

THE EFFECTS OF TELLURIC LINES IN RADIAL VELOCITY SEARCHES FOR PLANETS WITH IODINE CELL AS CALIBRATORS¹SHARON XUESONG WANG (王雪松)^{2,3}, JASON T. WRIGHT^{2,3}, CHAD BENDER^{2,3}, ANDREW W. HOWARD⁴, GEOFFREY W. MARCY⁵, HOWARD ISAACSON⁵, AND SUVRATH MAHADEVAN^{2,3}

ABSTRACT

Tellurics are bad and you really don't want them. Here's why and how to get rid of them.

Subject headings: instrumentation

1. INTRODUCTION

The radial velocity method has contributed to hundreds of planetary discoveries and Kepler follow-ups. The current precision is at 1–2 m/s, with limiting factor being stellar activity and RV systematics, instrumental or software.

One of the contributing term comes from Earth's atmospheric absorption, which imprints telluric lines onto the observed stellar spectrum. Deep tellurics are thrown out, while micro-tellurics (define; Rothman et al. 2013) remain and they are very hard to deal with. The contamination from the micro-telluric lines has an adverse effect on the RV precision, and such effect is characterized for the HARPS-N spectrograph, which is ThAr calibrated, by Artigau et al. (2014) and Cunha et al. (2014).

Modeling telluric lines itself is a challenging task. ZZZ Cite the paper TERRASPEC and similar softwares and their 2% modeling precision. Cite Lockwood, Bender et al. for 1% in L band. ZZZ

In this paper, we characterize and discuss the remedies for micro-telluric lines in the context of iodine-calibrated precise RVs. We first quantify the effects of micro-telluric contamination on RV precision through simulation. Then we discuss possible remedies and their effectiveness. Finally we discuss implementation on real data and future work.

2. IMPACTS OF MICRO-TELLURICS ON RV PRECISION

We performed end-to-end simulation of Keck data and analysis process to access the impacts of micro-tellurics on RV precision. We use Keck to demonstrate this because Keck has the highest precision. We chose sig Dra and tau Ceti as our stars because they are RV standards which have been observed hundreds of times with Keck/HIRES, and are also favorite RV standards at other precise RV facilities. I really want to add an M dwarf standard here as well!

¹ Based on observations obtained at the Keck Observatory, which is operated by the University of California. The Keck Observatory was made possible by the generous financial support of the W. M. Keck Foundation.

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2.1. Methodology

We simulated Keck observations on sig Dra and tau Ceti by using synthetic stellar spectra of their respective spectral types (?) using SME (ZZZ cite Valenti and Fischer). We simulated one spectrum for each actual observed spectrum taken at Keck through the CPS programs. The synthetic stellar spectra is multiplied with the iodine atlas to create the standard iodine+ star RV observations. The multiplied spectrum is then multiplied with the blaze function and convolved with the observed spectral PSF, both derived from real observations for each night. Poisson noise is added.

We then forward model the simulated spectra to extract RVs using the CPS Keck code (ZZZ cite Johnson and Howard). We used the synthetic stellar spectrum as the input stellar template. In reality, stellar templates are derived from observed stellar spectra via deconvolution, which would introduce additional errors. Using the same synthetic stellar spectrum would eliminate such errors and isolate the problem to telluric lines only.

We ran two sets of simulations: control and contaminated. In the control, we only had stellar spectrum and iodine spectrum. In the contaminated, we added in simulated telluric lines in the simulated observed spectrum. The telluric lines were generated using TERRASPEC (ZZZ cite Bender). We adopted the typical Mauna Kea atmospheric condition (temperature and pressure profiles) and typical oxygen column density (which in reality fluctuate very little anyway). For simplicity, we assumed the same water column density for every observation, which is pwv= 1mm, a little bit humid than a typical Mauna Kea night (true? I think this is actually pretty typical). The pair of simulated control and contaminated spectra have the same added Poisson noise, and therefore any RV differences derived from these two sets of simulation would reveal the net effect of telluric contamination.

2.2. Results

Plots: RV difference vs. BC for sig Dra and tau Ceti. And M stars.

Micro-tellurics in the iodine region introduces RMS= 0.6 m/s scatter for GK stars (RV systematic error added in quadrature). Leaving untreated, this would define the precision floor.

Additionally, it manifests as spurious signal at periods of a sidereal year and harmonics, with an amplitude of 20 cm/s. This would affect our ability to detect super-Earth in the habitable zone of GK stars (Earth's signal is

8 cm/s). We have seen such spurious signal in Keck data on many stars, and telluric contamination is one of the contributing factors (see discussion for other factors).

For M stars... (probably worse)

3. REMEDIES AND EFFECTIVENESS

Plots: effects of full forward modeling (RV difference between modeled and contaminated, modeled and control).

We demonstrate the effectiveness of several remedies. First, double masking: probably a terrible idea. Throwing away the pixels will make the fitter harder to converge, and introduce additional errors on the scales larger than the effects of telluric lines themselves. Additionally, it is hard to choose a flux cut-off level. Throwing away too much would mean unstable solution and lower RV precision, but masking too little would mean insufficient removal of tellurics.

Second, full forward modeling plus some sort of masking for deep lines. This is the most effective way. Modeling precision of $\sim 90\%$ basically bring the adverse effects of tellurics down to <10 cm/s. 90% is very easy to achieve – remember the state-of-the-art is 1-2%, and even consider errors induced by modeling residuals caused by atmospheric wind or lack of knowledge on linelist or broadening parameters or inaccurate knowledge on atmospheric temperature/pressure profiles. The deep lines may not be modeled very well. However, the statistical weighting procedure at the very end will empirically quantify which chunks behave badly due to ineffective modeling of telluric lines and thus throw out or de-weight the chunks.

4. DISCUSSION AND FUTURE WORK

In terms of application to real observations, this brings marginal improvements to existing Keck data. We tested on sig Dra, tau Ceti, and M stars, the differences are...

Important for MINERVA, HRS2, HPF2. Crucial for CARMENES, HPF, EPDS, SHREK, ESPRESSO,

SPiRou etc. White paper has suggested improvement on line lists in HITRAN. EPRV2 has a lot of recommendations. That is the future direction.

The authors thank John A. Johnson for providing a copy of his Doppler code and his help with our incorporation of the code into the HET pipeline. The authors also thank Debra Fischer for her assistance in this regard.

This work was partially supported by funding from the Center for Exoplanets and Habitable Worlds, which is supported by the Pennsylvania State University, the Eberly College of Science, and the Pennsylvania Space Grant Consortium.

The authors appreciate the significant Keck observing time and associated funding support from NASA for the study of long period planets and multiplanet systems. J.T.W. and S.X.W. acknowledge support from NASA Origins of Solar Systems grant NNX10AI52G.

The work herein is based on observations obtained at the W. M. Keck Observatory, which is operated jointly by the University of California and the California Institute of Technology. The Keck Observatory was made possible by the generous financial support of the W.M. Keck Foundation. We wish to recognize and acknowledge the very significant cultural role and reverence that the summit of Mauna Kea has always had within the indigenous Hawaiian community. We are most fortunate to have the opportunity to conduct observations from this mountain.

The Hobby-Eberly Telescope is a joint project of the University of Texas at Austin, the Pennsylvania State University, Stanford University, Ludwig Maximilians Universität München, and Georg August Universität Göttingen. The HET is named in honor of its principal benefactors, William P. Hobby and Robert E. Eberly.

This work has made use NASA's Astrophysics Data System Bibliographic Services.

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