve a large and real $\Omega_{0\pm}$ and hence feasible IMFWM. In the case when the two pump waves belong to the same mode

i.e. $l = l'$ and $m = m'$, Eqs (3c and 3d) would be modified slightly by assuming $P_1 = P_2$. Notably, in deriving Eqs (3a-3d), the contribution of linear mode coupling in PM condition has been ignored. This assumption is justified by considering the excitation of only three to four modes in a short length (few tens of cm) of host fiber free from any mechanical waveguide perturbation. We would also like to emphasize that although the frequency detuning of the generated sidebands in IMFWM and geometric parametric instability (GPI) in GRIN-MMF are quite similar, the mechanisms are completely different. Unlike IMFWM, the parametric instability process relies on the periodic self-imaging effect due to the excitation of large number of modes (more than 200) within the fiber [26].

4 Multiple intermodal four-wave mixing

In Fig 2, we have plotted the phase mismatch parameter ($\Delta\beta$) as a function of the spectral shift (Ω) for all possible IMFWM processes that satisfy Eq (5). The possible pump combinations are mentioned in the figure, whereas the modes of the corresponding Stokes and anti-Stokes are depicted in the inset. The position of $\Delta\beta(\Omega) = 0$ indicates the allowed IMFWM process and has been marked as $I_1 - I_6$ in Fig 2. Each IMFWM process in the positive Ω_0 (Ω_{0+}) side also has a complementary IMFWM in the negative Ω_0 (Ω_{0-}) having Stokes and anti-Stokes waves with interchanged mode-order. The spectral-shifts of all these processes, and the conversion efficiency along with the mode designation of the participating waves have been presented in Table 1. A slight asymmetry between each set of Ω_{0+} and Ω_{0-} occurs due to the presence of $\delta\beta^{(1)}$ in Eq (11) (see Table 1).

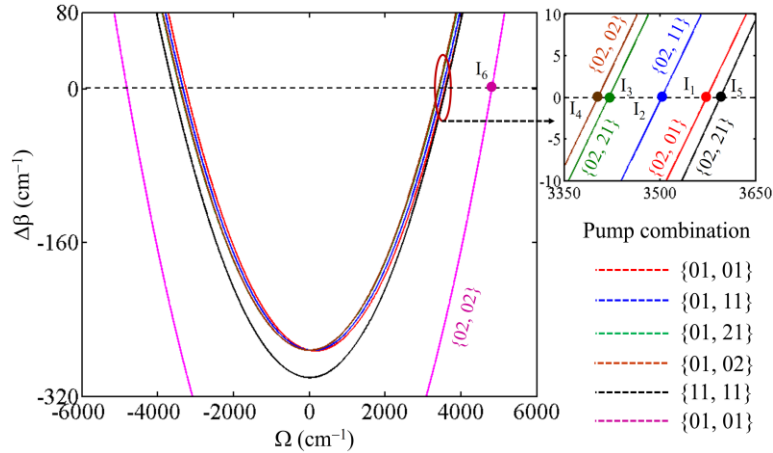


Fig 2. Phase-matched Stokes and anti-Stokes wavelengths in SMF-28 for different combinations of pump-mode.

In the case of the first four IMFWM processes (IMFWM #1: red – IMFWM #4: brown), the mode order of the anti-Stokes waves i.e. LP_{01} , LP_{11} , LP_{21} , LP_{02} coincides with one of the pump waves. Hence, the $\delta\beta^{(0)}$, in all these cases, would be simply the difference between the propagation constants of the LP_{02} Stokes mode ($LP_{l'm''}$) and fundamental pump mode (LP_{01}) i.e. 271.8 cm^{-1} . However, as one analyses the PM condition of IMFWM #1 and IMFWM #4, a decrease in Ω_{0+} (or, an increase in Ω_{0-}) is seen due to the decrement of $\delta\beta^{(1)}$ (see Eq 11) from -7.4×10^{-3} to zero. In IMFWM #5 (solid black curve) where both the pumps in LP_{11} mode completely annihilate to generate Stokes wavelength in LP_{02} and anti-Stokes in LP_{21} mode, an enhancement of the spectral shift (Ω_{0+} or, Ω_{0-}) was found. This is so because of the rise in $\delta\beta^{(0)}$ value to 300.3 cm^{-1} as the difference between the propagation constants of LP_{21} and LP_{11} is higher than that between LP_{11} and LP_{01} .

In IMFWM #6, where both the Stokes and anti-Stokes in LP_{02} mode are produced from the pump in LP_{01} mode, a significant detuning of generated sidebands from the pump is observed. An almost doubling

of $\delta\beta^{(0)}$ of this process in comparison to the previous IMFWM is responsible for such a huge upsurge in Ω_0 (I_6 in Fig 2). The difficulty in exciting both the pump-modes having dissimilar spatial field with almost equal intensity makes the IMFWM #1, #5, and #6 more favorable than the others. However, in a recent report by Ramachandran *et al*, the equal excitation of two circularly symmetric pump-modes (LP₀₄ and LP₀₅) in a step-index MMF is achieved by using a binary phase plate encoded on a spatial light modulator [27]. Now, unlike in IMFWM #1 and IMFWM #6, where the excitation of the focused pump beam in LP₀₁ mode can be achieved by carefully adjusting the input-end of the fiber using 3-D translational stage, the activation of IMFWM #5 requires launching the pump in LP₁₁ modes. This, in general, can be achieved through a minute control over longitudinal (offset) as well as rotational (tilt) motion at the input by a five-axis positional stage with high precision [28].

Table 1. Comparison of spectral-shift and conversion efficiency of allowed IMFWM in SMF-28 under frequency-doubled Nd:YAG pumping

Process	P ₁	P ₂	Stokes	Anti-Stokes	F_{ijkl}^{mnop} ($\times 10^{-15} \text{m}^2$)	$\Omega_{0\pm}$ (cm^{-1})
IMFWM #1	LP ₀₁	LP ₀₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₀₁	13.5	3574
			LP ₀₁	LP ₀₂	11.5	-3256
IMFWM #2	LP ₀₁	LP ₁₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₁₁	0.7	3502
			LP ₁₁	LP ₀₂	3.0	-3333
IMFWM #3	LP ₀₁	LP ₂₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₂₁	4.0	± 3419
			LP ₂₁	LP ₀₂	6.8	-3413
IMFWM #4	LP ₀₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₀₂	LP ₀₂	13.9	± 3402
IMFWM #5	LP ₁₁	LP ₁₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₂₁	3.3	3594
			LP ₂₁	LP ₀₂	5.8	-3588
IMFWM #6	LP ₀₁	LP ₀₁	LP ₀₂	LP ₀₂	15.6	± 4812

5 Cascaded intermodal four-wave mixing: Anti-Stokes pumping

In Fig 3, we have plotted the spectral shift as a function of pump detuning ($\Delta\Omega_p$) in cm^{-1} around 532 nm for the IMFWM #1 and IMFWM # 6 processes. It is clear from the figure that with an increase in frequency beyond the primary pump i.e. $\Delta\Omega_p$ is positive (blue shifted), the spectral shift reduces. But an increase in spectral shift occurs at the negative $\Delta\Omega_p$ side (red shifted) for both the processes. Here, one can extract the information about a complex cascaded IMFWM (C-IMFWM) which can be initiated by the above mentioned four wave mixing phenomena. In C-IMFWM process, the phase-matched Stokes and anti-Stokes waves act as the new secondary pump, and generate new secondary sidebands. This happens due to a significant transfer of energy from the primary pump to those of the primary sidebands. Such C-IMFWM is essential to produce narrow linewidth sources which are far detuned (more than 200 THz) from the main pump. In IMFWM #1, the phase-matched Stokes and anti-Stokes in LP₀₂ and LP₀₁ mode, respectively are found at $\Omega_{0+} = \Omega_1 = 3572 \text{ cm}^{-1}$ as indicated by point P in Fig 3. The pair of C-IMFWM triggered by this primary anti-Stokes can be found at $\Delta\Omega_p = \Omega_{0+}$ and marked as P₁ (Stokes in LP₀₂, anti-Stokes in LP₀₁) and P₂ (Stokes in LP₀₁, anti-Stokes in LP₀₂) with a spectral separation of 3013 cm^{-1} (Ω_{0+}^S) and -2769 cm^{-1} (Ω_{0-}^S), respectively. The overall positions of these secondary sidebands would be found at $\Delta\Omega_p \pm \Omega_{0+}^S$ (6585 cm^{-1} , 559 cm^{-1}) and $\Delta\Omega_p \pm \Omega_{0-}^S$ (6343 cm^{-1} , 803 cm^{-1}) from the primary pump. The C-IMFWM initiated by the primary Stokes wave in LP₀₂ mode at $\Delta\Omega_p = -\Omega_{0+}$ has not been found feasible as the corresponding PM curve remains positive in the entire visible range for all the IMFWM processes that satisfy the selection rule (Eq 5). This reason also holds

anti-Stokes lines, far-detuned from the pump i.e. $3500\text{--}4800\text{ cm}^{-1}$, would be useful in quantum information processing technologies [27] as well as in biomedical science and fluorescence spectroscopy.

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Dr Sudip Kumar Chatterjee is currently an Assistant Professor in the department of Physics at Bennett University. Prior to his present appointment, he worked as a postdoctoral fellow in the department of Instrumentation and Applied Physics, Indian Institute of Science Bangalore during 2020-2021, at Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur during 2017-2020, and at Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur during 2016-2017. He received his doctoral degree from Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur in 2016. His research interests include Nonlinear parametric processes, Beam manipulation in fiber, and Advanced interferometric sensors.



Professor Vijaya is an experimental physicist working in topics related to Optics and Photonics for the past 30 years. After completing her doctoral degree and CSIR research associateship at IIT Madras, she worked at SSSIHL for 4 years

and IIT Bombay for 14 years, before she moved to IIT Kanpur in 2011. Her research work includes nonlinear optics, fiber optics, nanophotonics, optical devices, miniature lasers, microstrip patch antennas and metasurfaces, all with an emphasis on applications. Apart from teaching and research, outreach effort for school and undergraduate education is one of her passions. She is a senior member of IEEE, Optica and SPIE.