

Astron. Astrophys. Suppl. Ser. **55**, 171-177 (1984)

Clean lines in the solar flux spectrum

R. J. Rutten and E. B. J. van der Zalm

Sterrewacht « Sonnenborgh », Zonnenburg 2, 3512 NL Utrecht, The Netherlands

Received July 19, accepted October 12, 1983

Summary. — We list profile parameters of 602 unblended lines in the Sacramento Peak Atlas of the visual solar irradiance spectrum, and we compare these to our earlier measurements of the same lines in the Jungfraujoch Atlas of the solar disk-center intensity spectrum.

Key words : solar spectroscopy — stellar abundances.

1. Introduction.

In our previous paper (Rutten and van der Zalm, 1984; henceforth paper I) we have selected 750 unblended lines present in the visual disk-center spectrum of the sun, and provide a list of various line-profile parameters. In this paper we extend these solar clean-line data by adding profile parameters measured from the full-disk spectrum. We so make an intermediate step between solar resolved-disk intensity spectrometry and stellar full-disk flux spectrometry; the list compiled here should be useful for stellar abundance analysis.

Paper I is based on the Jungfraujoch Atlas of the visual disk-center spectrum (Delbouille *et al.*, 1973; henceforth JJ Atlas). Here we use the Sacramento Peak Irradiance Atlas of the full-disk spectrum (Beckers *et al.*, 1976; henceforth SP Atlas). Each atlas has been recorded photoelectrically with a double-pass scanning-grating spectrometer, and each furnishes the highest spectral purity (spectral resolution, signal-to-noise ratio, absence of distortion) available for the respective spectrum. For our purposes their instrumental broadening is negligible; while the resolution of the SP Atlas is somewhat coarser, so is the inherent spectral detail of the flux spectrum. However, the appreciably larger noise level of the SP Atlas influences our results below.

2. Data reduction.

2.1 BACKGROUND NORMALIZATION. — We use the magnetic-tape editions of the two atlases and discuss only their region of overlap ($\lambda\lambda 400.6$ -700.0 nm). Both atlases suffer from scale variations which result from the record

concatenation necessary for segmented recording. This is illustrated in figure 1, where the comparison given in figure 5 of paper I is extended with the corresponding interval of the SP Atlas. The panels show the top 4% of each atlas, and also disk-center data taken with the broad-band Fourier Transform Spectrometer at Kitt Peak (Brault, 1978, example 2), which here supply a standard of quality. Each tracing is again normalized to a straight line (dotted) connecting the peaks at $\lambda = 401.34$ nm and $\lambda = 405.31$ nm, which are the highest in the FTS data and in the JJ Atlas, respectively. The upward spikes display the background windows in this crowded region on an exaggerated scale. The differences between their envelopes in the two lower panels are due to segment-by-segment tilts of the JJ Atlas records, of which the junctions are indicated. The SP Atlas (top) shows better background normalization, at least in the left half of the figure; but its peak-to-peak variations are larger, primarily due to the larger noise.

The varying segment tilts encumber locating the *true* continua I_c^T and F_c^T , whereas the noise decreases the precision with which one can locate the *local* continuum F_c^L (see paper I for notation and definitions; we use F for irradiance and call it flux). In section 2.1 of paper I we have worked out in detail how to convert measurements normalized to the local continuum into line parameters referring to the true continuum, i.e. corrected for the presence of unresolved blends. We refrain here from applying similar corrections to measurements from the SP Atlas because the errors in the evaluation of F_c^L , which are rather large due to the noise in the background flux values, exceed the corrections, which are small. We thus provide « local » line strengths and line depths only.

2.2 LINE PARAMETERS. — Of the 750 lines without resolved blends selected from the JJ Atlas in paper I, there are 638 present below the upper wavelength limit of the SP

Send offprint requests to : R. J. Rutten.

Atlas (700 nm). We have rejected 34 lines for which the adjacent maxima in the SP Atlas are so low that their halfwidths are ill-defined, and also $\lambda 588.383$ and $\lambda 697.047$, which should have been rejected in paper I because they are blended by telluric H_2O lines; the latter are stronger in the SP Atlas than in the JJ Atlas. For the remaining 602 lines we have measured the profile parameters listed in table I⁽¹⁾.

The first column of table I specifies the wavelength of the line in nm, measured again as the normalized first moment of the lower third of the profile, on the wavelength scale of the SP Atlas. The identification (spectrum and multiplet number) is again copied from Moore *et al.* (1966). The parameter « Mode » is W for the lines for which the whole profile was used, B if only the blue half and R if only the red half was used, as in paper I. The halving serves to reduce the effects of unresolved blends often present in one line wing; we have halved the SP Atlas profiles following the choices made in paper I for the JJ Atlas profiles.

The measurement of the other profile parameters differs from paper I in the determination of the extent of a line and of the local continuum, because the noise in the SP Atlas bars the simple definition of a line as the interval between two successive maxima. Instead, we here define a line to begin and end at the first maxima of a running mean that are outside the extent of the line as it was measured in the JJ Atlas. The running mean is given by $(F_{k-1} + 2F_k + F_{k+1})/4$, where k is the sample counter of the successive tape-edition irradiance values F_k . We define the local continuum F_c^L equal to the highest of these two smoothed maxima, and measure the fractional line depth $D_{SP}^L = (F_c^L - F_\lambda)/F_c^L$, the full width at half maximum in pm $FWHM_{SP}$, and the logarithmic line strength $\log(W_{SP}^L/\lambda)$ from this background level. The last column specifies the background, relative to the nominal continuum level of the SP Atlas F_c^{SP} (900 in tabular- and tape-edition units).

3. Discussion

In figure 2 we show the differences between the strengths, depths and widths of the 602 lines in table I and the corresponding values given for the JJ Atlas in table IV of paper I, as functions of line strength (left) and line depth (right). Each panel shows a well-defined trend at right and large spread at left; we discuss these features separately.

What trends should we expect? Let us first consider the effects of the solar *rotation*. Simple theory (e.g. Unsöld, 1955, pp. 508-511; Gray, 1976, pp. 393-399) shows that if the intensity profile of a line, relative to its background, does not vary over the disk, then the flux profile is simply the convolution of the intensity profile with a rotation profile of which the shape is set by the continuum limb darkening. This convolution decreases the line depths and increases the line widths, but does not affect the line strengths. The changes increase with wavelength because the solar limb is less darkened at longer wavelengths, so that

the rotation profile is flatter: in the red, the west and east limbs contribute more Doppler-shifted signal than in the blue. We estimate the effect of rotational broadening from a simple numerical experiment. A plot of $FWHM_{JJ}/\lambda$ against D_{JJ}^L (not shown) shows that disk-center lines of depth $D^L = 0.5$ typically have $FWHM/\lambda = 0.015 \pm 0.002$. Smearing gaussians of this halfwidth with the solar rotation profile (with $v \sin i = 1.9$ km/s) results in lowering of their amplitudes by 10 ± 3% at $\lambda = 550$ nm, with less than 1% amplitude change over the range $\lambda\lambda 400-700$ nm.

In addition, there are effects of center-to-limb variations in the *intensity profiles*. Most of these lines are better described by pure absorption than by scattering; they become shallower towards the limb, which results in reduction of their depths and strengths in the flux spectrum compared with the rotationally-broadened disk-center intensity spectrum. Furthermore, the broadening effects of granulation and waves, measured traditionally as micro- and macroturbulence, increase when viewed obliquely, resulting in decrease of the line depths, increase of the line widths, and, for lines on the flat part of the curve of growth, increase of the line strengths. These profile effects also increase with wavelength due to the decrease in limb darkening, but more steeply than the rotational broadening because the whole limb contributes, rather than its east and west parts only. The largest profile effect is generally the increase of the macroturbulence from 1 km/s at disk center to 2 km/s at the limb.

Let us now compare these expectations to the actual trends in figure 2. The mean vertical offsets of the stronger lines, best seen in the D_{JJ}^L panels at right, indeed display effects of smearing: the line widths (bottom) are larger in the flux spectrum and the depths (middle) are smaller, while the strengths (top) are about the same. The reductions in line depth are somewhat larger than the prediction for rotational broadening alone, especially at longer wavelengths. They show a pronounced increase with wavelength, which we attribute to the profile effects. The long-wavelength lines in the middle panels (crosses) show upturns for the strongest lines, i.e. smaller reduction in line depth; this decrease in the effect of the smearing on their line depth results from their line-core saturation. (A similar upturn is shown by the plot of $FWHM_{JJ}/\lambda$ against D_{JJ}^L mentioned above.) The strongest blue lines present (circles) have not yet reached saturation and show no upturn.

We now turn to the *spread*. Some of it may be due to variations in the profile effects discussed above, but most of it results from measurement errors, primarily in the assignment of the local continuum F_c^L which is most sensitive to the noise in the SP Atlas. This is illustrated in the middle-right panel of figure 2, in which the increase of the spread for weak lines is most abrupt. (The fan-like structure at left is due to the three-digit discretization.) The many weak lines that quite erroneously have $D_{SP}^L > D_{JJ}^L$ testify that J_c^L has often been overestimated, notwithstanding our smoothing. The size of the spread multiplied by D^L shows that the errors in J_c^L range up to 1%, in agreement with the general accuracy of 1% estimated for the SP Atlas by its authors; we find that heavier smoothing in the evaluation of J_c^L does not produce significant improvement.

⁽¹⁾ Copies on magnetic tape or punched cards can be obtained from E.v.d.Z.

The spread in the top panels is larger ($0.1 \text{ dex} = 26\%$) because the equivalent widths are about twice as sensitive to errors in J_c^L as the line depths are. The many overestimations of J_c^L have caused the slight mean offsets shown by the weaker lines in the top panels.

Finally, we note that the spread in the top-left panel is two to three times smaller than the spread in the comparable bottom-left panel of figure 6 in paper I. The lines most suitable for abundance analysis, with $-5.5 \leq \log(W/\lambda) \leq -5.2$, have errors well within 0.1 dex, which is the best precision attainable using line

strengths in curve-of-growth methods (see Sect. 5 of paper I).

Acknowledgements.

We thank C. Zwaan and B. J. Oranje for comments.

Note added in proof : A detailed analysis of solar rotational broadening has been given in the PhD thesis of David H. Bruning, now at Mt Wilson.

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TABLE I (*continued*).

Wavelength	Ident	Mode	D ^L	FWHM	log(W/λ)	F _L ^L /F _L ^R
698.8529	Fe I	167	W	0.254	12.54	-5.292 0.998
699.6653	Ti I	256	B	0.018	9.93	-6.587 0.995

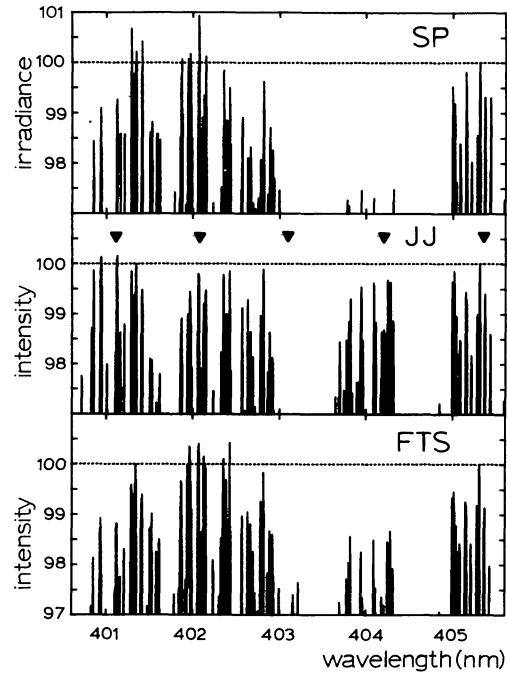


FIGURE 1. — Comparison of the background windows in the SP Atlas, in the JJ Atlas, and in KPNO-FTS data, for a short wavelength interval in the blue where these data sets overlap.

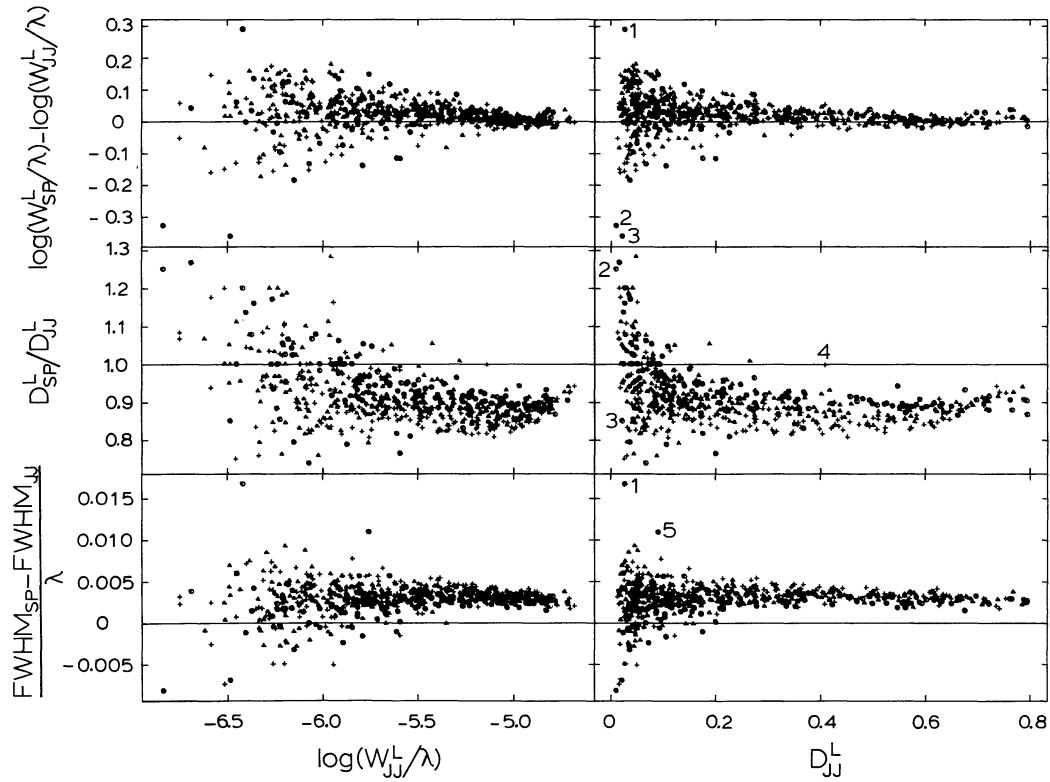


FIGURE 2. — Comparison of line-profile parameters measured from the SP Atlas and from the JJ Atlas for 602 clean lines. Horizontal : logarithmic line strengths from the JJ Atlas (left); line depths from the JJ Atlas (right). Vertical : difference in logarithmic line strengths (top); ratio of line depths (middle); difference in line halfwidths, normalized by the wavelength (bottom). All parameters are measured from the local continuum. Circles are lines from the wavelength interval $\lambda\lambda 400.6$ -500 nm, triangles from $\lambda\lambda 500$ -600 nm ; crosses from $\lambda\lambda 600$ -700 nm. (The numbers identify deviating lines, respectively : 1 = $\lambda 450.421$, 2 = $\lambda 456.603$, 3 = $\lambda 495.430$, 4 = $\lambda 695.125$ and 5 = $\lambda 441.339$.)