

# LIQUID LIGHT GUIDE

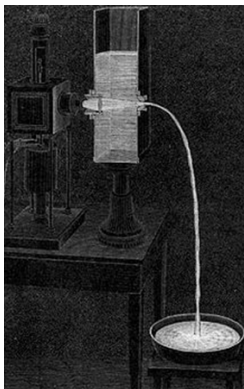
Una Pale

XV. gymnasium, Faculty of electrical engineering and computing,  
University of Zagreb, Croatia

## 1. Introduction

Light guide is a fiber-optic cable which is used to transfer signal (light impulses) and this way is one of basic ways of information transfer. Today it is very common in computer networks, telecommunications, medicine, submarines ect. Usually it is made from glass, quartz or plastic. In this paper, research of waters' properties which enable water jet to serve as a light guide is presented. Colladon's apparatus for so called "light fountain" or "light pipe" from 1840. was constructed. The main goal was to research how intensity of transferred light and length of jet capable to transfer light depend on the shape of the jet. Experimental results are described and compared with computer model.

## 2. Apparatus



The apparatus itself was very similar to Colladon's apparatus [Figure 1] but with few extra improvements so the measurements could be done. [Figure 4] A huge transparent vessel with a horizontal nozzle and a laser (He-Ne laser, 630nm) was set. The nozzle and laser were in the same horizontal level and laser was pointed into the nozzle so it could enter a water jet leaving the nozzle. Nozzles had to have perfectly smooth walls and narrow toward the end so it could prevent turbulences to appear. The plastic end of pens turned better of any other glass or metal tubes.

Figure 1: Colladon's apparatus

## 3. Materials and methods

In the beginning in vessel was 10 liters of water and the jet was almost horizontal. As water seeped, because of the reducing height of water in vessel and hydrostatic pressure, the output velocity also reduced so the curvature of water jet became steeper. Every few seconds the intensity of light in jet, always in the same vertical distance from nozzle, was measured. At the same time the jet was photographed so curvature could be determined mathematically (the coefficient of parabola).

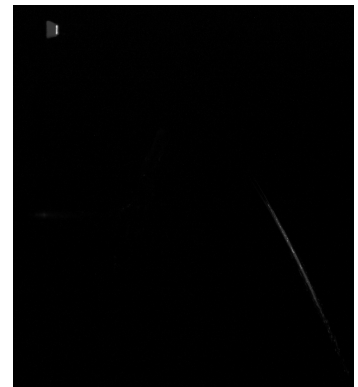


Figure 2: The effect („dark“ and red part)

### 3.1. Measuring the length of laminar part of the jet

There were two phases in the jet; "black" and red part (since the laser was red). First part where jet was "dark" and smooth was

part where the light was inside of the jet and wasn't coming out (in our eye) and that's why we couldn't see it in the dark. After some length, the jet started to fall apart, wasn't smooth any more and light was coming out. Here it couldn't serve any more as a light guide. Goal was to determine how the length of laminar part of the jet (part which can transfer the light) depends on the shape of jet. It was photographed and pictures were processed in free program ImageJ. The coefficient of parabola which jet described was calculated and the length of "dark" part of jet was measured. As a reference for dimensions there was a ruler photographed in the picture.

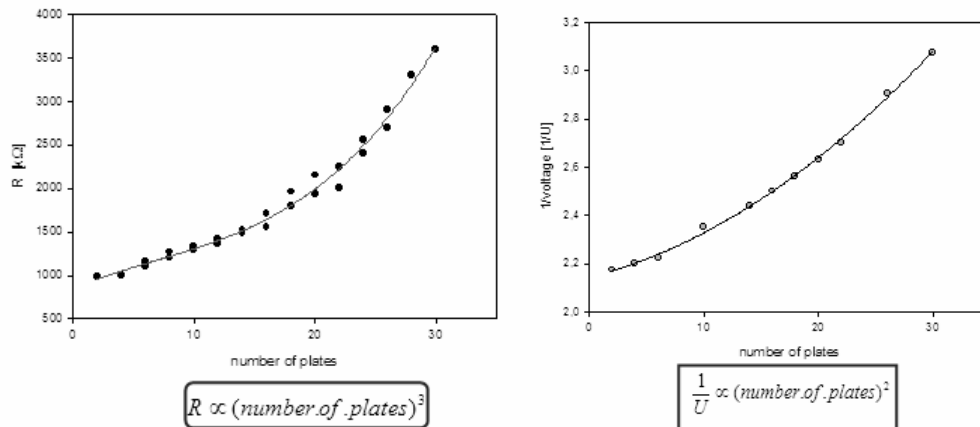
### 3.2. Measuring the intensity of light

As the shape of jet changed the intensity of light which came to (always the same) place of measurement in "black" part of jet, also changed. The photo resistor was put in particular place and the resistance was measured since it depended on intensity of light. The dependence is not linear and it was necessary to calibrate it.



**Figure 3: Calibration of the photo resistor**

Since some materials absorb the light that passes through them, glass plates were used. Changing the number of plates the total absorption was changed so the intensity of light on resistor too. Different number of them was put between laser and photo resistor. [Figure 3] The dependence of resistance on number of glass plate was determined. [Graph 1]



**Graph 1: Calibration of the photo resistor**

**Graph 2: Calibration of the photo diode**

The same procedure was repeated but instead of resistor photo diode was used and voltage was measured. It was known that the dependence of voltage on intensity was linear. This way the dependence of voltage on the number of pates was determined. [Graph 2] Since for the photo diode is  $I \propto U$  and the previous calibrations gave these relations;  $R \propto (\text{number.of.plates})^3$  and  $\frac{1}{U} \propto (\text{number.of.plates})^2$

it followed that the dependence of intensity on resistance of photo resistor is :

$$I \propto \left(\frac{1}{R}\right)^{\frac{2}{3}}.$$

The area of photo resistor was greater then the area of cross section of jet for all diameters of nozzle. These way all light inside of the jet came to the resistor.

Now when it was known how to get the intensity from resistance and when the apparatus was constructed [Figure 4] and the method were developed the measurements could be done.

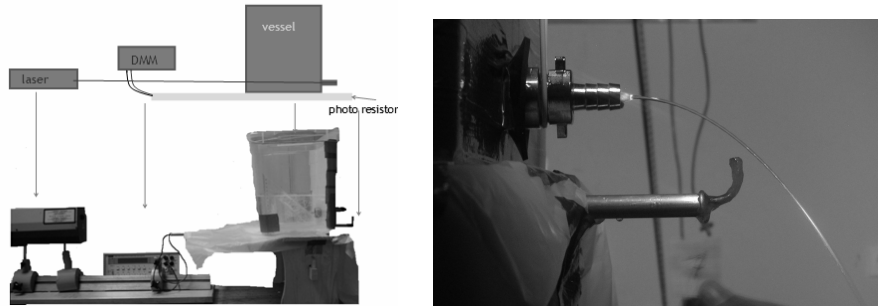


Figure 4: The apparatus

### 3.3. Computer simulation

This model was made to calculate the intensity of the light in the end of the “dark” jet. Simulation required some approximations. The jet was presented with two parabolas (they have same formulas but one is translated above another for the value of the diameter of the nozzle). [Figure 5] In the program only the place where laser ray strikes the edge of the jet first time was observed. [Figure 6] It was the place where the curvature was the greatest so all following input angles can be greater than the boundary one and only the reflection can happen which leaves the intensity unchanged after the first interaction.

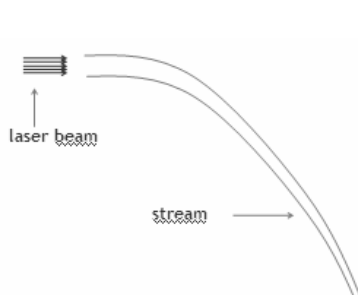


Figure 5: Jet and laser represented in program

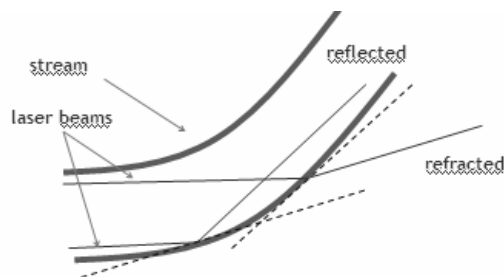


Figure 6: First intersection of laser ray and jet parabola

The laser beams were simulated as set of parallel lines. [Figure 5] This is how the program worked: 1. for each line the intersection with beam parabola is found 2. angle between laser ray and normal to the parabola is found 3. if the angle is greater than the boundary one the percentage of intensity stays 100, if the angle is smaller the percentage is calculated by the formula [Formula 1] 4. intensities are multiplied

with  $1/n$  if there is  $n$  observed rays and then summed. This procedure is repeated for different parabola coefficients so the measurement with different output velocities are simulated.

#### 4. Theory

There are two main reasons for the loss of the light; hydrodynamic and optical. Hydrodynamic reason is the decomposition of the jet. Because of the gravity the velocity of water increased and since the flow rate has to be constant, the radius of the jet decreased. On the surface of jet there are always small fluctuations called Plateau-Rayleigh fluctuations, no matter how laminar the jet is. They increase as the velocity is greater. Since the jet narrows at the same time, in the end jet turns to drops. These turbulences are unpredictable and it's very hard to theoretically determine the place at the jet where they will cause leakage of light from the jet. That's why we photographed it.

Second reason is optical reason. In different mediums light spreads with different velocity and has a different wavelength and that's why it refracts or reflects when it comes to the border between two different mediums. What will happen with light when comes to border depends on the input angle and refractive index. If input angle is smaller than boundary angle (for water it's is  $48.6^\circ$ ) the light passes in second medium but with different output angle. This angle is determined by the Snells law. If the input angle is greater than boundary angle, the total internal reflection happens and it means that the light stays in the previous medium, and the 100% of initial intensity is preserved. It's important not to forget that even if the most of the light refracts still some percent of the initial light and it's intensity stays in initial medium. This percentage is determined with the formula:

$$K = \left( \frac{n_1 \cos \alpha - n_2 \cos \alpha}{n_1 \cos \alpha + n_2 \cos \alpha} \right)^2$$

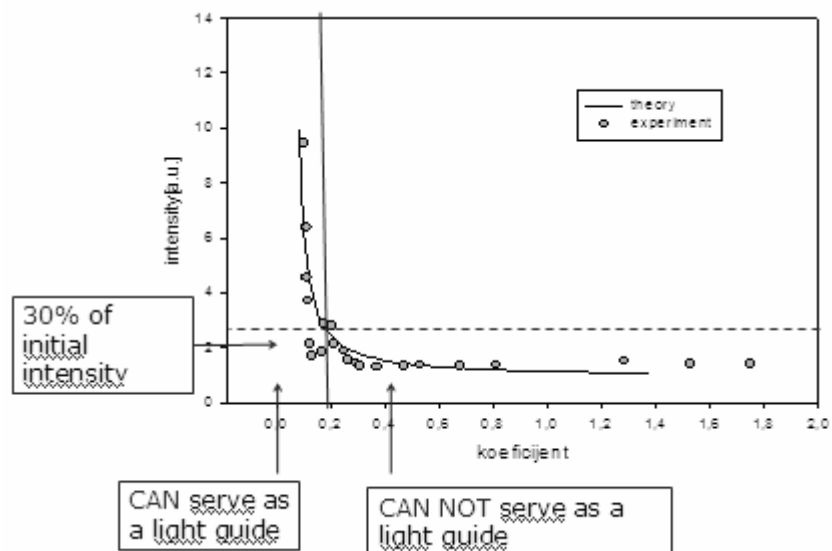
**Formula 1: Percentage of light that stays inside of jet in dependance of input angle**

#### 5. Results and discussion

##### 5.1. Dependence: Intensity of light - coefficient

The intensity of light that stay in jet after first refraction (until the beginning of the dissipation of the jet) decreases steeply as the coefficient of the parabola start to increase. Later it becomes almost a constant. [Graph 3] As a criteria of a good light guide it was taken a number of 30% of initial intensity that has to be preserved. From graph it can be seen that the maximal coefficient of parabola for jet to still be "good" light guide is 0.2.

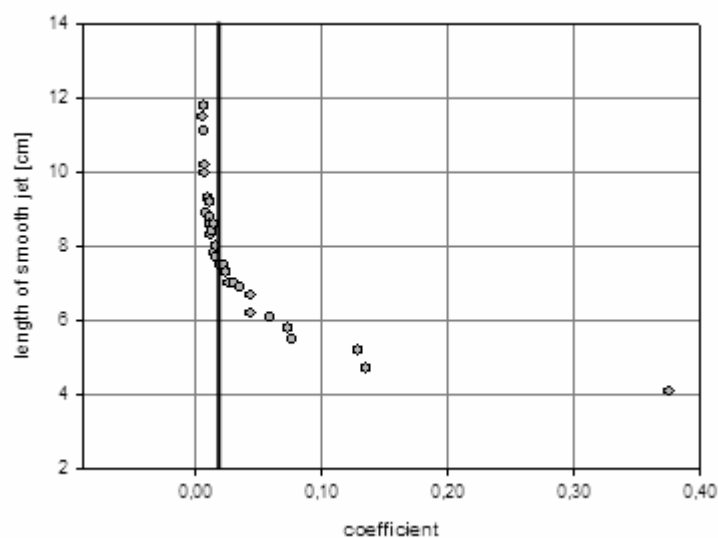
In graph the line represents the computer model and dots measurements. Theory and measurements agree very well. It confirms theory that only the first intersection is important and that it is satisfactorily to present jet as two identical parabolas.



Graph 3: Dependence of intensity on coefficient of parabola

### 5.2. Dependence: Length of the laminar part of the jet – coefficient

The length of the laminar part of the jet wasn't possible to predict theoretically because the turbulences appear after only few centimeters from the nozzle, but the question is when they start to bother the refraction and reflection. In [Graph 4] the measurements of the length of "black" part of the jet from taken pictures are shown.

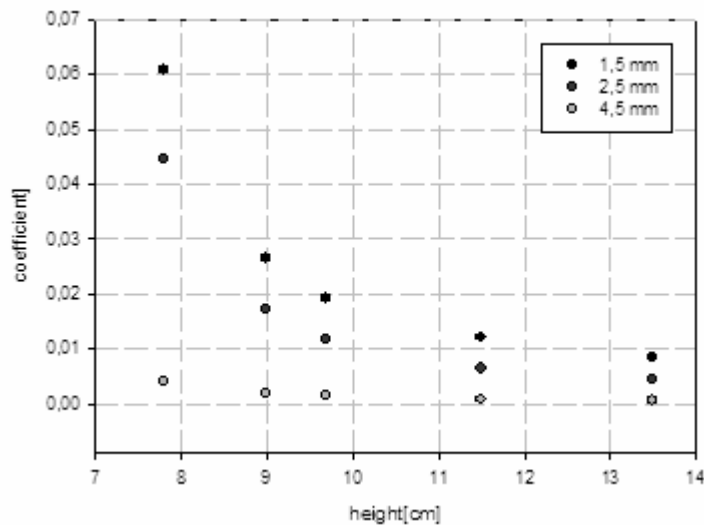


Graph 4: Dependence of length of laminar part of jet on coefficient of parabola

### 5.3 Influence of the radius of the nozzle

The radius affects the coefficient of the parabola. The thicker jet is for the same height of the water in a vessel, coefficient is smaller which means that the jet is more horizontal. [Graph 5] It may seem contradictory but it's because of the friction with

nozzles which can't be neglected. In case of greater radius the friction with nozzles affects smaller on the outcome velocity. That's also why the velocity couldn't be determined from the height.



**Graph 5: Influence of radius of the nozzle on the coefficient of parabola**

#### 4. Conclusion

The goal of paper was accomplished. Conditions under which the jet operates as a light guide were determined. If it has a coefficient of parabola which describes its shape smaller than 0.2, then it preserves more than 30% of initial light. This 30% of intensity we declared as a boundary for water jet to be a “good” light guide because no matter how steep the curvature of jet is, it always leads some amount of light till the end (where it turns into drops), but after this 30% the intensity decreases really slowly with tendency of becoming a constant as the coefficient is increased. Moreover, for smaller coefficients the length on which this intensity of light can be transported (length of “black” jet) is longer. Radius of the jet affects the outcome velocity and the coefficient for the same height of water in vessel. The best light guide possible to achieve is with big radius of the nozzle, and a lot of water in vessel so the coefficient is the smaller.

#### 5. Literature

- [1] Halliday, Resnick, Walker: Fundamentals of Physics, 6th Edition
- [2] Jim Hayes: *Fiber Optics – Technician's Manual*, 2th edition
- [3] A.Llor: Statistical hydrodynamic models for developed mixing instability flows
- [4] S.M. Čantrak: Hydrodynamics, Engineering university, 2005, Beograd