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# 同位素原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案

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**摘要:**提出一种基于同位素原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案,并应用于原子干涉仪激光系统的小型化。该方案使用同位素原子吸收泡代替现有拉曼光方案中的移频或调制光学器件,以实现拉曼激光的稳频和失谐,使光路和电路同时简化。针对<sup>85</sup>Rb原子干涉仪,<sup>87</sup>Rb原子D<sub>2</sub>线的饱和吸收谱被用于对拉曼激光进行稳频,稳频后的拉曼激光红失谐在GHz量级,线宽约为80kHz。将该拉曼激光用于原子干涉仪获得了对比度为20%的干涉条纹,重力测量的灵敏度为345 μGal/Hz<sup>1/2</sup>。连续24h重力测量数据的阿伦方差显示原子干涉仪的分辨率约为2×10<sup>-8</sup> g@7 500 s。该拉曼激光的频率噪声引起的单次重力测量噪声优于1 μGal,完全可以满足μGal量级的重力测量需求。该拉曼激光方案有助于推动原子干涉仪激光系统的小型化、轻量化和实用化。

**关键词:**原子干涉;激光冷却;拉曼激光;饱和吸收谱;电光调制器

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## 0 引言

原子干涉仪是一种基于物质波干涉技术的新型高精度测量仪器,已被广泛应用于测量地球重力<sup>[1-4]</sup>、重力梯度<sup>[5-6]</sup>和转动<sup>[7-8]</sup>。目前,原子干涉仪的测量精度已经达到10<sup>-10</sup>水平<sup>[9]</sup>,仍有较大的提升空间<sup>[10]</sup>。高精度的原子干涉仪主要用于基础物理研究,如验证等效原理<sup>[11]</sup>、测量引力常数<sup>[12-14]</sup>、测量精细结构常数<sup>[15-16]</sup>和寻找引力波<sup>[17-18]</sup>等。原子干涉仪的小型化有助于原子干涉仪在资源勘探<sup>[19]</sup>、惯性导航<sup>[20]</sup>和重力场的描绘<sup>[21]</sup>等方面发挥重要作用。激光系统的小型化是原子干涉仪小型化的关键环节<sup>[22]</sup>。目前,激光系统的小型化已有多种方案<sup>[23-26]</sup>,其中拉曼激光的产生方案归纳起来主要有三种:拍频锁相(Optical Phase-locked Loop, OPLL)<sup>[27]</sup>、声光调制器(Acousto-optic Modulator, AOM)移频<sup>[28]</sup>和电光调制器(Electro-optic Modulator, EOM)调制<sup>[25]</sup>。拍频锁相方案通常需要三个独立的激光器,进行两次拍频,一次用于获得1GHz左右的失谐,另一次用于产生拉曼激光,拉曼激光的相位噪声受限于电路反馈带宽,光路和电路复杂。声光调制器移频方案通常需要一个GHz量级的声光调制器和一个电光调制器,电光调制器用于偏置锁频来获得1GHz左右的失谐,声光调制器用于产生拉曼光,而高频AOM的衍射效率较低,光功率损耗严重,同时该方案在啁啾补偿过程中衍射角度会随着啁啾频率的变化而变化,从而引入由光程差和光频移所带来的测量误差及噪声。电光调制器调制方案产生拉曼激光的效率高,并且对震动噪声不敏感,非常适合在小型原子干涉仪中使用,但一般仍需要两个电光调制器,一个用于偏置锁频来实现拉曼激光失谐,另一个用于产生拉曼激光。在上述拉曼激光产生方案中,用于稳频的原子和作为原子干涉仪测试质量的原子是同一种原子,为获得拉曼激光所要求的约GHz量级的大失谐,需要专门的光学器件和配套的电路来实现,使激光系统复杂化,影响其可靠性。同时,质量和成本的增加不利于原子干涉仪在惯性领域和航天领域中的应用<sup>[26]</sup>。

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基于简化光路和电路可提高激光系统性能<sup>[25]</sup>的理念,针对采用一种Rb原子作为测试质量的原子干涉仪,提出基于其另一种同位素原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案,以简化激光系统。该方案采用一个Rb原子吸收泡和一个电光调制器来实现拉曼激光的稳频、失谐和产生。该方案使用电光调制器产生拉曼激光,继承电光调制器调制方案产生拉曼激光的优点,而使用Rb原子吸收泡替代声光调制器或电光调制器等光学器件来实现拉曼激光的稳频和失谐,使光路和电路同时简化,有助于提高拉曼激光的可靠性和长期稳定性。针对<sup>85</sup>Rb原子干涉仪,在<sup>87</sup>Rb原子饱和吸收谱稳频、调谐激光频率的基础上,提出了基于<sup>87</sup>Rb原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案,在实验上确定了拉曼激光锁频点的位置和失谐量并进行稳频实验,最后将该方案产生的拉曼激光应用于原子干涉仪评估其性能。该拉曼激光方案有助于原子干涉仪激光系统的小型化,加速原子干涉仪在移动平台上和对质量敏感领域中的广泛应用。

## 1 基本原理

### 1.1 拉曼激光的稳频和失谐原理

Rb元素有<sup>85</sup>Rb和<sup>87</sup>Rb两种同位素,这两种同位素原子通常被选作原子干涉仪的测试质量。针对采用一种Rb原子作为测试质量的原子干涉仪,提出基于另一种同位素原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案来简化激光系统。在采用<sup>85</sup>Rb原子作为测试质量的原子干涉仪中,拉曼激光用于激发原子受激拉曼跃迁的原理如图1,频率分别为 $\omega_1$ 和 $\omega_2$ 的激光通过激发态 $|F'\rangle$ 作为中间能级,将原子基态上能级 $|F=3\rangle$ 和下能级 $|F=2\rangle$ 耦合起来做拉比振荡。为了抑制自发辐射,要求拉曼激光相对于共振线 $F=3\rightarrow F'=4$ 有一个约GHz量级的大失谐 $\Delta$ 。为发现<sup>85</sup>Rb原子拉曼激光的频率、失谐与<sup>87</sup>Rb原子D<sub>2</sub>线跃迁谱线之间的联系,首先将拉曼激光的两个频率成份 $\omega_1, \omega_2$ 和失谐 $\Delta$ 与<sup>85</sup>Rb原子D<sub>2</sub>线 $F=3\rightarrow F'=4$ 的跃迁谱线的相对位置在频率轴上标出,如图2(a)。其次,将<sup>87</sup>Rb原子D<sub>2</sub>线 $F=2\rightarrow F'$ 的跃迁谱线与<sup>85</sup>Rb原子 $F=3\rightarrow F'=4$ 的跃迁谱线的相对位置也在频率轴上标出,如图2(b)。对比图2(a)和(b)发现当拉曼激光红失谐约GHz量级时,拉曼激光的频率 $\omega_1$ 恰好位于<sup>87</sup>Rb原子 $F=2\rightarrow F'$ 的跃迁谱的范围之内(两条虚线之间)。即如果将激光器的频率通过原子饱和吸收谱稳频的方法锁定在<sup>87</sup>Rb原子 $F=2\rightarrow F'$ 的其中一个跃迁峰或交叉峰上,则拉曼激光的频率 $\omega_1$ 为该跃迁峰或交叉峰的中心频率,失谐 $\Delta$ 为该中心频率相对于<sup>85</sup>Rb原子 $F=3\rightarrow F'=4$ 跃迁谱线的

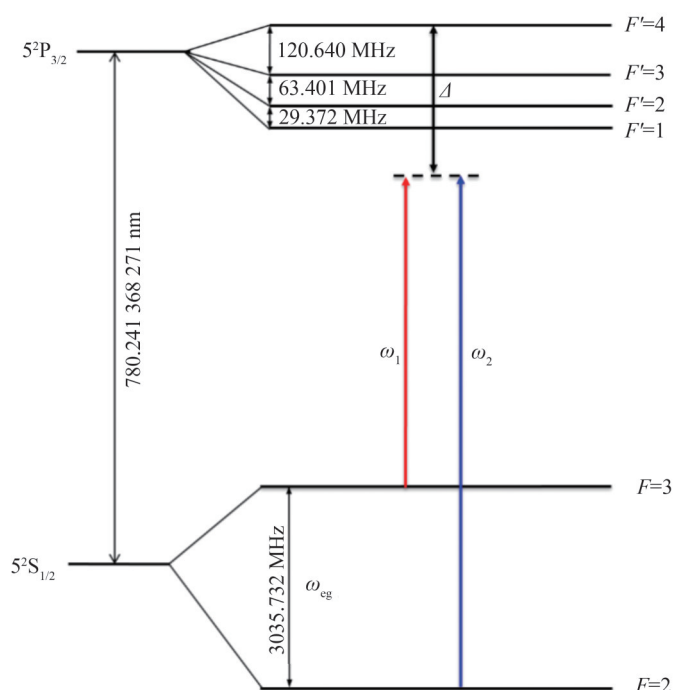


图1 <sup>85</sup>Rb原子的拉曼跃迁

Fig. 1 <sup>85</sup>Rb atomic Raman transition

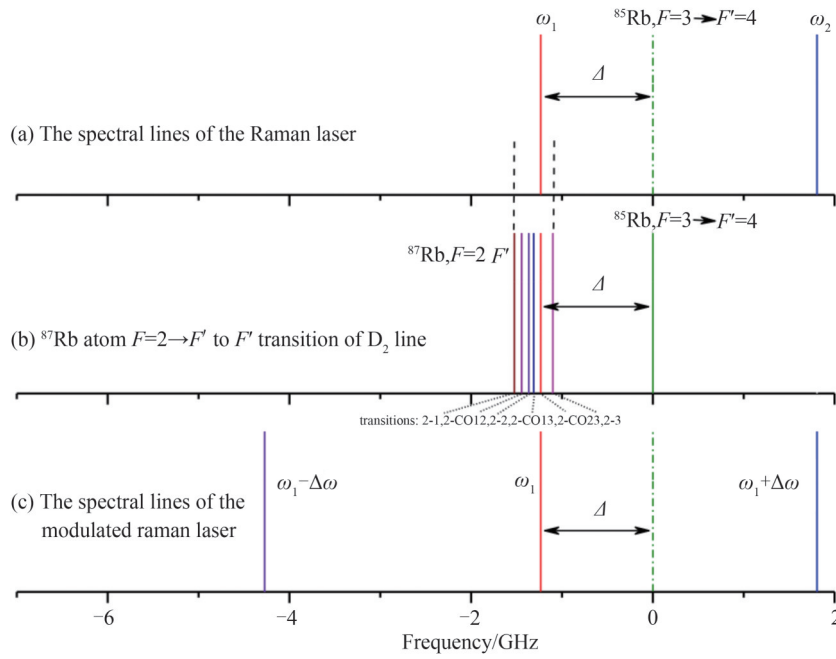


图2 拉曼激光稳频和失谐的原理  
Fig. 2 The schematic of the stabilizing frequency and detuning of Raman laser

偏移量,即坐标值。由图2(b)可知,拉曼激光频率 $\omega_1$ 可以分别锁定在谱线 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=3, F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO2, 3, F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO1, 3, F=2 \rightarrow F'=2, F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO1, 2$ 和 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=1$ 上,对应失谐 $\Delta$ 分别为 $-1.1, -1.234, -1.312, -1.367, -1.444, -1.524$  GHz。拉曼激光的另外一个频率成份 $\omega_2$ 可通过电光调制器对频率为 $\omega_1$ 的激光进行调制产生。当调制频率 $\Delta\omega$ 约为 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $D_2$ 线基态能级劈裂对应的频率 $\omega_{eg}$ 时,载频 $\omega_1$ 和+1级边带( $\omega_1 + \Delta\omega$ )构成一对拉曼激光,如图2(c)。该方案直接将 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子拉曼激光的频率锁定在其同位素 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子的谱线上,以获得拉曼激光所需的大失谐,无需借助任何移频和调制光学器件。值得一提的是,该方法也可用于拍频锁相和声光调制器移频的拉曼激光方案中,简化获得拉曼激光失谐的光路和电路。如果原子干涉仪使用 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子作为测试质量,则可用 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子的饱和吸收谱进行稳频和产生蓝失谐,方法完全类似。

### 1.2 拉曼激光方案

在上述拉曼激光稳频和失谐原理的基础上,提出基于 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案,如图3。

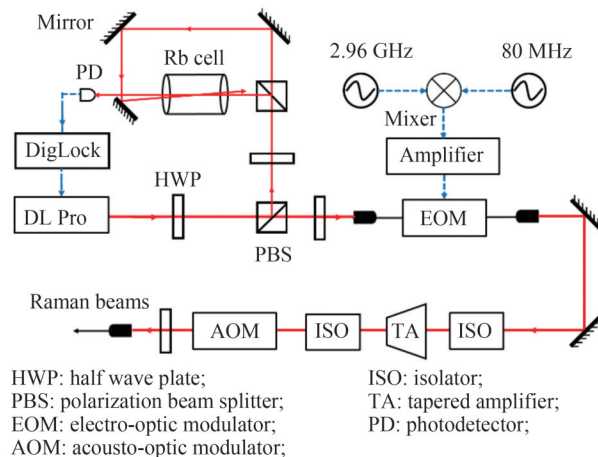


图3 基于Rb同位素原子饱和吸收谱稳频的拉曼激光方案  
Fig. 3 The frequency-stabilized Raman laser system based on Rb isotope atom saturated absorption spectrum

半导体激光器(DL Pro)输出波长为780 nm、功率约为30 mW的激光束。该激光束经过一个1/2波片(HWP)后被偏振分束棱镜(PBS)分为两束,分束比由该1/2波片调节,其中一束用于 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子的饱和吸收谱稳频和测量,另一束耦合进光纤电光调制器EOM(iXblue; NIR-MPX800-LN-10)进行调制,产生拉曼激光。驱动电光调制器的频率为3.04 GHz的微波信号由固定频率为2.96 GHz的微波信号和频率可调的80 MHz的射频信号混频放大后产生,输出功率最大为1 W。经电光调制器调制后的激光束从另一个光纤耦合头准直后输出,输出光束包含载频和边带,其中载频和+1级边带构成原子干涉仪所需的拉曼激光的种子激光,功率约为10 mW。该种子激光经TA放大约10倍后,再经声光调制器AOM进行时序和开关控制,最后耦合进保偏光纤输送给原子干涉仪的物理单元使用。目前,使用的电光调制器(iXblue)要求输入激光功率最大不超过25 mW,输出功率约10 mW,必须使用TA放大器对功率进行放大。如果选择输入最大光功率约100 mW和输出光功率约50 mW电光调制器,则无需TA放大器放大,激光系统可进一步简化。对于采用 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子作为测试质量的原子干涉仪,该拉曼激光的方案同样适用,只需将拉曼激光的频率锁定在 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $D_2$ 线的跃迁谱线上,同时将电光调制器(EOM)的微波频率由3.04 GHz改为6.8 GHz即可。

该拉曼激光方案的优点是利用Rb原子的两种同位素 $D_2$ 线跃迁谱的频率间隔约为GHz量级的特点,将激光频率直接锁定在同位素原子的饱和吸收谱上,在不借助任何移频或调制光学器件的情况下,实现拉曼激光的稳频和失谐,使原子干涉仪的激光系统大大简化,长期稳定性和可靠性提高,有助于原子干涉仪的小型化、轻量化和实用化。

## 2 实验

### 2.1 稳频

利用如图3所示拉曼激光方案中的饱和吸收谱稳频实验光路,测量Rb原子 $D_2$ 线的吸收谱,从实验上确定拉曼激光锁频点的位置和失谐量的大小,并对拉曼激光进行稳频实验。

首先,通过注入电流和PZT扫描半导体激光器(DL Pro)的频率,用示波器记录Rb原子的饱和吸收谱,同时用自由光谱程为300 MHz的标准具(COHERENT公司)对饱和吸收谱进行定标。实验测量结果如图4,为便于读取失谐量 $\Delta$ 的数值,将水平轴频率参考点设置在饱和吸收谱中 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $D_2$ 线 $F=3 \rightarrow F'=4$ 的跃迁峰的中心,频率刻度通过选择激光器扫描一个行程内的标准具输出信号中20个自由光谱程对应频率间隔为6 GHz来标定。 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $D_2$ 线 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=3$ 的跃迁峰、 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO2,3$ 和 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO1,3$ 的交叉峰的信噪比高,可用于半导体激光器锁频,它们相对 $^{85}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $F=3 \rightarrow F'=4$ 的跃迁峰的失谐 $\Delta$ 分别为-1.15, -1.28, -1.40 GHz,在实验误差范围内与理论值基本符合。如果采用参考光去除饱和吸收谱中的多普勒背景信号,则可提高原子跃迁信号的信噪比和锁频的长期稳定性。通过峰值锁定的方法将激光频率稳定在 $^{87}\text{Rb}$ 原子 $F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO2,3$ 的交叉峰上,稳频误差信号如图4中插图所示,锁频范围约 $\pm 10$  MHz,预估长期稳定度优于 $5.2 \times 10^{-8}$ 。通过5 km光纤延时自拍频测量拉曼激光线宽,测量结果如图5,用洛伦兹函数对拍频信号(离散点)进行拟合(实线)得拉曼激光的半峰全宽约为160 kHz,线宽约为80 kHz,完全满足

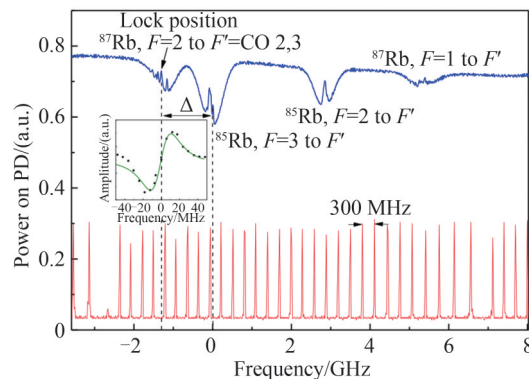


图4 Rb原子饱和吸收谱和锁频点。插图为稳频信号  
Fig. 4 The saturated absorption spectrum of Rb atoms and lock position. The inset is the stabilizing frequency

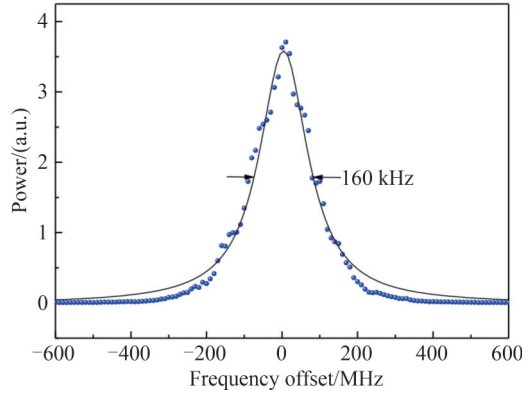


图5 拉曼激光的自拍频信号

Fig. 5 The self-heterodyne linewidth measurement of Raman laser

小型原子干涉仪对拉曼激光线宽小于1 MHz的要求。

## 2.2 拉曼激光性能评估

将该拉曼激光方案产生的拉曼激光用于原子干涉仪评估其性能,该原子干涉仪属于竖直原子重力梯度仪中的一个,未采取震动隔离措施。实验时原子干涉仪先通过三维磁光阱制备冷原子样品(温度约 $1.5 \mu\text{K}$ ,原子数约 $10^8$ )。在冷原子样品制备完成后,通过改变冷却激光的失谐,将冷原子样品竖直上抛。当冷原子样品进入原子干涉区后,用 $\pi/2 - \pi - \pi/2$ 拉曼激光脉冲序列依次作用于冷原子样品上形成原子干涉环路,通过设在环路出口处的光电探测器探测原子干涉信号。在自由演化时间 $T=115 \text{ ms}$ ,拉曼激光 $\pi$ 脉冲和 $\pi/2$ 脉冲的脉宽分别为 $20 \mu\text{s}$ 和 $10 \mu\text{s}$ 时,光电探测器记录的干涉条纹如图6。图6为200次测量数据构成的干涉条纹,对比度约为20%,用时294 s。对测量数据(离散圆点)进行正弦拟(实线)来提取相位,给出相位的不确定度 $\delta\phi$ 为 $42.5 \text{ mrad}$ ,相应重力测量的灵敏度 $\delta g$ 为 $345 \mu\text{Gal}/\text{Hz}^{1/2}$ ( $1 \text{ Gal}=1 \text{ cm}/\text{s}^2$ ),二者的关系可表示为

$$\delta g = \delta\phi / (k_{\text{eff}} T^2) t^{1/2} \quad (1)$$

式中, $k_{\text{eff}}$ 为拉曼激光有效波矢, $t$ 为积分时间。将原子干涉仪连续运行超过24 h,通过对干涉条纹进行正弦拟合的方法反演出局部重力测量数据,其阿伦方差曲线如图7。由阿伦方差曲线可知重力测量的分辨率优于 $2 \times 10^{-8} \text{ g}@7500 \text{ s}$ 。图中阿伦方差的误差棒随积分时间增加而明显增大的主要原因是原子干涉仪没有采取震动隔离措施、没有进行归一化探测和磁屏蔽等,而非激光器频率的长期稳定性不好。因为该拉曼激光中的两个频率成份由同一个激光器产生,其频率的漂移对两个频率成份来说是相同的,始终不影响它们的频率差,可等效为失谐 $\Delta$ 的变化来处理。由于激光器频率被锁在饱和吸收谱线上,其频率的长期稳定度优于MHz。与GHz量级的失谐相比,MHz量级的失谐变化(频率漂移)对重力测量结果的影响可以忽略不计。

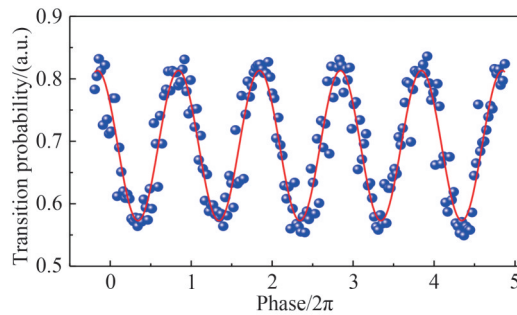


图6 冷原子干涉条纹

Fig. 6 Cold atom interference fringes

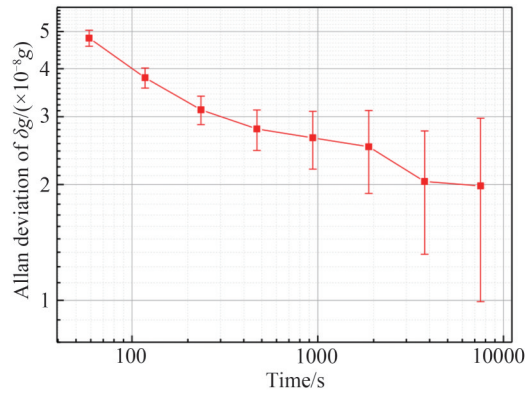


图7 重力测量的阿伦方差

Fig. 7 Allan deviation of the gravity measurement

### 3 分析与讨论

由于该拉曼激光方案采用单一激光源和双频光束共享同一光路的共模噪声抑制技术,使拉曼激光的两个频率成份中源自半导体激光器、光路和光学元件的相位噪声在反射镜反射前几乎相等,对原子干涉仪的灵敏度和分辨率的影响因共模抑制可以忽略不计。而在拉曼激光与原子作用时,拉曼激光中的一个频率成份不经过反射镜反射,而另外一个频率成份经过反射镜反射,因而反射镜的震动噪声被其引入原子干涉仪的相位,成为限制原子干涉仪重力测量的灵敏度和分辨率主要噪声源。在仅考虑白噪声的条件下,该拉曼激光频率噪声引起的单次重力测量噪声  $\sigma_g$  可表示为<sup>[29]</sup>

$$\sigma_g^2 \approx \frac{\pi^4 t_d^2 \Delta\nu^2}{2k_{\text{eff}}^2 T^2} \quad (2)$$

式中,  $k_{\text{eff}} = 4\pi/\lambda$  为拉曼激光有效波矢,  $\lambda$  为激光波长,  $T$  为原子自由演化时间,  $t_d = 2h/c$  为对射拉曼束光的延迟时间,  $h$  为冷原子样品与反射镜之间的距离,  $c$  为光速,  $\Delta\nu$  为拉曼激光的线宽。将原子干涉仪的参数  $\lambda = 780 \text{ nm}$ ,  $h = 0.5 \text{ m}$ ,  $T = 115 \text{ ms}$  和  $\Delta\nu = 80 \text{ kHz}$  代入式(2),得单次重力测量噪声约为  $0.9 \mu\text{Gal}$ ,完全可以满足  $\mu\text{Gal}$  量级的重力测量需求。因此,拉曼激光的性能不是限制该原子干涉仪重力测量灵敏度和分辨率的主要原因,提高原子干涉仪的灵敏度和分辨率可通过震动噪声的隔离与补偿、归一化探测和磁屏蔽等来实现。

### 4 结论

本文所提拉曼激光方案采用电光调制器产生拉曼激光,继承了电光调制器调制方案产生拉曼激光的优点,并利用 Rb 元素的两种同位素原子  $D_2$  线的跃迁谱线之间的频率间隔为 GHz 量级的特点,将激光频率直接锁定在同位素原子的饱和吸收谱上,无需借助移频和调制光学器件和配套电路来实现拉曼光的稳频和获得失谐,使光路和电路同时简化,又提高了拉曼激光的可靠性和长期稳定性。原子干涉实验和理论评估表明所提拉曼光方案能够满足小型原子干涉仪对拉曼激光的应用需求。该拉曼激光方案有助于推动原子干涉仪激光系统的小型化、轻量化和实用化,促进原子干涉仪在移动平台和航天领域中的应用。

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## The Frequency-stabilized Raman Laser System Based on Isotope Atom Saturated Absorption Spectrum

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**Abstract:** Atom interferometers based on the matter wave interferometry are promising tools for precision measurements. In laboratory, they have been used in the field of fundamental physics research. An important research effort is going on to miniaturize them, which can help to make them play a key role in resource exploration, inertial navigation and gravity mapping from space. The miniaturization of a laser system is a key link to miniaturize an atom interferometer. However, because the atoms used for the frequency stabilization in the existing schemes of the Raman laser system and the atoms used as the test masses in the atom interferometers are of the same type, the special optical elements and their driving devices are used to obtain the far detuning of the Raman lasers by frequency offset locking method, which makes the laser system complex and affects its reliability. Meanwhile, the increase in weight and cost of the laser system is adverse to apply them in the field of inertial navigation and space application. For an atom interferometer using one type of Rb isotope atoms as test mass, a frequency-stabilized Raman laser system based on another type of Rb isotope atoms saturated absorption spectrum is proposed to make the laser system for an atom interferometer compact and robust. This Raman laser system is helpful to miniaturize the laser systems of atom interferometers, and promotes the atom interferometers to be applied in movable platforms or in the weight-sensitive fields.

For an <sup>85</sup>Rb atom interferometer, the frequency-stabilized Raman laser system based on <sup>87</sup>Rb atom saturated absorption spectrum is proposed to make the laser system compact and robust. First, the schematic of the stabilizing frequency and detuning of Raman laser is introduced. Second, the frequency-stabilized Raman laser system based on <sup>87</sup>Rb atom saturated absorption spectrum is proposed. In this Raman laser system, the frequency of the Raman laser is stabilized to the <sup>87</sup>Rb atom saturated spectrum to obtain the far detuning. Then, the laser beam from the Raman laser is modulated by an electro-optic modulator with driving frequency of 3.04 GHz. Amplified by a tapered amplifier, the carrier and +1<sup>st</sup> bandside in modulated laser beams are used as the Raman beams.

The frequency stabilization experiment is done. By scanning the injection current and the voltage of the piezoelectric transducer of the Raman laser, the Rb saturated absorption spectrums are obtained. The frequency of the Raman laser is stabilized to the peak of <sup>87</sup>Rb atom  $F=2 \rightarrow F'=CO2, 3$  transition of D<sub>2</sub> line, obtaining a red detuning of a magnitude of GHz and a linewidth of 80 kHz. The Raman beams generated by this Raman laser system are used to one atom interferometer of the atom gradiometer to evaluate its performance. The sensitivity of the atom interferometer using this Raman beams is 345  $\mu\text{Gal}/\text{Hz}^{1/2}$  with the interference fringe contrast of 20%. And the Allan deviation of the gravity measurement more than one day shows that the resolution of the atom interferometer is  $2 \times 10^{-8} \text{ g}@7\ 500 \text{ s}$ . It is calculated that the noise of the gravity measurement per shot contributed by the frequency noise of the Raman laser beams is less than 1  $\mu\text{Gal}$ .

This Raman laser system uses an electro-optic modulator to generate a Raman beams, which inherits the advantages of the existing Raman schemes based on an electro-optic modulator. In this Raman laser system, a Rb cell is used as a substitute for an acousto-optic or electro-optic modulator to stabilize the frequency of the Raman laser and obtain the far detuning, which not only simplifies the light path and electric circuit of the Raman laser system, but also improves the reliability and long-term stability of the Raman beams. Both the atom interference experiment in the atom interferometer and the theoretical evaluation show that this Raman laser system is able to meet the miniaturized atom interferometers applied requirements. This Raman laser system is helpful to realize the miniaturization



and weight reduction of the laser systems and promotes the atom interferometers to be applied in the movable platforms and in space.

**Key words:** Atom interferometer; Laser cooling; Raman laser; Saturated absorption spectrum; Electro-optic modulator

**OCIS Codes:** 020.1335; 020.3320; 140.3550; 300.1030