

condition, as summarized in Ref.[6],

$$k_{SPP_{gr}} = k_0 \sin \theta + \frac{2n\pi}{d}, \quad (1)$$

where $k_{SPP_{gr}}$ and $k_0 = 2\pi/\lambda_0$ is the wave vector of SPPs on a grating and propagating light, λ_0 is the wavelength of the propagating light, θ is incident angle, d is grating pitch, and n is a positive or negative integer.

In this study, SPPs were excited by incident light with a grating (in-coupler), to propagate along a waveguide until they reach another grating (out-coupler) to radiate. The out-coupled power emitted from the out-coupler is considered to be proportional to the power of the SPPs that flow into the out-coupler, in the assumption that the efficiency of SPP-light coupling is steady among all couplers, while maintaining the incident light in power. It follows that, the out-coupled light decreases at the same rate to the SPPs, as the distance between the in-coupler and out-coupler increases. We calculated the distance that the out-coupled power falls to $1/e$, depending the length of the waveguides: that is, equivalent to the propagation length of the SPPs.

Fig. 1(A) shows schematic of experimental setup. A CO₂ laser was used for a mid-infrared light source generating linearly polarized light at wavelength of 10.6 μm . The power was controlled by Pulse Width Modulation in radio frequency. P-polarized light was incident into the in-coupler at a certain angle that fulfills Eq. 1 with $n=1$, being loosely collimated by a spherical mirror with $R=400\text{mm}$. The out-coupled light was collected by a power meter using a spherical mirror with $R=150\text{mm}$. An aperture was arranged in front of the power meter, being optical conjugate with the out-coupler in the sample which is attached with a xyz-stage on a rotational table. We also used a He-Ne laser for a guide laser, to be coupled with the mid-infrared light passing through a CaF substrate which behaves as a partial mirror in both visible and mid-infrared ranges.

Annealing was applied to the sample twice on a hotplate in Argon atmosphere, for increasing grain size on the surface of the waveguides[7]. In the first annealing process, the sample was heated at 600°C for 20min, and gradually cooled on the hotplate at room temperature. In the second annealing, the

sample was heated at 700°C for 16min, cooling down in the same way.

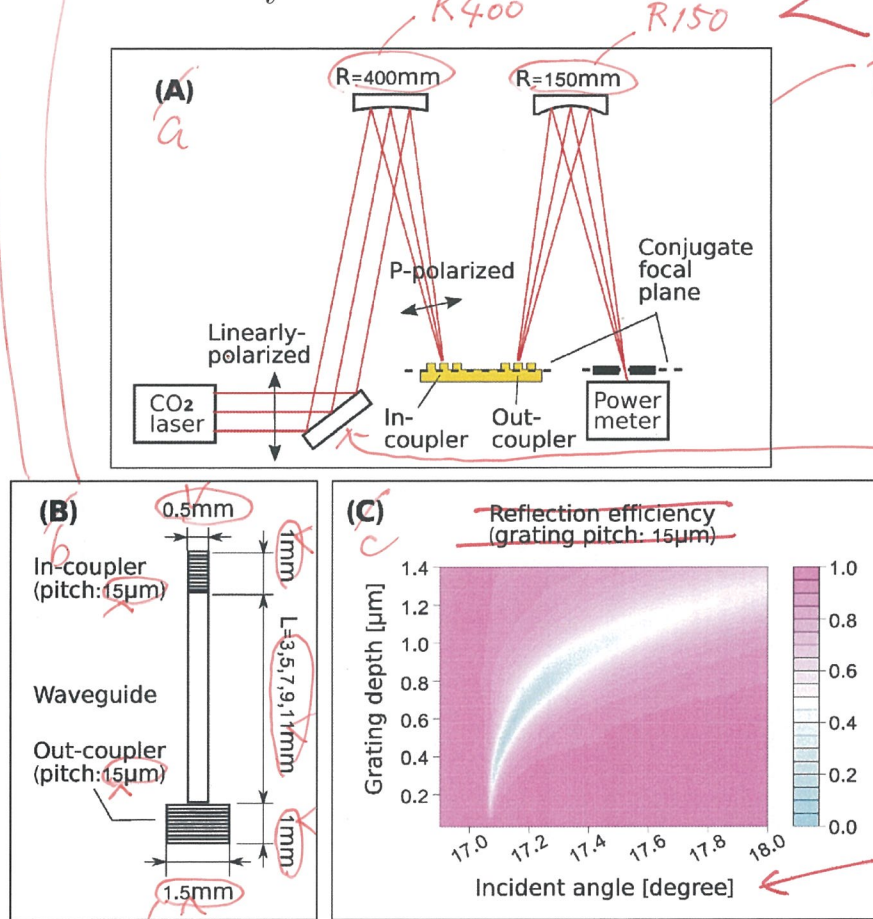


Figure 1: (A) Schematic of experimental setup. (B) Gratings and waveguide design. (C) Reflection efficiency on a grating with pitch 15 μm and duty cycle 50%, calculated by RCWA.

3. Experiment

3 Sample

We designed multiple waveguides with lengths ranging from 3 to 11mm with a 2mm step, sandwiched by gratings with length 1.0mm as shown in Fig. 1(B). A width of the waveguide and the in-coupler is 0.5mm, while the out-coupler has a width of 1.5mm. Both of the in-coupler and out-coupler have a rectangular profile with pitch of 15 μm in duty cycle 50%. Each of the waveguides is parallelly aligned with a spacing 1.5mm. The waveguides and swelling part of gratings are optimized to be 800nm higher than the gold base, as illustrated below.

Grating depth is reported as significantly influential for the SPP-light coupling efficiency[6][8]. To estimate the optimized grating depth for the strong SPP-light coupling that results in high signal-to-noise ratio of the optical experiment, we conducted a nu-

of the CO₂ laser. The time averaged power was controlled by the duty ratio of the power modulation in radio frequency. The input power to the in-coupler was typically 0 mW. The duty ratio was typically 0.4.

In order to modify the morphology of the Au film, the sample was annealed twice with a hotplate in Argon atmosphere [7].