stellar interferometry : an overview about basics

Vves Rabbia Observatoire de la Côte d'Azur UMR Lagrange, Nice, France

rabbia@oca.eu

Perso 06 24 33 84 96



stellar interferometry : an overview about basics

sections

- introduction : a problem raised
- science context and motivation
- few academic reminders
- basics for interferometry and aperture synthesis
- Iimitations and subsequent needs
- interferometers : principle, production, typology
- difficulties in real world (and some remedies)
- managing with data and some results
- quick-look at some alternative HAR methods
- nulling interferometry and coronagraphy

purpose of the talk

to recall and to illustrate (hand waving as far as possible)

- general framework and some land marks
- specific terminology (and debunking "jargon")
- basics of interferometry and aperture synthesis
- few things about nulling techniques

stellar interferometry is part of a large body of topics covering methods and techniques aiming at

High Angular Resolution (HAR)

the underlying goal is Aperture Synthesis but other techniques contribute to HAR eclipsing binaries lunar occultation speckle interferometry mauca meteor matisseinterferometrieNov 2019Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange5interest of angular resolution: self-speaking illustration:



resolution and resolution

detector resolution : the number of pixels IS NOT the point

what counts for the astronomer is the size of pixels over the sky

and this depends on the instrument (including observing conditions)



pixel on the sky jargon : resel, resolution element

one resel may cover several pixels on the detector



a specific example ; the case of stars

even the most reduced ambition is not achievable

conventional imaging is powerless be the star 'big' or 'small' and ignoring atmospheric effects the size of an image would be reduced to a single resel



mauca meteor matisse interferometrie Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange an exemple of improved angular resolution the morphology of the source begins to appear 8



9

solving the problem ??

conventional imaging being disqualified it is necessary to find another way to describe the brightness distribution of the star (or at least to determine some of its key parameters)

a relevant method is named : aperture synthesis it is based on interferometry which is one of the techniques pertaining to High Angular Resolution

specific words that we are going to explicit



interference : mutual influence of two things

interference : mostly pertaining to wave phenomena

here we shall consider interferences of light for which we use the model of electromagnetic waves

a definition (?)

here we speak of stellar interferometry which means

"measuring something of a star by using interference of the light received from this star "

stellar interferometry : an observational method in astrophysics, based on interferences and **Coherence** of light which aims at obtaining **high angular resolution**

the instrument used

High Angular Resolution : a matter of "finesse" in exploration



what does "high" mean ? it means "responding to current scientific needs"

the purpose of angular resolution in astrophysics

describe the brightness angular distribution of a source and obtain morphological parameters (not necessarily imp

Astrophysics
$$I(\alpha_0, W, \alpha - \alpha_0, \lambda, t, \vec{P})$$

wants

interferometry focuses primarily on δ brighness distribution λ_1 $\alpha - \alpha_0, \lambda, t$ then on

chromatic dependance of the brightness distribution

then eventually, look for time evolution and polarisation

in the following, we restrict the topic to stars

$$\alpha_0$$
 sky coordinate

 λ_3

 δ_0



(Signal to Noise Ratio)

15

science context and motivation



mauca meteor matisse interferometrie

depending on sources, few parameters might be of great help but some morphologies would requires images

Nov 2019

Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange

examples

binaries : angular separation (vector) single stars : angular diameter limb darkening : radial variation of intensity multiplicity : number of components, geometry extended atmosphere : radial structure, schock wave circumstellar matter : angular diameter, structure complex objects (Miras, bipolar jets, disks,)







few academic and elementary reminders pertaining to our topic

light phenomenology of interferences optical index diffraction



in 0. - Orden transcersales à la sortere de

rays are locally perpendicular to the wavefront



amplitude A : a parameter related to the collectable energy :

E proportional to (A²)x(recording time) unité : joule

also is introduced the wavelength λ : distance travelled by the energy during one period

and the phase : angular parameter linked to an origin of time

NOT depending on the medium where propagation takes place

with the « photon model », frequency appears in the energy of an individual photon:

E = h.V Joule where h = Planck's constant 6.62*10^(-34) Joule.seconde

$$\lambda = \frac{propagation \ velocity}{frequency}$$

depending on the medium where propagation takes place via the optical index « n » (refraction index) of the medium

in a medium of optical index « n »

wavelength λ

in vacuum , v = c; n=1

$$\lambda_{medium} = \frac{velocity \ v}{frequency \ v} = \frac{c}{n} \cdot \frac{1}{v} = \frac{\lambda_{vacuum}}{index \ n}$$
$$\lambda vacuum = \frac{velocity \ c}{frequency \ v}$$

illustration : influence of the optical index

propagation velocity is reduced because of « n »



geometrical path L optical path n.L distance



time



22

to travel a given distance it takes more time in a material medium

wavefront distorsions

An index inhomogeneeeity locally modifies the propagation velocity what is inducing geometrical distorsions over the wavefront the distorsions induce optical aberrations since the rays remain locally perpendicular to the distorted emerging wavefront

Malus Dupin theorem, 1808, a consequence of the Fermat principle



in the medium light walks at the same pace as in vacuum

(unchanged frequency) but with shorter steps

influence of the geometry and of the index of the crossed medium





distorted wavefront : aberrated image



23

24

phenomenology of interferences and behaviour of waves

an historical device : Young's fringes

a set-up for legend

fringes : alternated bright and dark areas



thomas young 1773_1829

dark !? paradoxical ?

```
interferences :

light + light \rightarrow light

light + light \rightarrow darkness

energy + energy \rightarrow energy

energy + energy \rightarrow NO energy
```





addition of waves and observed energy distribution

addition of two sinewaves « in phase » (no pathlengths difference)

amplitude of the sum

energy distribution of the sum (after averaging square modulus)

less collectable energy



addition of two sinewaves « in opposition of phase » : no energy collectable » :





fringes « live » 01 (aquatic experiment)

little quiet pond and little stones







29

recorded fringes « live » 02



fringes« live » 03 : interpretation



(latin: diffractare / to scatter)

diffraction

the light energy is not carried by rays but rather by a series of waves (sinusoids) the configuration of their crests illustrates the shape of the wavefronts



« finesse » in image analysis, exploration lobe

exploration lobe : report back to the sky of the angular distribution given by the instrument for a point source

also named : Point Spread Function (PSF)

note : angular extension of the lobe \approx wavelength / diameter



pictorial illustration : theoretical behaviour of the exploration lobe





lobe extension λ/D and looking for 1 milliarcsec lead to D = 100 m in the visible (and more in Infrared) telescope not (yet) available

observing conditions

mainly atmospheric turbulence PSF degraded , loss of resolution (speckles)









mauca meteor matisse in

interferometrie

Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange

36

problem for imaging stars !! angular dimensions of stars are so terribly small

astronomers (scientific requirements)

need High Angular Resolution I want milliarcsec level 510 - ⁹ radian



engineers (technical requirements) hep ! : diffraction sets a limit λ / D what leads to several tens of meters for D

interferometry aims at breaking the limits of conventional imaging so as to determine some morphological parameters without large telescope diameters, (and ultimately produce images)


actually it is the peripheral corona of the collector which governs the angular extension of the central peak of the Airy pattern yet at the price of increased sidelobes (and less photons, of course)



but ..

not easier to make large corona than large diameter !

so what...?

phenomenology_ 2

not easier to make large corona than large diameter ! but ... look let's take two pieces of the corona



in one direction the central peak remains narrow

however

on the perpendicular direction the peak extension is the one of the small piece

fringes and interfringes (spatial period)

the period of fringes is governed by the « optical path differences »





fringes observed with a remote source sun reflected by the roof of a car (parked in the distance)









42

questions appear

extension λ/B much finer than λ/D gain B/D example 100m/1m OK but, the exploration lobe is like a comb

where does it come from ? what does that mean "exploring with a comb ?" exploring with a lobe both narrow and large



some theoretical basis needed but before getting these basis let's look again a little more at phenomenology



mauca meteor matisse interferometrie Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange



interferometrie



basics for interferometry and aperture synthesis toolbox and terminology

> mathematical tools Fourier world (reminders) spatial frequencies & spatial spectra Fourier optics linear filtering fundamentals principles detection, coherence, VCZ theorem interferometers

Fourier world concept and formalism

an omnipresent tool : signal processing, spatial frequencies, linear filtering, coherence, interferometry, aperture synthesis,....



48

f(x)

X

X

f(x)

a coarse conceptual short cut

there are functions « nice" or « friendly"(physical signal)

they are described by a set of couples (x, f(x))it is the description in the space of coordinates

there is another description that is built in the space of frequencies description by a weighted sum of sine functions of various frequencies and phases (they form a «mathematical base » nearly like for vectors







 \Box the weighted sum of the sine functions defining f(x) is a continuous sum (integral over frequencies) extended to infinite

$$f(x) = \int_{-\infty} weight(u).base_component(x,u).du$$

the components of the base are not simple sine functions but are complex exponential (helical shaped)

 $base_component(x, u) = e(x, u) = \exp(i.2\pi.u.x)$





which relation with Fourier?

Vectors :

components X_n retrieved via the scalar product V. e_n

« TransFourized » :

fonctions « friendly" : the scalar product of f & g is :

$$< f, g > = \int f(x).g^{*}(x).dx$$

the scalar product of function f(x) & componant e(u,x) is :

$$\hat{f}(u) = \langle f, e_u \rangle = \int f(x) \cdot e^*(u, x) \cdot dx$$

and we retrieve the componant linked to « u »:

$$\hat{f}(u) = \int f(x) \cdot e^{-i \cdot 2\pi \cdot u \cdot x} \cdot dx$$





but what does mean all these horrible formulae ??

briefly the FT tells what is the content in frequencies for « friendly » functions (and some others too)

algebra describes how to extract this contents

a less abstract approach : let's draw



remember : the constant and the sine function do not match our algebra ! How to survive ? Dirac distribution !



55

going from one description to the other

interferometrie

$$\hat{f}(u) = \int f(x) \cdot e^{-i \cdot 2\pi \cdot u \cdot x} \cdot dx$$

M

spectral \rightarrow direct : inverse FT simply change the sign of the exponential

$$f(x) = \int \hat{f}(u) \cdot e^{+i \cdot 2\pi \cdot u \cdot x} \cdot du$$

warning,

mauca meteor matisse

immediate difference with respect to vectors actually here f(u) et f(x) may be seen as componants each to the other. We will come back to this point later on

Nov 2019

to tackle the situation more intuitively we will make some « hand made » Fourier transforms, but first, let's look at the Dirac distrtibution



$$q' = \sum_{n=-\infty} \sum_{k=-\infty} o($$





59 interferometrie Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange mauca meteor matisse usual functions though rather pathological (but soon friendly) the definition integral does not converge : Dirac heals constant X U cosinus 🖡 р X U - 1/p 1/p Re $(e_{x,u})^{\uparrow}$ $Im(e_{x,u})$ Ц f X III(x/p) III(p.u) † U X f 1/p р



rectangle, pulse, door







algebraic definition and notation for our usual functions

rectangle, pulse, door
$$\Pi\left(\frac{x}{A}\right) = \begin{cases} 1 & if |x| < A/2 \\ 0 & elsewise \end{cases}$$

triangle or lambda function
$$\Lambda\left(\frac{x}{A}\right) = \begin{cases} 1 - |x| & if |x| < A \\ 0 & if |x| > A \end{cases}$$

gaussian
$$G(x, a) = \exp\left(-\frac{x^2}{a^2}\right) \xrightarrow{(x^2/a^2)}_{a} \xrightarrow{(x^2/a^2)}_{a} \xrightarrow{(x^2/a^2)}_{a} \xrightarrow{(x^2/a^2)}_{a} \xrightarrow{(x^2/a)}_{a} \xrightarrow{(x$$





avec $Z = \pi . 2R.q$





global result : convolution decreases stiffness, smoothing



mauca meteor matisseinterferometrieNov 2019Yur pbia - OCA- Lagrange67toolbox theorems for FT
$$f(x)$$
 $f(x)$ $\hat{f}(u)$ starting point : $f(x)$ $\hat{f}(u)$ $\hat{f}(u)$ translation theorem: $f(x - a) \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u) \cdot e^{-i.2\pi \cdot u.a}$ similarity theorem $f(\frac{x}{a}) \Leftrightarrow |a| \hat{f}(a.u)$ convolution theorem $f(x) * g(x) \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u) \cdot \hat{g}(u)$ autocorrelation theorem $|f(x)|^2 \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u) * \hat{f}(-u) = \hat{f}(u) \otimes \hat{f}(u)$ very very important

parseval (rayleigh) $\int f(x) \cdot g * (x) \cdot dx = \int \hat{f}(u) \cdot \hat{g} * (u) \cdot du$

marca meteor matisse interferometric Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange [68]
pictorial for theorems with a rectangle ditribution
starting point:
$$f(x) \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u)$$

translation:
 $f(x-a) \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u).e^{-i.2\pi.u.a}$
similarity
 $f(\frac{x}{a}) \Leftrightarrow |a|.\hat{f}(a.u)$
convolution
 $f(x) * g(x) \Leftrightarrow \hat{f}(u). \hat{g}(u)$
autocorrelation $|f(x)|^2 = f(u) \otimes g^*(u)$
parseval (rayleigh) $\int f(x).g^*(x).dx = \int \hat{f}(u).\hat{g}^*(u).du$

69 mauca meteor matisse interferometrie Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange complication : introducing FT with 2 variables "friendly" physical signals again X what is changing ?? the moduli of base functions no longer are "sine lines" moduli are now something like "tôles ondulées" (but with negative parts) having various periods, phases and orientations still, a given 2D-signal again is a

weighted sum of 2D-base functions

location of a given point of the object requires two coordinates (x and y) or a vector

also, a given frequency is described by two "projected frequencies" "u" and "v", or a vector (to account for orientation of the sine-like surface) \vec{U} :

then a given base function (varying over x and y) will convey (x,y,u,v) and writes

$$e(x,y,u,x) = e(\vec{X},\vec{U}) = exp(i.2\pi.\vec{X}.\vec{U}) = exp[i.2\pi.(u.x+v.y)]$$



$$\vec{X}$$
: $\begin{vmatrix} x \\ y \end{vmatrix}$

illustrations for 2 variables objects



the "faster" the oscillation the farther from origin the diracs (higher frequency)

orientation of the couple is perpendicular to the wave crests


need some rest in quiet place !

limitations and subsequent needs

the first key : spatial frequencies

mauca meteor matisse interferometrie Nov 2019 Yves Rabbia - OCA- Lagrange frequencies , spectrum, in the familiar time domain

reminder : a physical signal can be described as a weighted sum of sinusoidal components (Fourier) of various frequencies

The set of weighting factors (Amplitude, frequency) is the spectrum of the signal

periodic signal : discrete spectrum



non-periodic : continuous spectrum



spatial frequencies

time domain : frequency = (1 / time) , Hz

spatial distribution (2-dim x & y)
spatialfrequency : vector (u,v) each component (1 / length)
spatio-angular frequency : vector (u,v), each (1/angle) or (1/radian)

just recalling practical pictures : "tole ondulée" or "sine surface" (with negative parts)

one direction modulated



all directions modulated



practical training : find spatial frequencies in the room !



spatial frequencies : further training

change your zebra for a circus horse



examples of spatial distributions and spatial spectra _ 1

spatial distribution: O(x,y) or $O(\alpha,\beta)$ spatial spectrum (2-dim Fourier Transform) $\hat{O}(u,v)$

WARNING ! : spatial spectrum is a complex function only modulus displayed here



examples of spatial distributions and spatial spectra _2







coming back to our suggested technical solution

conventional imaging does not work !

a new approach is needed to describe the brightness distribution or at least to obtain some of its parameters

answer is aperture synthesis which is based on interferometry

the idea behind : fetch spatial information in Fourier Space !

in other words : determine **spatial spectrum** and then, come back as far as possible to the angular intensity distribution of the source

conventional imaging : directly provides a 2-dim representation (feeding a camera)

with aperture synthesis the imaging process requires specific methods for observation and computation



