

PhD Candidacy Exam Proposal:

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1 A Single Photon Source Enabled by Fano Interference between a Broadband Emitter and a High Q, Kerr Cavity

1.1 Introduction

Single photon sources play a prominent role in the field of quantum information science. [1, 2] In the QKD protocol, Alice encodes an information, for example, in the qubit of a photon polarization state. If Alice must securely transmit this qubit through a quantum channel to Bob, the receiver, then Alice's single photon source must be deterministic. In a case where Alice generates a probabilistic two-photon state, then Eve, the eavesdropper, can glean information from one of the two photons (unknown to Alice) while the second photon is transmitted to Bob. [3, 4] Moreover, since photons travel at the speed of light and interact weakly with the environment over long distances, encoding information in the quantum state of a single photon (using degrees of freedom of polarization, momentum, or energy) is highly compatible and thus desirable in quantum communication application.

A deterministic single-photon source that emits a single photon *on demand*, with 100 % probability, is ideal. In practice, one evaluates the single-photon nature of a source by the ratio of the probability of single-photon to multi-photon emission, and thus single-photon sources lie on a spectrum of two main classes: deterministic and probabilistic sources. [5, 6] The former involves effective two level systems (quantum dots, single atoms, single ions) [7, 8, 9, 10, 11] that emit a single photon when excited by a resonant incident field; the latter involves, for example, parametric down conversion in waveguides (or four-wave mixing in optical fiber) systems [12, 13, 14] that emit a correlated pair of photons, where one photon heralds the other. The known difficulties with these systems involve trapping of a single ion or atom strongly coupled to cavities at cryogenic temperatures for deterministic single-photon sources, and care must be taken with the probabilistic sources to avoid generating multiple pairs of photons. Herein, we propose a theoretical basis for a novel system that circumvents ion trapping at ultra-cold temperatures, and this system is operative in the Purcell regime; then we calculate the second order correlation function as a measure of its single-photon nature.

Consider the following system: a high-quality cavity coupled to a broadband emitter. For example, ref [15] has a near sub-diffraction plasmon

nanorod placed on the chip of a torodial silicon based microcavity, with a 10^7 Q-factor. The absorption cross-section of the excited plasmon nanorod yields a Fano-lineshape slightly shifted about the resonance of the isolated mode of the microcavity. This Fano resonance is indicative of a hybrid mode of the hybridized plasmonic-photonic system. Moreover, not only is this system operative at room temperature, it is capable of measuring attometer shifts in the resonances of the microcavity modes. We propose the following modification: coating the cavity with polystyrene, which has a large third-order nonlinear susceptibility on the order of $10^{12} \text{cm}^2/\text{W}$. [16, 17]. (Polystyrene's third-order nonlinearity originates from the delocalization of the π -conjugated electrons along the polymer chains. [18, 19]) This achieves a Kerr effect such that transmission of a photon from the pump laser (through the plasmon) to the cavity would result in the shift of the cavity's resonance (see figure). Thus the resonance of the nonlinear cavity now depends on the photon-number in the cavity.

A characteristic of this nonlinear plasmonic-photonic system is the cavity photon-number dependent Fano resonance, with a sharp resonant peak and anti-resonant dip corresponding to an enhanced and diminished plasmon absorption cross-section (see figure). At the anti-resonant frequency of diminished plasmon absorption, there is a transmission of photon into the cavity. Thus, a pump laser exciting the plasmon at the anti-resonance would yield, ideally, a single-photon occupation in the cavity; and for a non-linear cavity, this single-photon occupation would result to a shift of the Fano resonance (see yellow curve of figure). If this shifted Fano resonance (of the cavity mode with a single-photon occupation) now yields a peak of enhanced plasmon absorption that aligns with the pump laser, then any subsequent photon will be absorbed by the plasmon. Thus, the system exhibits a blockade effect for a two-photon transition at the resonant peak aligned with the pump laser, however, permitting a single-photon transition at the anti-resonant dip aligned with the pump laser. We set out to calculate the second order correlation function of such single- and two-photon states of the proposed nonlinear cavity-emitter system.

1.2 Analysis

The two-photon blockade effect depends on the Fano resonance shift induced by the Kerr cavity. The system is designed such that a monochromatic pump laser aligns with the anti-resonant frequency (corresponding to a diminished

plasmon absorption) of a single-photon transition but aligns with the resonant frequency (corresponding to an enhanced plasmon absorption) of a two-photon transition; the former state transmits into the cavity while latter state is absorbed by the plasmon. Thus the degree of nonlinearity depends on the line-width between the anti-resonant dip and the resonant peak of the Fano line-shape, such that,

$$\begin{aligned}\lambda_1 - \lambda_2 &= \lambda_1 - (\lambda_1 + 2\pi c/\Gamma) \\ \Delta\lambda &= 2\pi c/\Gamma\end{aligned}\tag{1}$$

where Γ , the FWHM, is approximately equal to the line-width between the anti-resonant dip and the resonant peak of the Fano-lineshape; λ_1 and λ_2 are the wavelengths of the modes associated with the single- and two-photon transitions, respectively. Assuming the whispering-gallery modes of the toroidal kerr-cavity as standing waves, then $\lambda_{1,2}/n_{1,2} = 2L/m$, where n_2 is the refractive index of the kerr-cavity [20]:

$$\begin{aligned}n_2 &= n_1 + \Delta n I \\ &= n_1 + \frac{3\chi^{(3)}}{8n_1 c \epsilon_0} I.\end{aligned}\tag{2}$$

The kerr effect is induced by the local intensity I from the pump laser populating the kerr-cavity. From the above equations we find the relation:

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{\Delta\lambda}{\lambda_1/n_1} &= \Delta n I \\ &= \frac{3\chi^{(3)}}{8n_1 c \epsilon_0} I\end{aligned}\tag{3}$$

For a pump laser operating at an intensity $\approx 80 \text{ GW/cm}^2$, with a third order susceptibility $\approx 1.15 \times 10^{-12} \text{ cm}^2/\text{W}$, [16] and for a cavity mode $\lambda_1/n_1 \approx 1550 \text{ nm}$, the desired blockade effect can be achieved for a two-photon state whose resonance is shifted by $\Delta\lambda \approx$. This value serves as an upper bound since the fano-lineshape has a narrow line-width on the order of an attometer. This is advantageous because the desired blockade effect could be achieved for a kerr-cavity with a much smaller third order susceptibility and a faint laser beam (whose coherent state could have an average photon-number in range $\mu = 1 - 4$).

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