



Spectroscopy of molecules

Objective: Infrared (IR) spectroscopy examines how infrared radiation interacts with molecules through absorption, emission, or reflection, providing valuable insights into molecular structure. It analyzes transitions between electronic, vibrational and rotational energy levels, which are determined by the molecular potential energy surfaces, atomic masses, and vibronic couplings.

Due to its precision and reliability, IR spectroscopy is widely used in research and industry for quality control, real-time monitoring, environmental analysis, or material characterization. Since each molecule has a unique infrared spectrum - like to a fingerprint - this technique enables precise identification and analysis of substances.

The objective of this module is to simulate the IR spectrum of a diatomic molecule, allowing students to deepen their understanding of fundamental spectroscopic principles, molecular structure, and dynamics.

Activity with the interface.

<https://qtechedu.centralesupelec.fr/EN/ex2.html>

This module explores the concepts of rotational-vibrational spectroscopy using diatomic molecules like carbon monoxide (CO). Diatomic molecules provide a simpler, more interpretable model for understanding fundamental principles of rotational-vibrational spectroscopy.

To observe a rotational-vibrational spectrum, a molecule must meet the following conditions:

- ✓ it must be infrared active (dipole moment change);
- ✓ it must exist in the gas phase;
- ✓ its rotational energy levels must be populated at a given ($T = 300\text{K}$) temperature;
- ✓ the selection rules for rotational-vibrational transitions must be satisfied.

What units are used in calculation*, demonstrating experimental results.

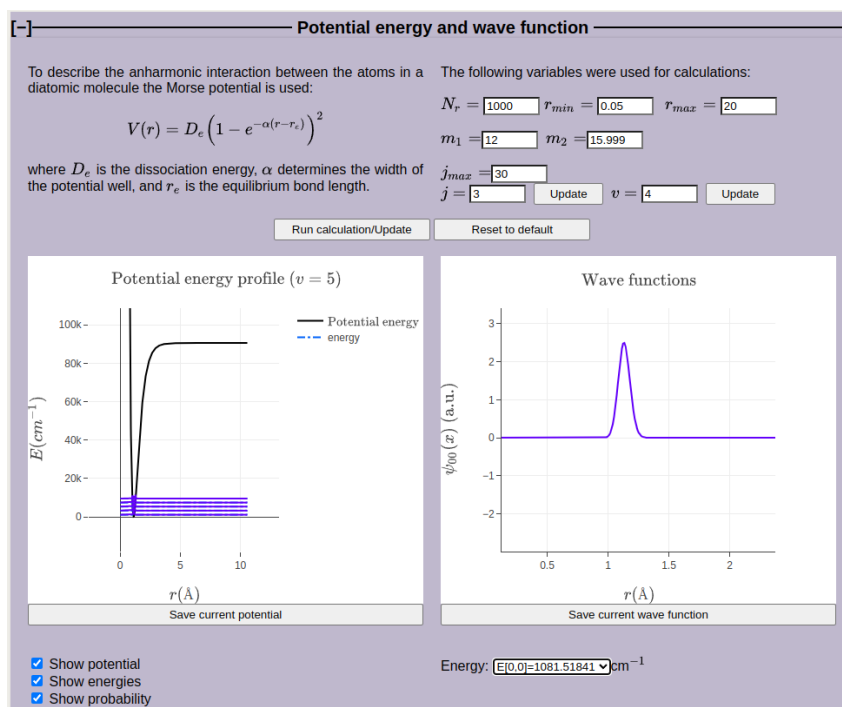
1. Introduction

- What is molecular spectroscopy, and what problems does it address?
- What molecular parameters can be obtained from rotational and vibrational spectroscopy?
- Analyze the potential energy diagram for carbon monoxide. Indicate the molecular energy levels, the types of possible transitions, and the corresponding spectral ranges for each.
- The CO molecule can be approximated as a rigid rotor with a fixed bond length at equilibrium. Draw a schematic representation of the CO molecule based on this model. Label the key features, including the bond length, the atoms involved, and indicate the direction of vibration and the axis of rotation. What mass is used for the molecule in the calculation?
- What units are used in quantum mechanical calculations, and how can we convert between different measurement systems? Demonstrate with an example using the calculation of the reduced mass of a CO molecule.

2. The tab **Potential energy and wave function** is used for visualization the potential energy profile, vibration levels and wave function for CO molecule.

The “Run calculation” and “Reset to default” buttons are used to run calculations with new parameters or to restore the default values, respectively.

The “Update” button allows you to modify the output parameters. If you need to save the result, click the “Save current data” button.



1. The following parameters can be adjusted:

- Number of grid points: $N_r = 1000$;
- Minimal and maximal distance between atoms: $r_{\min} = 0.05$ a.u. , $r_{\max} = 20$ a.u.;
- Mass of the atoms: $m_1 = 12$ u, $m_2 = 15,999$ u (in atomic mass units !!!);
- Maximum number of rotational levels (j_{\max}) considered in the calculation: $j_{\max} = 30$;
- The number of rotational levels (for $j = 0$ to 3) and vibration levels ($v = 4$) to be displayed: these parameters can be adjusted within the specified range without restarting the calculation.

What does each of the given parameters determine?

2. Perform calculations by varying the number of rotational levels, j_{\max} , within the range of 10 to 20. Analyze the resulting rotational-vibrational absorption spectra and compare them with the experimental data.

3. In the **Observables** tab, the physical quantities that can be obtained from experiments are calculated.

Write down the formulas for each value, specifying the variables used and what each value characterizes. In particular, indicate the values obtained from the figures.

4. Selection rules

- What is the meaning of the selection rules in molecular spectroscopy?
- Examine the figures (the values of the transition dipole moment for different values of v , v' and j , j') in the 'Selection Rules' tab. Where are these values derived from?

- Explain what you observe in these figures in relation to the selection rules for rotational and vibrational transitions. Based on this, formulate the selection rules for a diatomic molecule like CO.
- Based on the selection rules for rotational and vibrational transitions, provide specific examples of allowed and forbidden transitions for a diatomic molecule such as CO.

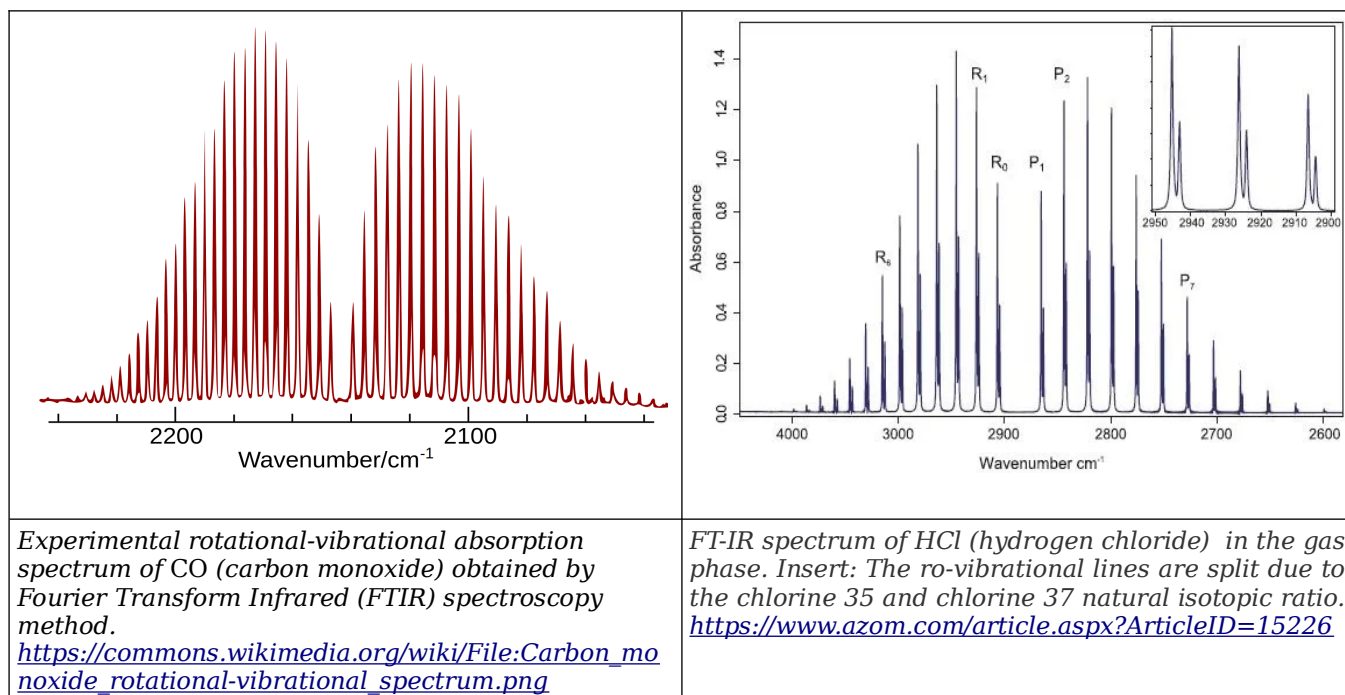
5. Application: Rotational-vibrational spectroscopy. The intensity of a rotational-vibrational transition in the molecule CO presented in this section.

- Explain the appearance of the P and R branches in the spectrum based on selection rules.
- Discuss the intensity pattern of the peaks in the spectrum (increase followed by a decrease in intensity with frequency).
- How does the spectrum change with temperature? What happens to the intensities and positions of the spectral lines as the temperature increases. Explain this dependence and confirm it with calculations using the platform.
- For the CO molecule at 300 K, which rotational transition produces the most intense spectral line in the rotational-vibrational spectrum? Justify your answer using the graphical interface.

To compare the obtained calculated spectrum with experimental one (select the appropriate option below the figures). Verify whether the spectra agree for different $j = 10, 20, 30$. Make the conclusions.

Problem:

Analyze the rotational-vibrational absorption spectrum from the ground vibrational state to the first excited state of CO (or HCl).



- (a) Prove that the distance between two nearest peaks is equal to $2B$.
- (b) Using the experimental spectrum, determine the moment of inertia (I) and equilibrium bond length (r_e) of the molecule. Also, explain what the dissociation energy D_e represents?
- (c) Determine the fundamental vibrational frequency from the rotational-vibrational spectrum. Using this frequency, calculate the force constant (spring constant) of the molecule.
- (d) Demonstrate how the rotational-vibrational spectrum can be used to measure the temperature of the sample.

Solution method:

* Atomic units https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hartree_atomic_units are used:

the unit of charge is $e = 1$ ($1.602176634 \times 10^{-19} \text{C}$);

the unit of mass $m_e = 1$ is defined as the mass of the electron ($9.1093837139(28) \times 10^{-31} \text{kg}$);

the unit of action $\hbar = 1$ - reduced Planck constant ($1.054571817 \times 10^{-34} \text{J}\cdot\text{s}$);

the unit of length $a_0 = 1$ - Bohr radius ($a_0 = 4\pi\epsilon\hbar^2/m_e e^2 = 0.529 \times 10^{-10} \text{m}$);

the unit of energy $E_H = 1$ - Hartree energy ($E_H = \hbar^2/m_e a_0^2 = 4.359 \times 10^{-18} \text{J} = 27.211 \text{eV}$).

The masses in the boxes below are given in daltons (Da) or unified atomic mass units (u). The unified atomic mass unit should not be confused with atomic unit of mass m_e . $1\text{u} = 1822.88848 m_e$.