

光学学报

基于宽带声光调制的高保真相位敏感光时域反射计系统

雷艳阳¹, 姜桃飞², 马云宾³, 夏猛⁴, 汤晓惠⁴, 隋景林¹, 杨芳⁴, 杜学新⁴, 董永康^{1,2,4*}

¹哈尔滨工业大学卓越工程师学院, 黑龙江 哈尔滨 150001;

²哈尔滨工业大学郑州研究院, 河南 郑州 450018;

³国家管网集团科学技术研究院, 河北 廊坊 065000;

⁴哈尔滨工业大学航天学院, 黑龙江 哈尔滨 150001

摘要 相位敏感光时域反射计(Φ -OTDR)系统通常用于振动监测中,具有响应速度快和检测灵敏度高的优势,但受相干衰落效应的影响,导致振幅较低位置提取的振动信号相位信息失真。为此,本文提出一种基于宽带声光调制的高保真相位敏感光时域反射计(Φ -OTDR)系统,实现对振动信号相位信息的高保真提取。该方案具有调制结构简单紧凑、相位延迟控制精确、频率分量灵活可控、不牺牲响应带宽和空间分辨率等优点。在验证实验中,灵活调制脉宽为100 ns,且同时将包含三个非等间距频率的多频探测光脉冲注入2 km的传感光纤,并以幅值评估的方式对多频拍频信号进行复用。结果表明,该方案中相干衰落的概率从17.541%降低到0.045%,并实现了对模拟振动信号相位信息的高保真重构。

关键词 相位敏感光时域反射计; 相干衰落效应; 相位信息; 多频脉冲调制

中图分类号 TN247

文献标志码 A

DOI: 10.3778/AOS231426

1 引言

相位敏感光时域反射计(Φ -OTDR)系统通过提取相位信息实现振动事件的定量分析,具有毫秒甚至亚毫秒量级的快速响应^[1]和纳应变量级的检测灵敏度^[2],在地震波监测和周界入侵监测等^[3-8]方面具有广阔的应用前景。

由于 Φ -OTDR系统中的相干衰落效应,信号振幅较低位置提取的相位信息失真,不能正确表征振动事件的强度和频率等参量。解决这一问题的主要手段包括:特殊的传感光纤、脉冲调制和解调算法。在特殊传感光纤方面:2016年,Alekseev等^[9]以多模光纤作为传感单元,对瑞利后向散射(RBS)信号进行联合独立分析;2017年,Zhang等^[10]在 Φ -OTDR系统中使用超弱光纤布拉格光栅(uwFBGs)结构,获得56 dB的信噪比;2021年,Zhao等^[11]将少模光纤作为外差 Φ -OTDR系统的传感单元,对不同模式的RBS信号进行多路复用,抑制相干衰落效应。在解调算法方面:2019年,Wu等^[12]提出一种频谱提取和再混合方案,利用单个矩形探针脉冲来消除 Φ -OTDR系统的相干衰落;2021年,He等^[13]提出一种通过辅助偏振分集检测和多重相移变换来抑制 Φ -OTDR系统中相干衰落效应的方法;

同年,该团队又提出一种多频分解方案(MFD)抑制相干衰落^[14]。在脉冲调制方面:2012年,Pan等^[15]提出一种 π 相移双脉冲方案使相干衰落效应可控;随后,又使用相位调制器产生三个谐波频率,以证明相干衰落分布随不同频率而变化^[16];2017年,He等^[17]提出一种内部频分复用方案,获得多条RBS信号强度曲线,使用旋转矢量法(RVS)抑制相干衰落效应;随后,该团队利用正负频率结合移动平均来抑制相干衰落^[18];2019年,Wang等^[19]提出一种差分相移脉冲技术抑制相干衰落,当光纤性能保持不变时,可在两个连续周期内进行相移调制;同年,Zabihi等^[20]在相干 Φ -OTDR系统中使用三种不同频移的声光调制器,为任意时刻提供最佳的检测频率。综上,针对现有的脉冲调制方案,合理优化调制结构,实现对探测光脉冲频率分量的灵活控制,具有重要意义。

本文提出了一种基于宽带声光调制的多频脉冲调制方案,实现 Φ -OTDR系统中相干衰落效应的抑制。利用宽带声光调制器灵活调制多频探测光脉冲,并以幅值评估的方式对多频后向瑞利散射光与本征光的拍频结果进行复用,有效抑制 Φ -OTDR系统中的相干衰落效应,实现高保真振动相位提取。该方案具有结构简单、调制灵活、不牺牲响应带宽和空间分辨率的优势。

收稿日期: 2023-08-16; 修回日期: 2023-09-20; 录用日期: 2023-09-28; 网络首发日期: 2023-10-23

基金项目: 跨地域复杂油气管网安全高效运行状态监测传感系统及应用(2022YFB3207602)、国家自然科学基金(62205088)

通信作者: *aldendong@163.com

2 基本原理

2.1 外差 Φ -OTDR系统传感原理

典型的外差 Φ -OTDR系统如图1所示,窄线宽激光器(NLL)输出的连续光经光耦合器(OC)分为探测和本征(LO)两个支路。探测支路被声光调制器

(AOM)调制为具有一定频移的光脉冲并注入传感光纤,光纤中产生的RBS信号经OC与偏振控制器(PC)调节偏振态后的LO混合拍频,并通过平衡光电探测器(BPD)转换为电信号,由数据采集卡(DAQ)实时记录;对拍频信号进行解调,即可实现对传感光纤沿线振动事件的表征。

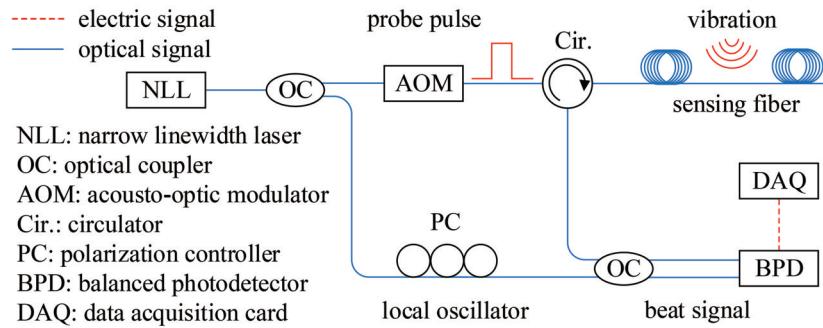


图1 外差 Φ -OTDR系统的原理图

Fig. 1 Schematic diagram of heterodyne Φ -OTDR system

假设外差 Φ -OTDR系统中的本征光和RBS信号分别为

$$E_L(t) = A \cos(\omega_0 t + \varphi_0), \quad (1)$$

$$E_R(t) = B(t) \cos[(\omega_0 + \Delta\omega)t + \varphi(t)], \quad (2)$$

式中: $E_L(t)$ 表示本征光; A 、 ω_0 和 φ_0 分别表示本征光的振幅、角频率和初相位信息; $E_R(t)$ 表示光纤中的RBS信号; $B(t)$ 和 $\varphi(t)$ 分别表示RBS信号的振幅和相位信息; $\Delta\omega$ 表示探测光脉冲的频移。

本征光与RBS信号经过一个 2×2 端口的3 dB耦合器进行混和拍频后由BPD进行探测接收,BPD的光电流信号输出结果为

$$I_{out}(t) \propto AB(t) \sin\{\Delta\omega t + [\varphi(t) - \varphi_0]\}. \quad (3)$$

式(3)可进一步简化为

$$I_{out}(t) = C(t) \cos[\Delta\omega t + \varphi_c(t)], \quad (4)$$

式中: $C(t)$ 与式(3)中 $AB(t)$ 成正比关系; $\varphi_c(t)$ 与式(3)中 $\varphi(t) - \varphi_0$ 成正比关系。对拍频信号 $I_{out}(t)$ 进行正交调制(IQ)解调^[21],再经过低通滤波数字滤波滤除倍频分量 $2\Delta\omega$ 后,得到I路和Q路的输出如下式所示:

$$\begin{cases} I(t) = C(t) \cos[\varphi_c(t)]/2 \\ Q(t) = -C(t) \sin[\varphi_c(t)]/2 \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

从式(5)可以看出,对I路和Q路输出信号求平方根可获得RBS信号的振幅信息;求 \arctan 可获得RBS信号的相位信息。运算过程如下式所示:

$$\begin{cases} C(t) = \sqrt{I^2(t) + Q^2(t)} \\ \varphi_c(t) = \arctan\left[\frac{Q(t)}{I(t)}\right] + 2m\pi^\circ \end{cases} \quad (6)$$

由于反正切函数的数学性质,其函数结果在 $[-\pi, +\pi]$ 之间,无法正确体现大于 π 的相位信息,需要利用展开算法^[22]进行展开。

2.2 相干衰落效应

假设 Φ -OTDR系统中的探测光脉冲的脉宽为 w ,光纤中光波的传播速度为 v ,则传感光纤中探测光脉冲的宽度 $W = wv$,由于使用窄线宽光源,相干长度表示为

$$L = \frac{\lambda^2}{\Delta\lambda} = \frac{c}{n\Delta f}, \quad (7)$$

式中: λ 、 $\Delta\lambda$ 和 Δf 分别为窄线宽光源的波长、频谱宽度和线宽; c 为真空中的光速。

根据式(7)可以看出,窄线宽光源的相干长度 L 远大于 $W/2$,所以长度为 $W/2$ 范围内的RBS信号存在干涉效应。由于传感光纤的折射率分布不均匀,导致传感光纤折射率和内部散射点的位置也随机分布,因此在传感光纤中注入的探测脉冲在不同散射点产生的RBS信号也会随机地相干相长和相干相消。在探测器探测到的RBS信号的时域信号也会呈现随机起伏,而在信号强度极低的位置,解调相位的信噪比(SNR)较差,称这种效应为相干衰落效应。这一弊端将会导致 Φ -OTDR系统在实际工程应用中频繁误报警。

2.3 宽带声光多频调制

根据 Φ -OTDR系统中RBS信号幅值分布随不同的探测脉冲频率变化的特点,将多频探测脉冲的调制方案简化如图2所示;利用任意波形发生器(AWG)自由写入 N 个频率分别为 f_1, f_2, \dots, f_n 的微波信号:

$$\begin{cases} E_1(t) = A \cos(2\pi f_1 t + \varphi_0) \\ E_2(t) = A \cos(2\pi f_2 t + \varphi_0) \\ E_3(t) = A \cos(2\pi f_3 t + \varphi_0), n=1, 2, 3, \dots, (8) \\ \dots \\ E_n(t) = A \cos(2\pi f_n t + \varphi_0) \end{cases}$$

式中, A 和 φ_0 分别为微波信号的振幅和初始相位。然

后, N 个微波信号的合成可以写为

$$E(t) = E_1(t) + E_2(t) + E_3(t) + \dots + E_n(t) \quad (9)$$

窄线宽激光器输出载频为 f_c 的单频连续光, 当 AWG 输出的微波信号 $E(t)$ 加载于宽带 AOM 时, 单频连续光被宽带 AOM 调制为频率为 $f_c + f_1, f_c + f_2, \dots, f_c + f_n$ 的多频连续光, 实现灵活的多频调制。随后, 经过第二个 AOM, 将多频连续光调制为多频光脉冲信号并产生 $-\Delta f$ 的频移。

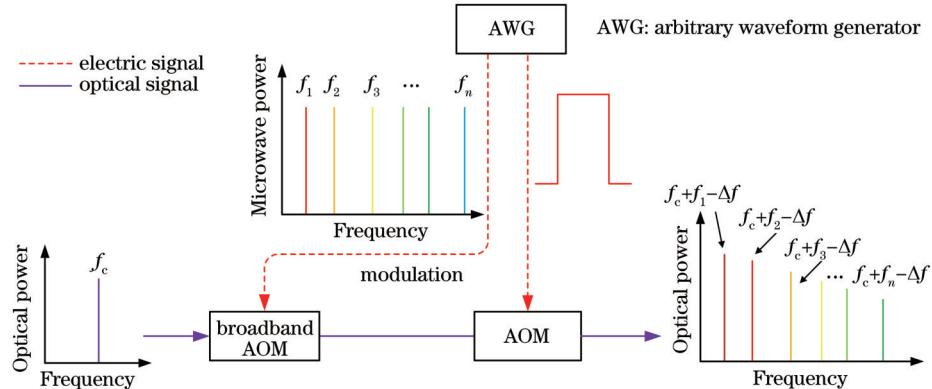


图 2 灵活多频调制方案

Fig. 2 Flexible multi-frequency modulation scheme

该方案有效地简化了多频探测脉冲调制, 可灵活地控制探测光脉冲的频率, 且不牺牲 Φ -OTDR 系统的空间分辨率和响应带宽。相较于多路调制复用, 该方案不存在相位延迟。

3 实验结果与讨论

搭建如图 3 所示的实验系统, 验证该方案的有效性: NLL(线宽为 3 kHz、波长为 1550.12 nm)输出的连续光经过 90:10 的 OC1 分为上下两路, 上路连续光(90%)经过 AOM1(带宽为 100 MHz、中心频率为 400 MHz)调制成多频连续光, 再经过具有 300 MHz 下

移频的 AOM2, 将多频连续光调制为宽度为 100 ns、重复频率为 10 kHz(100 μs)的光脉冲, 光脉冲经过掺铒光纤放大器(EDFA)放大峰值功率并由光纤布拉格光栅(FBG, 中心波长为 1550.12 nm、带宽为 0.08 nm)滤除放大器自发辐射(ASE)噪声后, 通过环形器进入传感光纤, 传感光纤总长约 6700 m, 缠绕有 20 m 光纤的压电陶瓷换能器(PZT)位于 4830 m 附近, 任意函数发生器(AFG)用于给 PZT 提供激励信号模拟振动, 通过 PC 的参考光(10%)与 RBS 信号经 OC2 混合相干后, 由工作带宽为 300 MHz 的 BPD 进行光电转换, DAQ 的采样频率为 2 GSa/s。

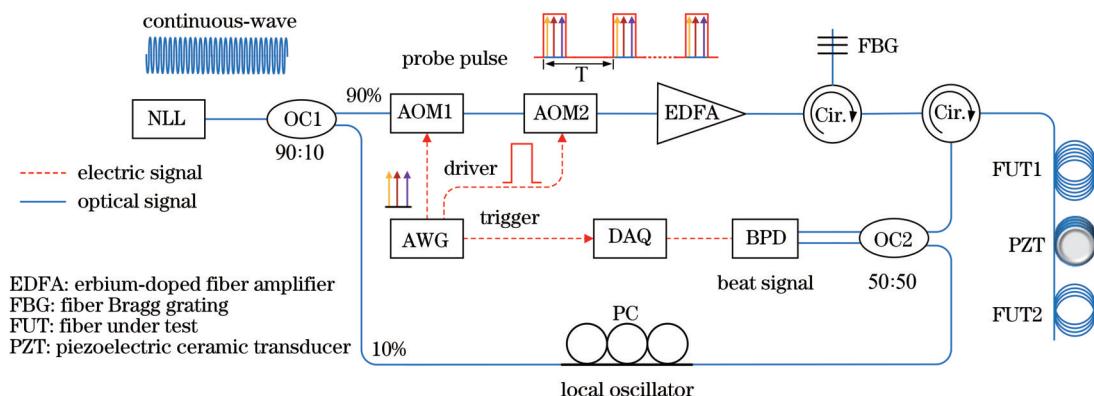


图 3 高保真 Φ -OTDR 系统实验装置

Fig. 3 Experimental setup of high fidelity Φ -OTDR system

实验中, 通过 AWG 自由写入三个频率分别为 340、390、450 MHz 的微波信号控制 AOM1, 实现对

90% 连续波光的灵活多频调制。图 4(a) 为 BPD 探测到的前端 200 m 传感距离上的多频时域拍频信号;

图4(b)为对应的傅里叶变换频谱,其中包括40、90、150 MHz三个主频率。分别设置通带全宽为20 MHz、中心频率为40、90、150 MHz的三个数字滤波器,对时域拍频信号进行带通滤波,前端250 m传感距离上的

拍频信号的滤波结果如图4(c)~(e)所示;显然,不同频率的拍频信号光具有不同的振幅信息分布,该特性有利于相干衰落效应的抑制,实现高保真相位信息解调。

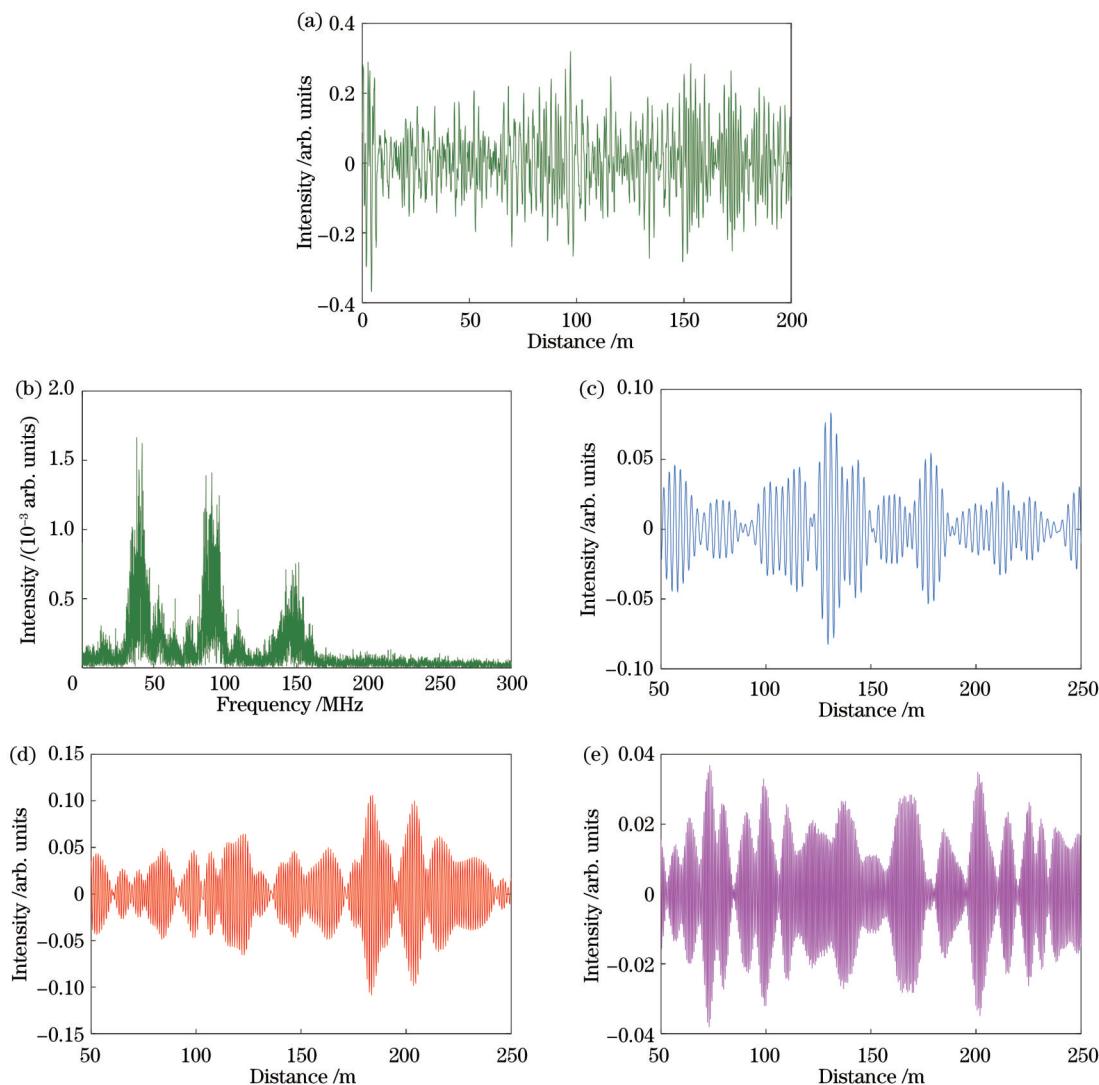


图4 多频拍频信号。(a)时域信号;(b)频域信号;(c)~(e)带通滤波后40、90、150 MHz时域拍频信号

Fig. 4 Multi-frequency beat signals. (a) Time domain signal; (b) frequency domain signal; (c)–(e) time domain beat signals of 40, 90, and 150 MHz after band-pass filtering

分别对40、90、150 MHz的拍频信号进行IQ解调,获得前端250 m传感距离上不同相位信息随传感距离的累积过程如图5(a)所示,对图5(a)中的累积相位信息进行差分运算,前端140 m传感距离内的差分结果如图5(b)所示;40 MHz拍频信号的差分相位信息在34.7、130.1 m处存在畸变,90 MHz拍频信号的差分相位信息在10.6、41.2、53.2、86.1、121.5 m处存在畸变,150 MHz拍频信号的差分相位信息在34.7、56.1、101 m处存在畸变,具体见图5(b)中黑色虚线圈标注。IQ解调分别获得的40、90、150 MHz拍频信号的归一化振幅信息如图5(c)所示,其中黑色虚线圈标记的振幅信息极低,对应于图5(b)中差分相位信息畸变点的

位置,进一步印证差分相位信息的畸变是由相干衰落效应导致的。

在传感光纤4830~4850 m之间的位置利用PZT施加频率为25 Hz的三角波模拟振动信号。图6(a)为传感光纤在4800~4900 m之间的40、90、150 MHz拍频信号的归一化强度,黑色虚线框为PZT模拟振动的位置;分别选择4825 m和4852 m作为振动区域相位信息提取的参考点,并重建振动区的相位信息。图6(b)为利用90 MHz拍频信号重建的振动区相位信息,由于4852 m位置90 MHz拍频信号的强度极低,重建的相位信息严重失真,不能正确地表征PZT模拟的振动信号频率和强度。

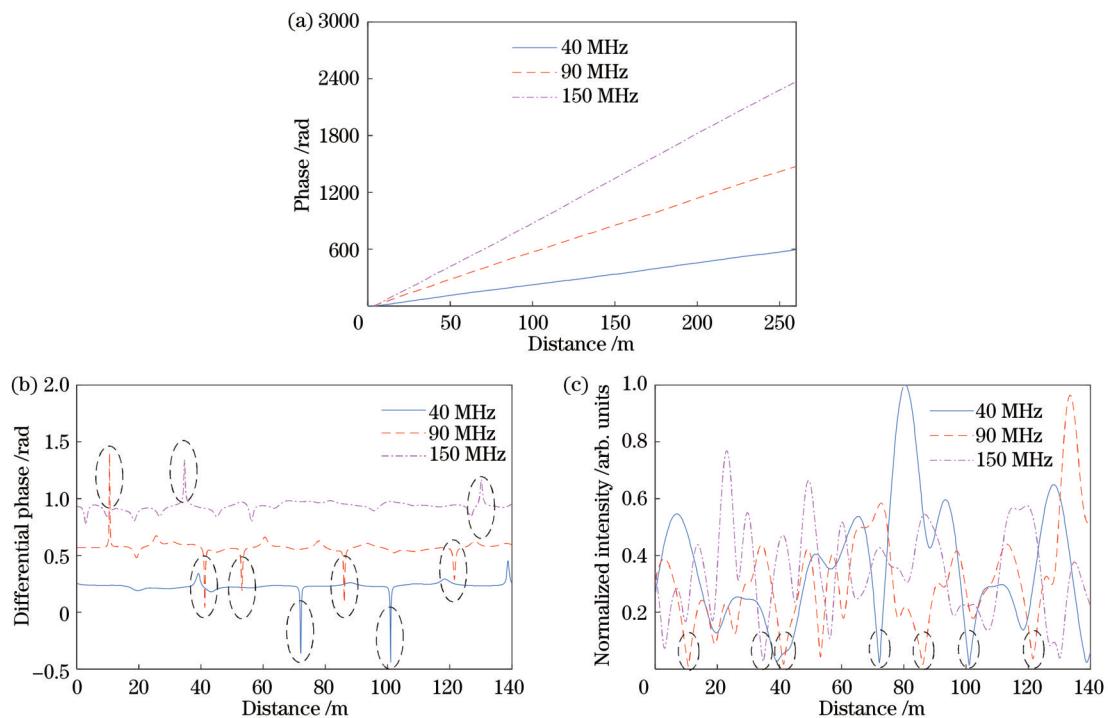


图5 40、90、150 MHz拍频信号的解调结果。(a)累积相位信息;(b)差分相位信息;(c)强度信息

Fig. 5 Demodulation results of 40, 90, and 150 MHz beat signals. (a) Cumulative phase information; (b) differential phase information; (c) intensity information

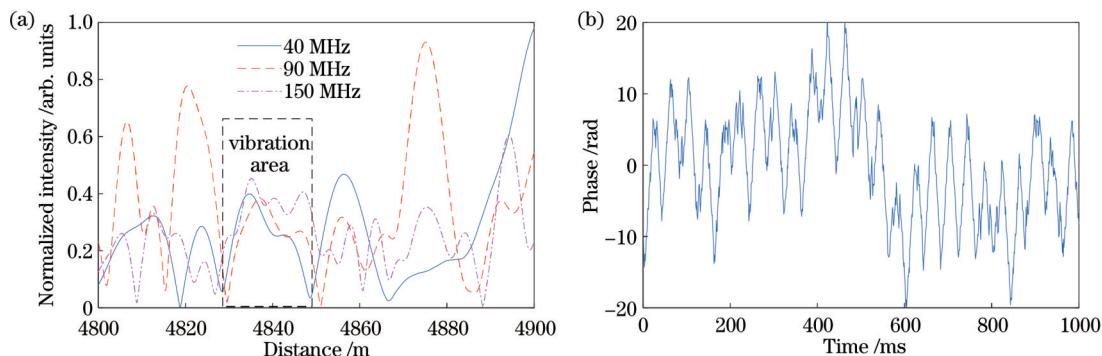


图6 振动信号解调与重构。(a) 40、90、150 MHz拍频信号归一化强度;(b) 90 MHz拍频信号重构振动信号

Fig. 6 Demodulation and reconstruction of vibration signals. (a) Normalized intensity information of 40, 90, and 150 MHz beat signals; (b) vibration signal reconstruction with 90 MHz beat signal

基于振幅强度评估的方式,求取各拍频信号振动区域前后两个固定参考点的振幅最小值,并根据各拍频信号参考点的振幅最小值里的最大值进行多个频率拍频信号复用,重构振动区域相位信息,从而避免相干衰落效应引起的相位信息失真。校正后的高保真相位信息如图7所示,实现对PZT模拟的三角波振动信号高度还原,由振动引起的相位变化为20 rad。根据公式 $\Delta\varphi = 4\pi n \Delta L / \lambda$ 可知,传感光纤的形变量为1.65 μm ,应变值为160 $\text{n}\epsilon$ 。

下面进一步评估了本文提出的高保真 Φ -OTDR系统的有效性。将传感光纤长度设置为2 km,并隔离环境噪声的影响。以空间分辨率10 m为相位信息重构区间尺度,分别对40、90、150 MHz拍频信号振幅信

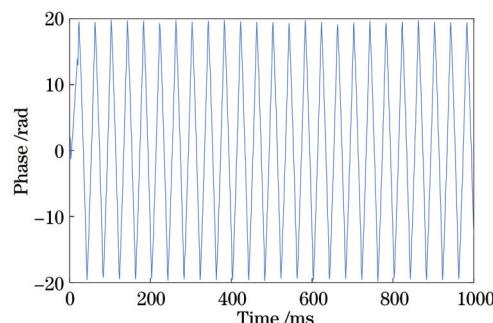


图7 重构PZT模拟振动信号的高保真相位信息

Fig. 7 High-fidelity phase information of reconstructed PZT simulated vibration signal

息逐个采样点移动进行统计分析。归一化振幅强度值小于0.1的采样点评估为相干衰落效应点^[17]。累积分

布统计结果如图8所示,40、90、150 MHz拍频信号的相干衰落概率分别为16.744%、15.061%、17.541%。采用振幅强度评估的方式进行频率复用后,相干衰落概率降低至1.123%;对比单一频率的拍频信号,重构相位信息的保真度由82.459%提高至98.877%,提高了16.418%。

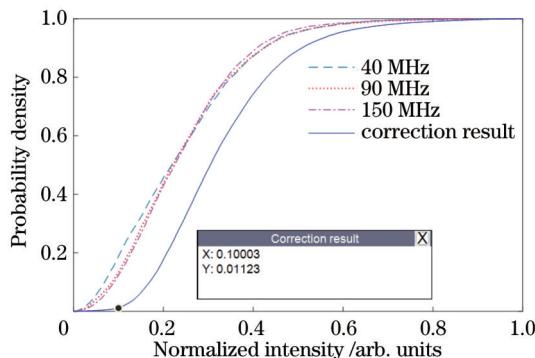


图8 40、90、150 MHz拍频信号归一化强度累积分布及频率复用结果

Fig. 8 Normalized intensity cumulative distribution and frequency multiplexing results of 40, 90, and 150 MHz beat signals

为进一步充分利用多频拍信号消除相干衰落效应,本文通过数据处理的方式分别对40、90、150 MHz拍频信号频谱对半引入 π 相移,产生新的振幅分布不

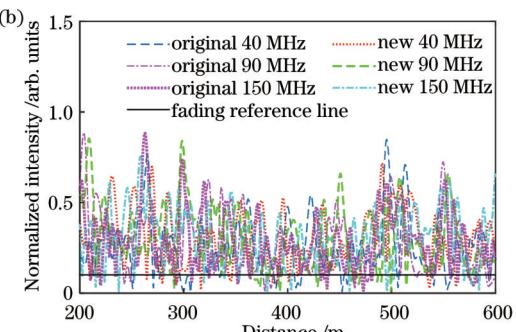
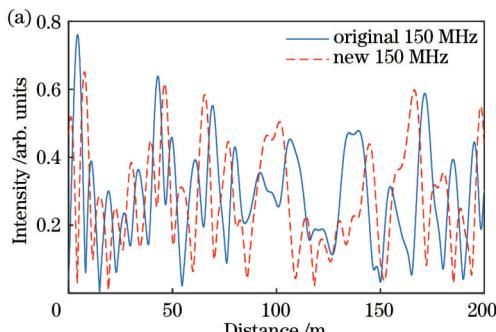


图10 引入 π 相移前后拍频信号的强度分布。(a) 150 MHz; (b) 40、90、150 MHz

Fig. 10 Intensity distribution of beat signal before and after introducing π phase shift. (a) 150 MHz; (b) 40, 90, and 150 MHz

将2 km传感光纤范围内的6个拍频信号的归一化强度采用上述振幅评估的方法进行统计分析,结果如图11所示,6个拍频信号复用后的相干衰落概率为0.045%,基本完全抑制了相干衰落效应。该方案的衰落抑制效果未考虑偏振衰落效应对评价结果的影响,若消除偏振衰落效应的影响,将得到更佳的抑制效果。

当传感光纤长度为3 km时,将PZT放置于在2.52 km位置利用AFG对20 m传感光纤施加频率为100 Hz的振动信号。利用上述方法充分抑制相干衰落效应后,高保真重构振动信号相位信息。图12(a)为高保真重构振动相位瀑布,图12(b)为振动位置的重构相位,相位差约为2.9 rad,应变约为11.9 ne。

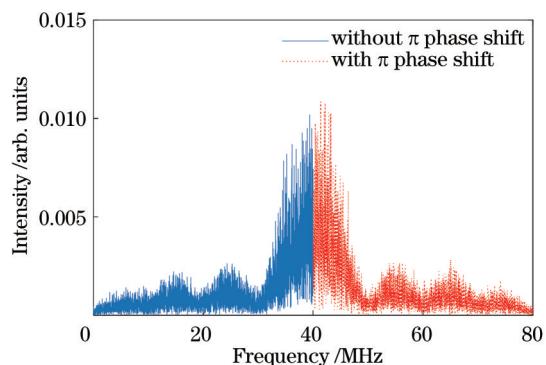


图9 40 MHz拍频信号对半频谱中引入 π 相移

Fig. 9 A π phase shift is introduced into half of 40 MHz beat signal spectrum

一致的拍频信号。以40 MHz拍频信号的频谱为例,在40~60 MHz频谱之间引入 π 相移,如图9所示。

与多重 π 相移变换相比,在对半频谱中引入 π 相移产生的新拍频信号与原始信号之间的相关性最低,且不会引入大量的运算。如图10(a)所示,150 MHz原始拍频信号与其引入 π 相移产生的新拍频信号的相似性较低,相关系数为0.214。图10(b)为40、90、150 MHz拍频信号对半频谱中引入 π 相移后的6个原始信号和新拍频信号的归一化强度分布;此外,40 MHz原始拍频信号与其引入 π 相移产生的新拍频信号的相关系数为0.193,90 MHz原始拍频信号与其引入 π 相移产生的新拍频信号的相关系数为0.138。

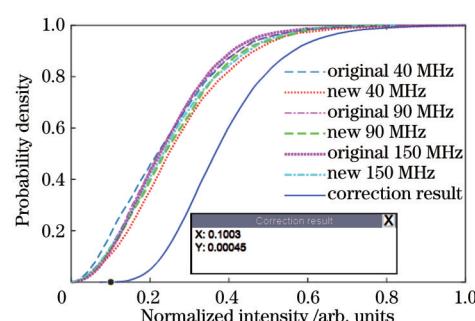


图11 40、90、150 MHz拍频信号和新拍频信号的归一化强度累积分布

Fig. 11 Normalized intensity cumulative distribution of 40, 90, 150 MHz beat signals and new beat signals

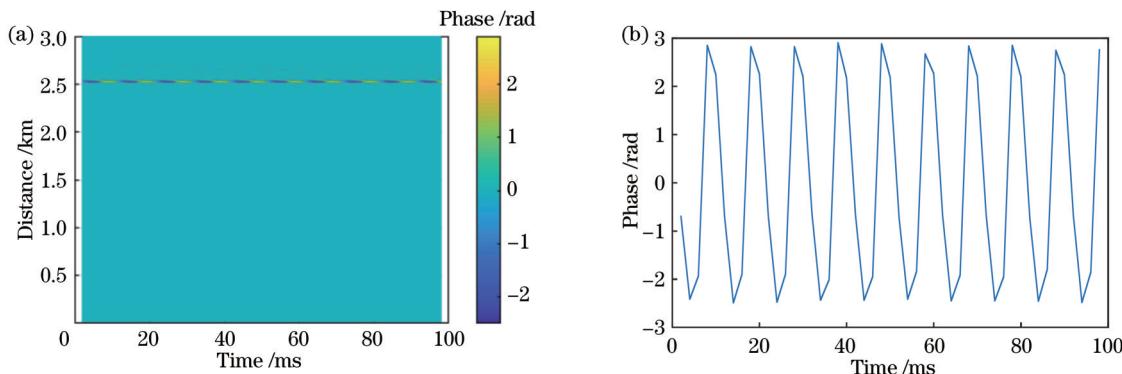


图12 差分相位信息。(a)时-空域分布;(b)振动区域分布

Fig. 12 Differential phase information. (a) Distribution of time-spatial domain; (b) distribution of vibration position

4 结 论

本文提出了一种基于宽带声光调制的高保真 Φ -OTDR传感系统,实现对振动信号相位信息的高保真提取。该系统通过宽带AOM对单频连续光进行灵活的多频调制,利用幅值评估的方式对多频拍频信号进行复用,有效抑制 Φ -OTDR传感系统中的相干衰落效应,实现高保真振动信号相位提取。该系统具有调制结构简单紧凑、相位延迟控制精确、频率分量灵活可控、不牺牲响应带宽和空间分辨率等优点,具有广阔的应用场景。

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High Fidelity Phase-Sensitive Optical Time Domain Reflectometer System Based on Broadband Acousto-Optic Modulation

Lei Yanyang¹, Jiang Taofei², Ma Yunbin³, Xia Meng⁴, Tang Xiaohui⁴, Sui Jinglin¹, Yang Fang⁴, Du Xuemin⁴, Dong Yongkang^{1,2,4*}

¹Elite Engineers School, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150001, Heilongjiang, China;

²Zhengzhou Research Institute, Harbin Institute of Technology, Zhengzhou 450018, Henan, China;

³Pipe China Institute of Science and Technology, Langfang 065000, Hebei, China;

⁴School of Astronautics, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin 150001, Heilongjiang, China

Abstract

Objective The phase-sensitive optical time domain reflectometer (Φ -OTDR) system can quantitatively characterize the vibration events along the sensing fiber by extracting the phase information of Rayleigh scattered light, which features a fast response up to milliseconds or sub-milliseconds and a detection sensitivity of nanostrains. Φ -OTDR has been widely used in sensing scenarios such as seismic wave monitoring, perimeter intrusion monitoring, and pipeline leak monitoring. Due to the interference fading effect in the Φ -OTDR system, the phase information extracted at the lower signal amplitude is distorted, which results in the incorrect response of the intensity and frequency of the vibration event. Then, it introduces frequent false alarms in practical engineering applications. Over the past decade and beyond, tremendous efforts have been devoted to addressing this issue, typically including the utility of special optical fibers (i. e., seven-core fiber and periodic ultra-weak Bragg grating array), complex demodulation algorithm (i. e., phase-shifted double pulse method and tracking algorithm), and multi-frequency pulse modulation [i. e., phase-shifted double pulse method and multi-branch acoustic-optic modulator (AOM) modulation]. From an applicative point of view, a simple multi-frequency pulse modulation Φ -OTDR system for suppressing the interference fading effect, which features flexible controlling of the frequency component of the probe optical pulse without sacrificing the response bandwidth and spatial resolution, is still a research gap to date.

Methods In this paper, for the first time (to the best of our knowledge), an AOM for generating multi-frequency probe light is employed in the Φ -OTDR system. The modulation frequency interval and number can be flexibly controlled by an arbitrary waveform generator (AWG) within the operating bandwidth of the broadband AOM. Subsequently, the continuous multi-frequency probe light is modulated into pulsed light through a general AOM. The multi-frequency beat signals can effectively suppress the inherent interference fading effect along the sensing fiber by appropriate filtering, demodulation, and multiplexing; ultimately realizing the high-fidelity demodulation of the Φ -OTDR system. We believe that the proposed scheme can provide a practicable way toward a simple and compact structure, precise phase delay control, and flexible and controllable frequency components without sacrificing response bandwidth and spatial resolution to suppress the interference fading effect in Φ -OTDR.

Results and Discussions The multi-frequency modulation principle and experimental schematic diagram are shown in Fig. 2 and Fig. 3, respectively. We utilize the AWG to generate three unequal interval radio frequency (RF) signals, including the frequency components of 340, 390, and 450 MHz. The multi-frequency modulation RF signal is simultaneously loaded on the broadband AOM. Then, the multi-frequency continuous light is modulated by an AOM with a fixed drive frequency of 300 MHz. The multi-frequency probe light has the characteristics of a down-shift frequency of 300 MHz, pulse width of 100 ns, and repetition frequency of 10 kHz. A 2 Gsa/s data acquisition card acquires the multi-frequency beat signals. The 40, 90, and 150 MHz beat signals are obtained by digital bandpass filtering, respectively, as shown in Fig. 4. Figure 5 verifies that the beat signals of different frequency components present various intensity distributions, which also further indicates the different interference fading locations versus different frequency components. A piezoelectric ceramic transducer (PZT) simulates vibration events across the sensing fiber. The experimental results of

the vibration events cannot be effectively reconstructed by the generic method with a single-frequency probe Φ -OTDR, as shown in Fig. 6. It can be seen that the reconstructed phase information originating from 90 MHz beat signal is distorted at the positions of the low amplitude points. Figure 7 shows the experimental results of the vibration events via the proposed multi-frequency modulation Φ -OTDR. More specifically, the high-fidelity reconstructed phase information is obtained by multiplexing three-frequency beat signals based on the amplitude intensity evaluation criteria. The demodulation results of 25 Hz are consistent with the frequency of the PZT vibration signal. The axial strain generated by the fiber is 160 ne. The beat signals of three different frequencies are multiplexed by amplitude intensity evaluation for the two reference points of any phase reconstruction interval. The suppressed results of the interference fading effect are evaluated using 10% of the normalized intensity as the threshold. Figure 8 shows that the probability of the interference fading effect is effectively reduced from 17.541% to 1.123%. In addition, π phase shift is introduced into the spectrum of beat signals of 40, 90, and 150 MHz, respectively. The generating time-domain signal intensity distribution is inconsistent with those of the original signals, as shown in Fig. 10. Figure 11 shows that the probability of interference fading effect is further reduced to 0.045% after all six sets of beat signals are multiplexed.

Conclusions In conclusion, we propose a novel multi-frequency pulse modulation Φ -OTDR scheme based on broadband acoustic-optic modulation. The proof-of-principle experimental results indicate that the probability of coherent fading can be reduced from 17.541% to 0.045%. Furthermore, this method offers the advantages of a simple and compact pulse modulation structure, precise phase delay control, and a flexible and controllable pulse frequency component without sacrificing the response bandwidth and spatial resolution in Φ -OTDR. We believe that our work provides a practical way toward distributed fiber optic acoustic and vibration sensing, such as seismic wave monitoring, perimeter intrusion monitoring, and pipeline leak monitoring.

Key words phase-sensitive optical time-domain reflectometer; interference fading effect; phase information; multi-frequency pulse modulation