



# Dual electromagnetic mechanisms with internal resonance for ultra-low frequency vibration energy harvesting

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Dual electromagnetic mechanisms enable watt-level output power.
- Pendulum swinging amplitude is restricted with even larger output power.
- Internal resonance for frequency up-conversion is realized.

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## ABSTRACT

Ultra-low frequency vibration in ambient environment is an abundant renewable energy source. Corresponding energy harvesters have attracted increasing attention from both academic and industrial worlds. In this paper, a rotational electromagnetic energy harvester (EMEH) and a translational EMEH are combined into a spring pendulum system, thus forming a dual EMEH, in which internal resonance phenomenon is triggered to result in significantly enhanced energy harvesting efficiency. The spring pendulum system exhibits robustness and stability with the equivalent electromagnetic shunt damping constraints. Meanwhile, the tunable damping preserves the integrity of the system even the external excitation overloads. Experimental results demonstrate that the output power of the dual EMEHs can reach up to 0.9 W with a moving mass of 1.42 kg. Moreover, the swing angle of the pendulum can be reduced with the effect of internal resonance, which protects the main system and ensures its operation in harsh operating environment.

## 1. Introduction

Ocean wave oscillation is a typical ultra-low frequency vibration source, which contains abundant energy that can be harvested. Scruggs and Jacob [1] analyzed the considerable amount of power contained in ocean waves and stated the engineering challenges for harvesting energy. Aderinto and Li [2] assessed the ocean wave energy resource, reviewed commonly used wave energy extraction technologies, and discussed challenges for industrial application. On the same topic, Sun et al. [3] reviewed the existing enhancement techniques of various energy harvesters. As for the harvesting principles, the piezoelectric energy harvester (PEH) [4], the electromagnetic energy harvester (EMEH) [5], the triboelectric nanogenerators (TENG) [6], and various combinations of the three kinds of harvesters [7] with proper interface circuit

[8] were extensively exploited and widely used by both researchers and industrial practitioners. Different structural design and optimization methods are proposed to reach high efficiency of ultra-low frequency vibration energy harvesting, including the quasi-zero-stiffness (QZS) technique, multistable energy harvesters, pendulum structures, etc.

QZS technique is one of the most researched topics recently for various applications including vibration isolation [9–12]. QZS-based energy harvesting [13,14] recently emerged as a hot topic, such as bio-inspired QZS energy harvesters [15,16], bi-objective QZS designs with simultaneous vibration control and energy harvesting function [17], etc. The latter was reviewed by Chen et al. [18], commenting on different bi-objective QZS designs realized in recent years. Multistable vibration energy harvester is another hot research topic for ultra-low frequency energy harvesting. Corresponding research ranges from monostable systems to bistable, tristable, and multistable systems. The

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### Nomenclature

DAS	Data acquisition station
DOF	Degree-of-freedom
EMEH	Electromagnetic energy harvester
FFT	Fast Fourier transform
PEH	Piezoelectric energy harvester
QZS	Quasi-zero-stiffness
TENG	Triboelectric nanogenerators

main purpose is to ensure effective operation of the harvesters subjected to ultra-low frequency excitations. In this regard, Fan et al. [19] designed a monostable system with special magnet arrangement, which can effectively lower the PEH response to a lower frequency range. Erturk and Inman [20] proposed a bistable Duffing oscillator to obtain high-energy orbits without resonance consideration. Zhou et al. [21–23] designed several bio-inspired bow-type bistable PEHs, with corresponding effective low working frequency verified by experiments. Liu et al. [24] developed a bistable nonlinear stiffness identification method to predict and enhance the system working performance. A broadband tristable energy harvester was also modeled and experimentally verified [25]. While most above harvesters were designed in symmetric structural form, the asymmetric type bistable [26] and tristable energy harvesters [27] were also analyzed, and corresponding high-energy orbits were compared with the symmetric structures. For multistable energy harvesters, Zhou et al. [28,29] reviewed the state-of-art progress in modeling principles, performance enhancement, and design methods. Alternative designs without external magnets [30], calculating methods of magnetic force [31], multistable energy harvesters with rolling magnets [32], and pendulum [33] were also considered in view of enhancing the performance of multistable energy harvesters. Recently, more diversified energy harvesting structures were proposed to harvest the ultra-low frequency vibration energy. For example, Song et al. [34] proposed two tandem cylinder PEHs to harvest water flow energy. With a gravity-driven roller, Zhao et al. [35] used a bio-inspired structure to cope with the ultra-low frequency vibration energy, and used the harvested energy to power ocean environment monitoring sensors. Shen et al. [36] used inerter-based EMEH to mitigate the vibration of a bridge stay cable, and achieve simultaneous vibration energy harvesting in the system. Tan et al. [37] proposed a string-suspended rotor to implement the frequency up-conversion mechanism that leads to a significant enhancement of energy harvesting efficiency. Ma et al. [38] leverage the magnets-enabled snap-through phenomenon to achieve the vibration-rotation modulation.

Moreover, the ultra-low natural frequency feature of the pendulum-like structure is potentially conducive to ultra-low frequency vibration energy harvesting. Typical designs include planar pendulum [39], spherical pendulum [40], double pendulum [41], etc. Wang [42] reviewed the research progress on pendulum-based energy harvesters. Design types, modulation mechanisms, transducer selections, characteristics, performance, and applications were objectively compared among different pendulum harvesters. Meanwhile, internal resonance principle has been widely investigated to reach a wider working band and higher frequency range for energy harvesting. Related works include Chen and Jiang [43] which utilized the internal resonance phenomenon to fabricate an EMEH with snap-through nonlinearity. Clamped-clamped beams with a mounted oscillator [44] were regarded as a typical case for internal resonance harvesting. Cantilever pendulum structure [45] was also proved effective in collecting multi-direction excited vibration energy. Double beams were utilized to achieve internal resonance in which the energy of the main beam can be transferred into the auxiliary beam [46,47].

Combining the pendulum and internal resonance phenomenon, the

spring pendulum proves to be an effective design for ultra-low frequency vibration energy harvesting. Compared with aforementioned beam-based internal resonance harvesters, a simple spring pendulum, as a nonlinear structure, can be applied in real engineering sites more easily. Corresponding modeling and response characteristics have been proposed and investigated for a long time. For example, Kane and Kahn [48] obtained the resonance boundary conditions and studied characteristics of resonant oscillations. Narkis [49] and Miles [50] analyzed the spring pendulum stability and verified the 1:2 internal resonance phenomenon. Broucke and Baxa [51] gave the periodic solutions of a spring pendulum with periodic orbits methods. Gitterman [52] investigated the spring pendulum system response with parametric excitation and external force. Recently, some new modeling and analysis methods for spring pendulum motion solutions are still emerging. Baleanu et al. [53] used the fractional model to describe the spring pendulum motion, which can excavate more hidden information of the physical world. Abohmer et al. [54] analyzed the steady-state asymptotic motion response and stability with both piezoelectric and electromagnetic devices. Souda et al. [55] explored the energy distribution of the spring pendulum system to propose the global characteristics of the spring pendulum energy exchange by considering a great number of trajectories. Amer et al. [56,57] used the multiple scales method to explore the chaotic response of a circular spring pendulum with harmonic excitation. Even for a simple nonlinear system, the uncertain dynamics deserve further exploration.

Referring to energy harvesting with the spring pendulum, more and more research has been conducted currently due to its ultra-low frequency applicability. Kecik and Borowiec [58] explored the auto-parametric response of a pendulum with vertical excitation, and proposed simulation results for various pendulum motion types. Mitura and Kecik [59,60] analyzed the parameters that influence the energy harvesting efficiency and conducted experiments to verify the theoretical results. Jiang et al. [61] evaluated the improvement of bandwidth with the analysis of the nonlinear behavior. To harvest the ultra-low frequency vibration energy, Wu et al. [62] designed a multi-direction spring pendulum like PEH by capitalizing on 1:2 internal resonance, then a 1:2:6 frequency up-conversion mechanism [63] was used to obtain higher energy harvesting efficiency. The spring pendulum system with internal resonance phenomenon can also be regarded as a rotational mutation of the translational dynamic vibration absorber (DVA). He et al. [64] used multiple scales method to obtain the bi-objective of vibration control and energy harvesting with precise results. Kecik and Mitura [65–67] then studied the pendulum absorber with simultaneous energy harvesting function, corresponding experiments were conducted to verify the energy harvesting performance without decreasing the vibration reduction effectiveness.

With the aforementioned spring pendulum based energy harvesters, the increase in the effective bandwidth is clear, and the vibration mitigation performance can also be guaranteed with properly designed structural parameters. However, the achieved harvested energy is still at the milliwatt level (mW), which can only be used to power some low-power sensors. When used for more power-demanding electrical appliances, the harvested energy is usually not enough, particularly for the offshore operating environment with limited power supply. To tackle this problem, this paper proposes dual EMEHs with internal resonance to harvest ultra-low frequency (lower than 1 Hz) vibration energy. The contribution of this work is mainly twofold: (1) realization of high output power up to Watt level with high energy density; (2) containment of the pendulum swing amplitude to a relatively low level.

The proposed system is designed for ocean wave energy harvesting, particularly for the buoy internal installation. The ocean wave excitation features ultra-low frequency and large amplitude for which the proposed pendulum structure can then take the best advantage. Moreover, the spring pendulum system is shown to be effective in improving the output frequency without complex structural design. In the following sections, the design and the modeling of the proposed mechanism are illustrated

in Section 2. Experimental setup and parameter identifications are given in Section 3. Then the results are discussed in Section 4. Section 5 summarizes the main conclusions.

## 2. Design and modeling

In this section, the proposed dual EMEHs in a spring pendulum structure with internal resonance alongside an EMEH in a single pendulum structure used as a comparison are illustrated. Corresponding models with rotational damping are established to predict the two kinds of motion trajectories and output voltage.

### 2.1. EMEH with internal resonance

A rotational EMEH and a translational EMEH are combined in a spring pendulum structure as shown in Fig. 1(a). The rotational EMEH, later labeled as  $H_1$ , is composed of a gearbox for frequency up-conversion, a permanent magnet DC motor that is used for electricity generation, and a tunable potentiometer for changing the load resistance. The rotating shaft of the gearbox is connected to the pendulum axis so that the swing energy can be harvested into the rotational EMEH.

The translational EMEH, later labeled as  $H_2$ , is a specifically designed electromagnetic transducer with opposing magnet pairs to achieve maximum transduction factor. The number of opposing magnet pairs is optimized as four to reach the highest electromechanical coupling performance with the structural parameter's limitation [68]. The coil is fixed at the pendulum axis, while the opposing magnet bar is connected with the pendulum axis through a spring, while the other end is hanging a counter-weight mass. Therefore, the dual EMEHs contain two energy sources,  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ , which can be simplified as a two degree-of-freedom (DOF) system as shown in Fig. 2(a). With a horizontal excitation, the swing pendulum drives  $H_1$  to rotate and  $H_2$  to vibrate in the radial direction. As a result, both EMEHs can harvest the ultra-low frequency vibration energy, whose efficiency can be maximized through a proper tuning of the natural frequencies of the system by adjusting the swing pendulum and spring-mass parameters.

Moreover, the comparative single pendulum harvester in Fig. 1(b) is a one DOF system with the magnets and coils of  $H_2$  fixed together. With an external excitation, the system will only swing so that  $H_1$  can work and harvest energy, but  $H_2$  can be regarded as a proof mass of swinging  $H_1$ . Without the participation of  $H_2$ , the measured response results allow the identification of  $H_1$  parameters.

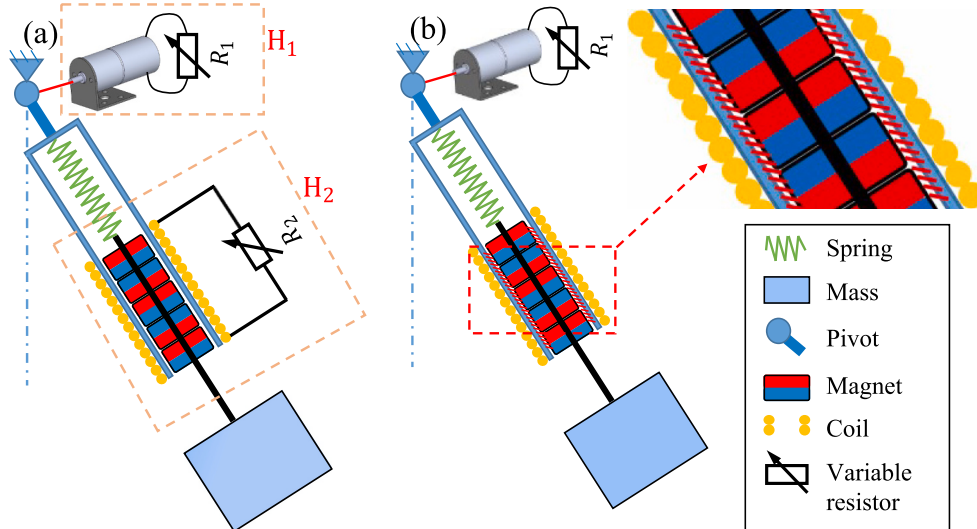


Fig. 1. Structure design with a rotational EMEH ( $H_1$ ) and translational EMEH ( $H_2$ ): (a) Dual EMEHs in spring pendulum structure; (b) one harvester ( $H_1$ ) with single pendulum response only.

### 2.2. Theoretical analysis

Both aforementioned designs can be modeled by the simplified motion models shown in Fig. 2. Since the coil weight of  $H_2$  is non-negligible when compared with the weight of the spring-mass oscillator, the weight of  $H_2$  coil and the bonded tube is regarded as a concentrated mass  $m_1$ .  $m_2$  is the equivalent weight of the spring-mass oscillator. The coordinate origin is selected at the rotating shaft in the swing plane.  $c_1$  and  $c_2$  are the equivalent damping coefficients of rotational  $H_1$ , and the translational  $H_2$ , respectively.  $k$  is the spring stiffness of translational vibration system,  $l_1$  is the distance between the origin and  $m_1$  center of gravity, which is a constant for both static and dynamic cases.  $l_2$  denotes the distance between the origin and  $m_2$  with unstretched spring. The distance between the origin and  $m_2$  is changing due to the spring deformation, denoted by  $r$ . The swing angle is denoted by  $\theta$ , and the whole system is excited by a displacement  $s$  in the horizontal direction.

The degenerative one DOF system can be modeled with a simple swing pendulum as shown in Fig. 2(b). The concentrated mass  $m$  is calculated by adding up  $m_1$  and  $m_2$ . The distance  $l$  can be measured between the origin and the mass center of gravity. The remaining symbols are the same as the spring pendulum system. To obtain the system response under different inputs of both kinds of designs, the second kind of Lagrange's equation is used:

$$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{q}} \right) - \frac{\partial T}{\partial q} + \frac{\partial U}{\partial q} + \frac{\partial D}{\partial \dot{q}} = 0 \quad (1)$$

where  $T$  is the kinetic energy,  $U$  is the potential energy,  $D$  is the dissipative power,  $q$  is the independent coordinates necessary to describe the system's motion at any instant. The detailed expression of each symbol in both systems will be deduced in the next subsections.

#### 2.2.1. Damped spring pendulum

For the damped spring pendulum system in Fig. 2(a), the kinetic energy, potential energy, and dissipative power can be written as:

$$T = \frac{1}{2} m_1 \left[ (\dot{x}_1 - \dot{s})^2 + \dot{y}_1^2 \right] + \frac{1}{2} m_2 \left[ (\dot{x}_2 - \dot{s})^2 + \dot{y}_2^2 \right] \quad (2)$$

$$U = m_1 g y_1 + m_2 g y_2 + \frac{1}{2} k \left( r + \frac{m_2 g}{k_2} \right)^2 \quad (3)$$

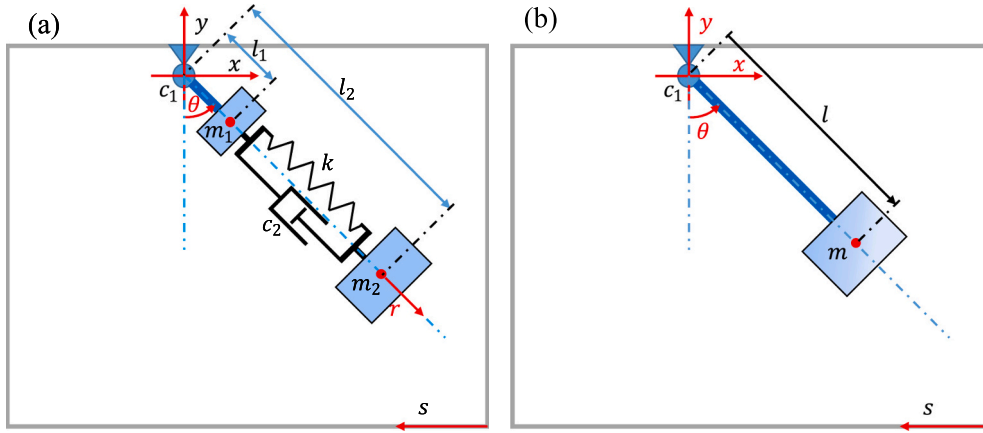


Fig. 2. Simplified motion model: (a) Spring pendulum; (b) single pendulum.

$$D = \frac{1}{2}c_1\dot{\theta}^2 + \frac{1}{2}c_2\dot{r}^2 \quad (4)$$

where the positions of  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  in Cartesian coordinate can be described as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} x_1 &= l_1 \sin\theta, \quad \dot{x}_1 = l_1 \cos\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} \\ y_1 &= -l_1 \cos\theta, \quad \dot{y}_1 = l_1 \sin\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} \\ x_2 &= (l_2 + r) \sin\theta, \quad \dot{x}_2 = (l_2 + r) \cos\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} + \dot{r} \cdot \sin\theta \\ y_2 &= -(l_2 + r) \cos\theta, \quad \dot{y}_2 = (l_2 + r) \sin\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} - \dot{r} \cdot \cos\theta \end{aligned}$$

For the coordinate  $\theta$ , taking all the variables and relations into Eq. (1) yields:

$$\begin{aligned} \left[ m_1 l_1^2 + m_2 (l_2 + r)^2 \right] \ddot{\theta} - [m_1 l_1 + m_2 (l_2 + r)] \cos\theta \ddot{s} + 2m_2 (l_2 + r) \dot{r} \dot{\theta} \\ + m_1 g l_1 \sin\theta + m_2 g (l_2 + r) \sin\theta + c_1 \dot{\theta} = 0 \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

For the coordinate  $r$ , taking all the variables and relations into Eq. (1) yields:

$$m_2 \ddot{r} - m_2 \dot{s} \sin\theta - m_2 (l_2 + r) \dot{\theta}^2 + kr + m_2 g - m_2 g \cos\theta + c_2 \dot{r} = 0 \quad (6)$$

The detailed relations derivation of variables are shown in Appendix A. The final explicit expressions of Eqs. (5) and (6) are:

$$\ddot{\theta} = \frac{1}{m_1 l_1^2 + m_2 (l_2 + r)^2} \left\{ [m_1 l_1 + m_2 (l_2 + r)] \cos\theta \ddot{s} - 2m_2 (l_2 + r) \dot{r} \dot{\theta} - m_1 g l_1 \sin\theta - m_2 g (l_2 + r) \sin\theta - c_1 \dot{\theta} \right\} \quad (7)$$

$$\ddot{r} = \dot{s} \sin\theta + (l_2 + r) \dot{\theta}^2 - \frac{k}{m_2} r + g(\cos\theta - 1) - \frac{c_2}{m_2} \dot{r} \quad (8)$$

### 2.2.2. Damped single pendulum

For the degenerated single pendulum system in Fig. 2(b), only one DOF exists with the moving mass  $m = m_1 + m_2$ . Corresponding kinetic energy, potential energy, and the dissipative power can be written as:

$$T = \frac{1}{2} m \left[ (\dot{x} - \dot{s})^2 + \dot{y}^2 \right] \quad (9)$$

$$U = -mgl \cos\theta \quad (10)$$

$$D = \frac{1}{2} c_1 \dot{\theta}^2 \quad (11)$$

where the positions of  $m$  in Cartesian coordinate can be written as:

$$\begin{aligned} x &= l \sin\theta, \quad \dot{x} = l \cos\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} \\ y &= -l \cos\theta, \quad \dot{y} = l \sin\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} \end{aligned}$$

With the detailed relations derivation in Appendix B, Eq. (1) can be transferred as:

$$m l^2 \ddot{\theta} - m l \cos\theta \cdot \dot{s} + m g l \sin\theta + c_1 \dot{\theta} = 0 \quad (12)$$

The explicated expressions of Eq. (12) can be written as:

$$\ddot{\theta} = \frac{1}{l} \cos\theta \cdot \ddot{s} - \frac{g}{l} \sin\theta - \frac{c_1}{m l^2} \dot{\theta} \quad (13)$$

## 3. Experimental setup and parameter identifications

To verify the energy harvesting performance and theoretical analyses, a prototype of dual EMEHs is fabricated and settled on an ultra-low frequency vibration exciter for the test. Corresponding model parameter identification process is also elaborated in this section.

### 3.1. Experimental setup

The experimental system is built as shown in Fig. 3 to implement the design model in Fig. 1. A linear motor with the capacity of providing ultra-low frequency motion is used as the exciter. Relative motor driver and control box are used to control the excitation types.

A prototype with dual EMEHs in a spring pendulum structure is fabricated and fixed on a holder, which is connected with the mover of the linear motor. External resistors  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  are used to tune the matching resistance and count the output power of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . As shown in Fig. 3(b), the stator of rotational  $H_1$  is fixed on the stator, while the rotor is connected with the pendulum rotating shaft. An angular displacement sensor is also bonded with the pendulum rotating shaft to measure the pendulum swing angle. The coil of the translational  $H_2$  bonded with the pendulum, and the magnets bar plays as part of moving mass  $m_2$  of the spring-mass oscillator system in Fig. 3(c). A laser displacement sensor is fixed on the coil that also contributes to  $m_1$ . After tuning the relative position between the magnets bar and the coil to ensure proper coupling when the spring is stretched with gravity, two limit circular plates in Fig. 3(d) are used to restrict the vibration amplitude so that  $H_2$  operates in an effective range. The two displacement sensors, and the external resistors  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  are connected to a data acquisition station (DAS) so that the response and the output power can be measured. The related converter parameters of both  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  are listed in Table 1.

### 3.2. Model parameter identification

The hand-measured structural parameters usually contain accumulated errors for the performance evaluation. The parameter identification based on the sensor-measured signals can highly improve the reliability of the proposed model. For the dual EMEHs, the natural frequency, matching resistance, and corresponding damping coefficients of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  are dominant parameters to be identified.

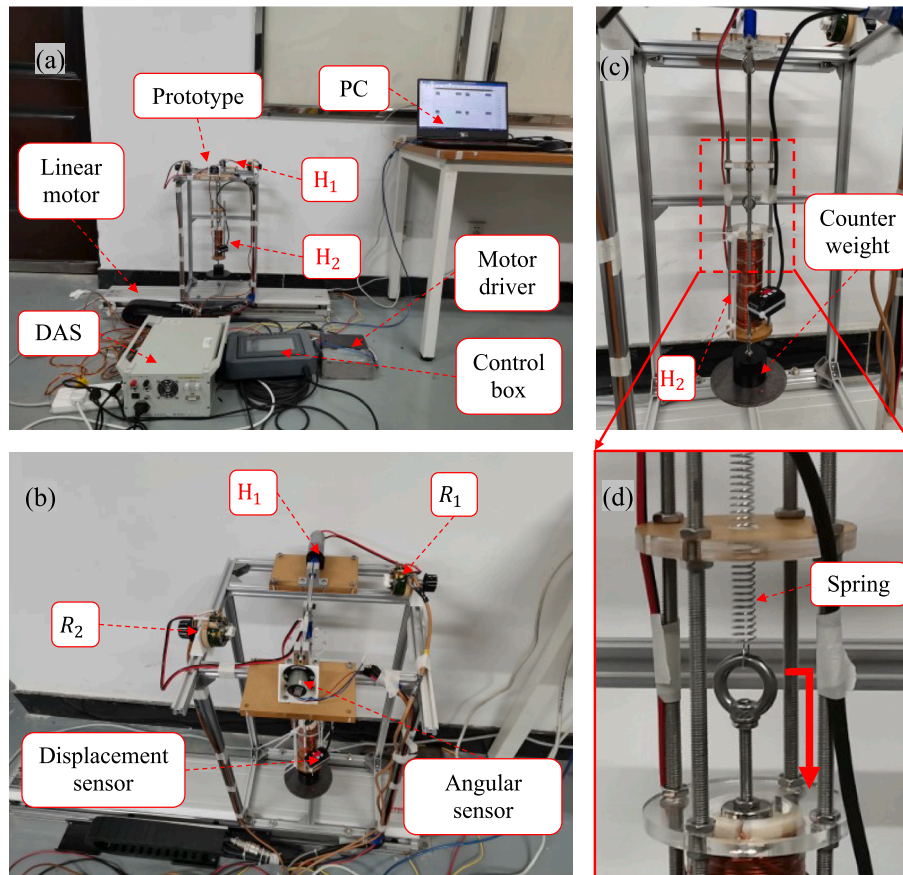


Fig. 3. Experimental setup: (a) Overview; (b) rotational EMEH H<sub>1</sub>; (c) linear EMEH H<sub>2</sub>; (d) detailed spring of H<sub>2</sub>.

**Table 1**  
Converter parameters of H<sub>1</sub> and H<sub>2</sub>.

Converter	Parameter	Value
H <sub>1</sub>	Length	53.8 mm
	Diameter	24.4 mm
	Gear ratio	78
	Stator resistance	37.5 Ω
	Speed constant	4.9 mV/rpm
H <sub>2</sub>	Length	120 mm
	Diameter	32 mm
	Coil resistance	1.5 Ω
	Transduction factor	6.522 V•s/m

### 3.2.1. Natural frequency

The natural frequency of the swinging pendulum and the spring mass oscillator can be easily obtained through the free vibration response curves with both harvester coils set in open circuit conditions. When the second DOF is blocked by adding cable ties to bond the magnet bar and the coil as shown in Fig. 3(c), the pendulum swinging free response curve can be obtained as shown in Fig. 4(a). Similarly, when the rotational shaft is fixed to restrict swinging, an initial displacement excitation will trigger the free vibration response of the second DOF. The corresponding curve is plotted in Fig. 4(b). Both free vibration response curves can be described as the equation below:

$$\theta(t) | r(t) = e^{-\zeta\omega_n t} (A_1 \cos \sqrt{1 - \zeta^2} \omega_n t + A_2 \sin \sqrt{1 - \zeta^2} \omega_n t) \quad (14)$$

Both curves in Fig. 4 show the standard free vibration response characteristics so that the natural frequency can be identified with the

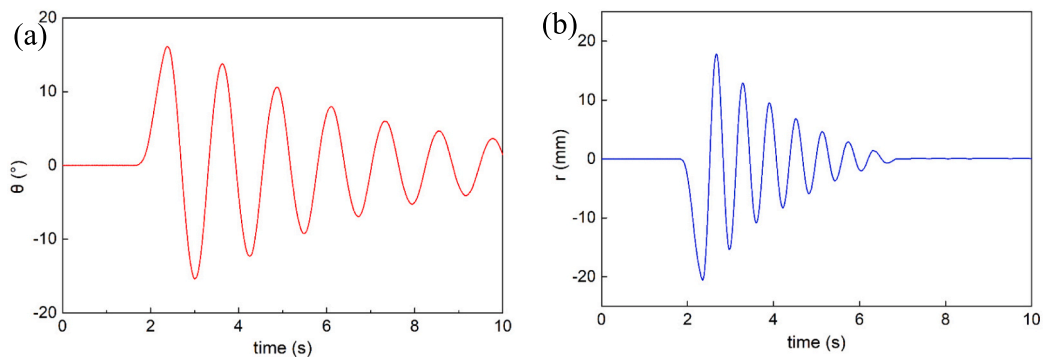


Fig. 4. Natural frequency identification of: (a) H<sub>1</sub> in single pendulum system; (b) H<sub>2</sub> in spring pendulum system with no swinging.

FFT of the obtained signals. The FFT results show that the pendulum swinging natural frequency is 0.8 Hz, and the spring mass oscillator system's natural frequency is 1.6 Hz. The natural frequency ratio is 1:2 that satisfies the internal resonance requirement as discussed in the literature.

### 3.2.2. Matching resistance

To achieve maximum output power, the connected external resistances of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  require optimal matching. Theoretically, the optimal external resistance for maximum power [69] equals the internal resistance of EMEH coils. However, in real applications, the coil with a closed loop circuit will generate considerable heat. Therefore, the optimal matching resistance is larger than the internal resistance due to the influence of temperature and other related factors.

Prior to the starting of the optimal matching resistance test, the coil internal resistances of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  are measured by a precision resistance instrument. The internal resistance of  $H_1$  is 37.5  $\Omega$ , and that of  $H_2$  is 1.5  $\Omega$ . Then, the output power of  $H_1$  with variable external resistance is measured with the linear motor under the excitation frequency  $f = 1$  Hz and peak-to-peak amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m. The variable output power curve of  $H_1$  with different external resistance is plotted in Fig. 5(a), which shows the maximum output power appears when external  $R_1 \approx 45$   $\Omega$ . Moreover, the output power of  $H_2$  with variable external resistance is measured with the linear motor under the excitation frequency  $f = 2.5$  Hz and amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m. The variable output power curve of  $H_2$  with different external resistance is plotted in Fig. 5(b), which shows the maximum output power appears when external  $R_2 \approx 2.5$   $\Omega$ . The matching resistance of both EMEHs is slightly larger than their internal resistance, which is consistent with the above analysis.

### 3.2.3. Rotational damping coefficient

With the assumption that the internal friction of the gearbox is negligible, the rotational damping coefficient can be regarded to vary linearly with the circuit impedance. The rotational damping coefficient  $c_1$  is calculated using the above selected optimal matching resistance in the single pendulum configuration to avoid the influence of internal energy alternation. The second DOF is blocked with the same methods as the pendulum natural frequency test. The external resistance  $R_1$  is set at the matching resistance value of 45  $\Omega$ . The excitation frequency of the linear exciter is set at  $f = 1$  Hz, and the excitation amplitude is varied discretely from  $A = 0.025$  m to  $A = 0.2$  m. Then, the swing response of the single pendulum is measured by the angular displacement sensor.

With the measured structural parameters  $m = 1.4234$  kg and  $l = 0.344$  m and the varied excitation amplitude, the differential equation Eq. (13) can be solved through a numerical calculation software. The swing angle in time domain with excitation amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m and the swing angle amplitude with different excitation amplitudes are measured and plotted in Fig. 6 to compare with the simulation results. After tuning the damping coefficient  $c_1$  in the calculation, the most

suitable  $c_1$  fitting the measurement is searched out at 0.3684 N•m•s/rad. As shown in Fig. 6(a), the time-domain response curve agrees well with the simulated curve in both amplitudes and phases. The measured swing angle amplitude curve with varied excitation amplitude  $A$  in Fig. 6(b) is also consistent with the simulation results. Some internal friction and gear clearance effects may result in the deviation of several individual situations, which is also visible on the curves.

### 3.2.4. Translational damping coefficient

For the energy harvester  $H_2$ , the structure is a typical linear electromagnetic shunt damper for which the damping coefficient should follow linear variation. Since the matching resistance is small and the equivalent damping is rather high, free vibration response cannot last for several periods for the damping coefficient identification. The translational damping coefficient  $c_2$  is calculated using the above selected optimal matching resistance when  $H_2$  is under force excitation. The linear exciter in this study can only function in horizontal direction so that  $H_2$  cannot be excited directly. Therefore, both swinging and translational DOFs are released in this test that the internal resonance occurs. The total mass  $m$  in the last rotational damping coefficient test is divided into  $m_1$  and  $m_2$ . With the roughly measured effective length  $l_1$  and  $l_2$ , the masses and lengths satisfy the following relationship:

$$m_1 l_1 + m_2 l_2 = (m_1 + m_2) l \quad (15)$$

In light of Eq. (15), the calculation runs with slightly ratified structural parameters. The spring stiffness  $k$  can be obtained by measuring the deformation and the changed hanging mass. The damping coefficient  $c_2$  can be roughly estimated by referring to the calibrated transduction factor ( $K_t \approx 6.522$  V•s/m) in Ref. [68].

With updated parameters, the damping coefficient  $c_2$  is identified as 10.6 N•s/m, which is very close to the calculated value based on the transduction factor. With the identified parameters, the measured results and calculated results in terms of rotational angle  $\theta$  variation with different amplitudes are in agreement as shown in Fig. 7(a) and (b). Note the measured translational displacement  $r$  variation results slightly deviate from the calculated results in Fig. 7(c) and (d). The observed difference between the measurement and calculation can be caused by factors like the air gap as well as the friction effect. Indeed, a 2 mm air gap exists between the EMEH magnets bar and the coil central hole. The laser displacement sensor is assembled parallelly to the EMEH magnets bar as shown in Fig. 3(c). However, the expected perfect parallel arrangement may not be maintained due to the air gap when the spring-mass oscillator is subjected to the centrifugal force, resulting to imprecise displacement measurement. Moreover, when the pendulum swings, the magnet might hit the internal surrounding area of the coil, thus generating contact or frictional forces which also bring error between the experiment and calculation. This might explain that fact that the measured experimental results are lower than calculated ones. Having said that, quantified analysis on the influences of the above factors is

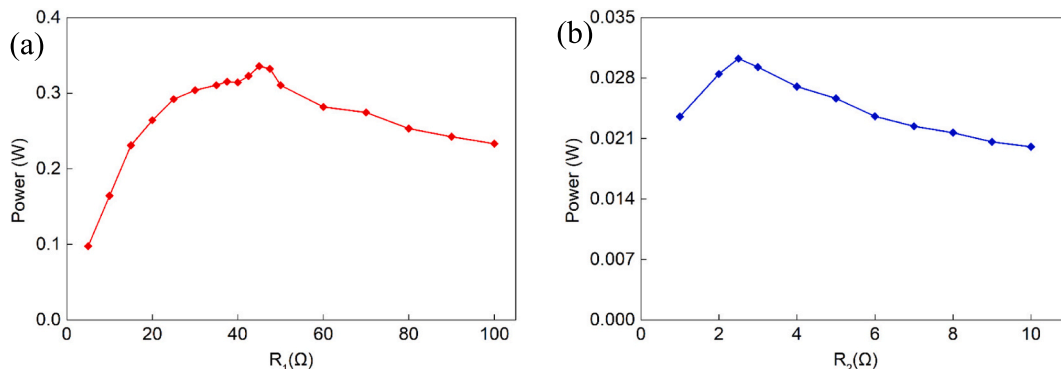


Fig. 5. Optimal external resistance matching for maximum output power of (a)  $H_1$  and (b)  $H_2$ .

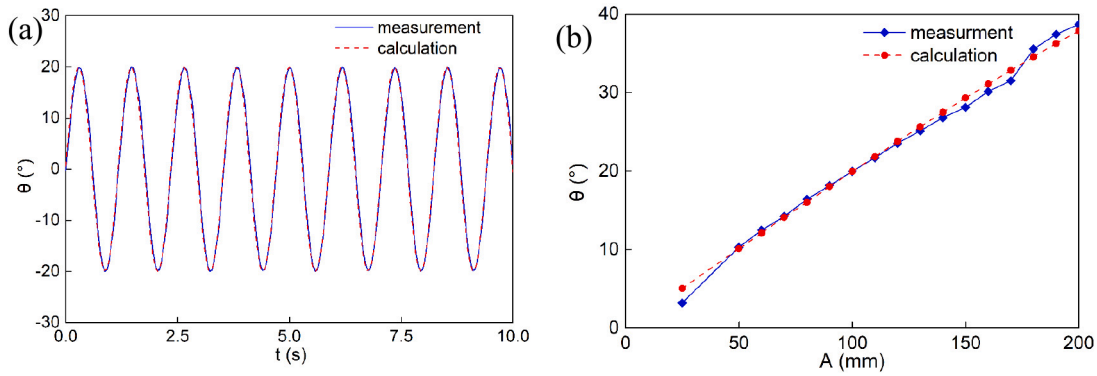


Fig. 6. Rotational damping coefficient  $c_1$  identification in single pendulum test: (a) Rotational angle  $\theta$  in time domain with the excitation amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m; (b) peak value of rotational angle  $\theta$  with different excitation amplitude  $A$ .

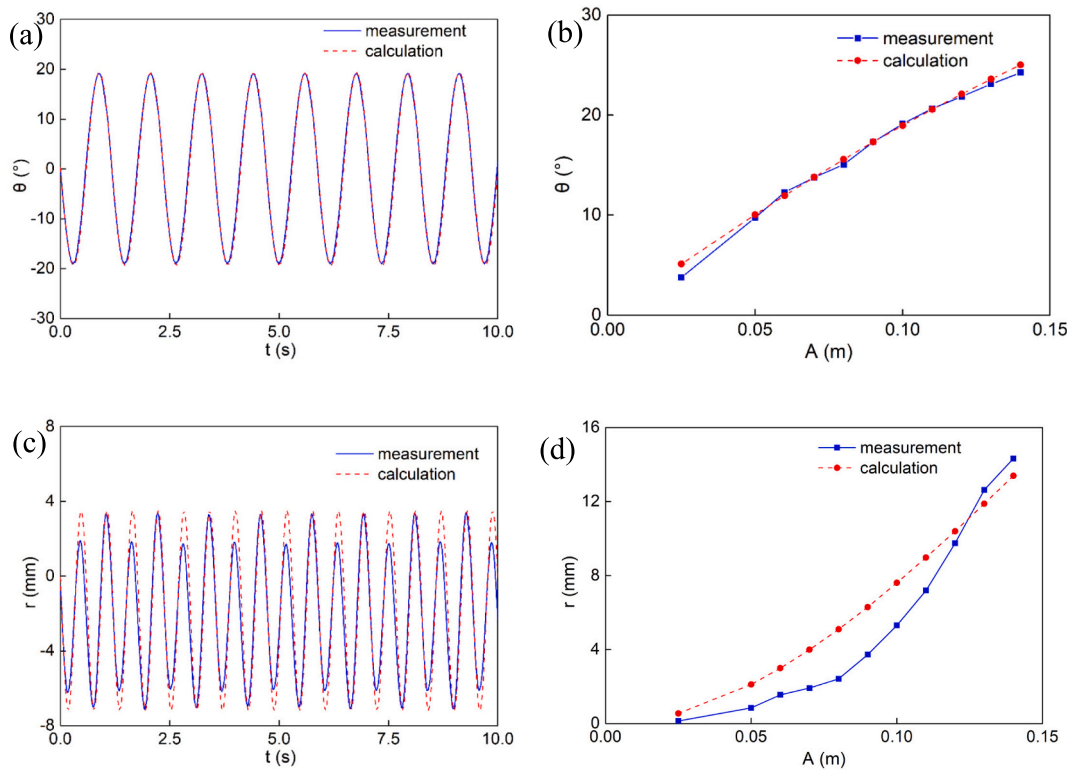


Fig. 7. Translational damping coefficient  $c_2$  identification of: (a) Rotational angle  $\theta$  in time domain with the excitation amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m; (b) peak value of rotational angle  $\theta$  with different excitation amplitude  $A$ ; (c) translational displacement  $r$  in time domain with the excitation amplitude  $A = 0.1$  m; (d) peak value of translational displacement  $r$  with different excitation amplitude  $A$ .

challenging, which deserves additional systematic work in the future.

The identified parameters of the proposed harvesters are verified with tests, and the key parameters are listed in Table 2.

Table 2  
Identified parameters of both systems.

System	Notation	Value
Single pendulum	$m$	1.4234 kg
	$l$	0.344 m
	$m_1$	0.6625 kg
	$m_2$	0.7609 kg
Spring pendulum	$l_1$	0.31 m
	$l_2$	0.3736 m
	$k$	80.9 N/m
	$c_1$	0.3684 N•m•s/rad
	$c_2$	10.6 N•s/m

#### 4. Experimental results and discussion

In this section, the excitation with constant acceleration and discrete sinusoidal frequency sweeping from 0.5 Hz to 5 Hz is conducted, and corresponding output power with both spring pendulum and single pendulum system is measured. Moreover, the excitation with constant sinusoidal frequency and varied amplitudes is also provided to reach the maximum output of the designed dual EMEHs.

##### 4.1. Output with constant acceleration

Based on the relationship between the sinusoidal displacement and acceleration, the constant acceleration (0.2 g) excitation curve can be drawn and imported into the linear motor driver. The spring pendulum system and single pendulum system are both measured to assess the

performance.

4.1.1. Spring pendulum system

The output voltage of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  with frequency-swept sinusoidal and constant acceleration excitation is shown in Fig. 8(a) and (b). The maximum output voltage appears around the pendulum swinging natural frequency (0.8 Hz ~ 0.9 Hz), further precisely identified as 0.85 Hz, which can be embodied in Fig. 8(c). The output voltage variation follows an increasing trend before 0.85 Hz before decreasing. An abnormal phenomenon occurs at 1.6 Hz, where the output voltage of  $H_1$  is smaller than the ones in its adjacent frequency bands, while the output voltage of  $H_2$  is larger. This is due to the energy transfer from the pendulum swinging to the spring mass oscillator as a result of the internal resonance phenomenon. The internal resonance phenomenon can be better seen through the output voltage comparison at 1.6 Hz in Fig. 8(a) and (b).

Under constant acceleration excitation, the output power curves of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  are plotted in Fig. 8(c) and 8(d). The maximum output power of  $H_1$  with 0.85 Hz excitation is around 398 mW, and the synchronous output power of  $H_2$  is around 350 mW. The total output power is 0.75 W, which is sufficient for powering some sensors and low-power-demanding electrical appliances. The frequency band of  $H_1$  is wider than that of  $H_2$  due to their frequency response characteristics. However,  $H_2$  can provide a double frequency output so that the frequency up-conversion can also be implemented. Moreover, the measured results match well with the calculated ones except for the lower peak value and narrower bandwidth. One plausible reason might again be the effect of the internal friction which causes lower response in the measured output power at peak and other frequencies as compared with the calculated results.

4.1.2. Single pendulum system

To compare the output performance with the above spring pendulum system, the output voltage and power of the degenerative one DOF swinging pendulum are also measured with identical excitation. As shown in Fig. 9(a), the maximum output power also locates at 0.85 Hz with a larger amplitude than that of spring pendulum system. It is worth noting that no internal resonance phenomenon exists with 1.6 Hz excitation. The maximum output power is around 0.45 W as shown in Fig. 9 (b), which is larger than that of  $H_1$  output in the spring pendulum system, but much smaller than that of the total output of  $H_1$  and  $H_2$  output in spring pendulum system. Therefore, the spring pendulum is capable of enhancing the energy harvesting performance of the single pendulum harvester. Similar to the calculated results of the spring pendulum system, the calculated results of the single pendulum possess a larger peak value when the internal friction is not considered.

4.2. Maximum output

To evaluate the maximum output power of the proposed dual EMEHs, both the spring pendulum system and single pendulum system are measured with the resonance frequency (0.85 Hz) and increasing excitation amplitudes.

4.2.1. Spring pendulum system

With the increasing excitation amplitudes, the output power of the spring pendulum system is extracted through the measured voltage as shown in Fig. 10. With the excitation amplitude of  $A = 150$  mm (acceleration is equal to 0.29 g), the output power is around 450 mW for both  $H_1$  and  $H_2$ . The total output power is around 900 mW, which reaches the level of Watt. Since the transduction factor is increasing with its dimension [3], large replaceable EMEHs would yield even higher harvesting performance. The output power of  $H_1$  is monotonically

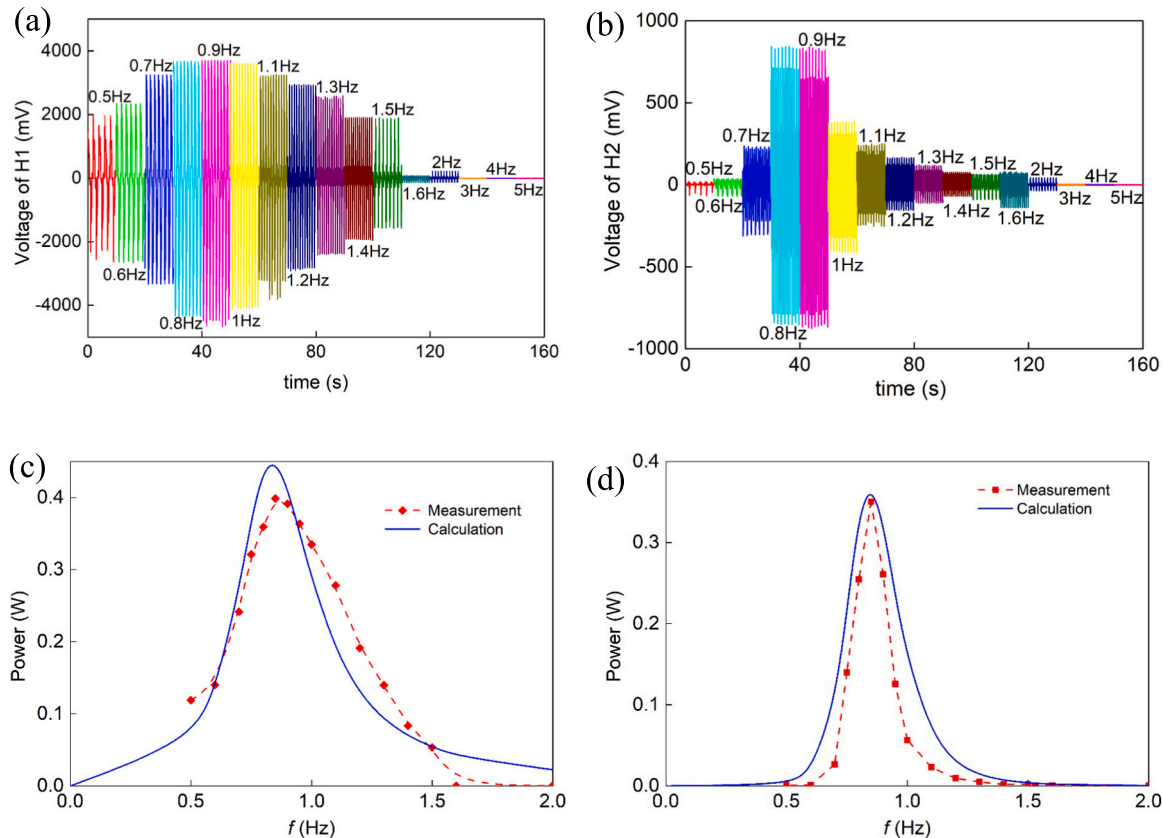


Fig. 8. Dual-EMEHs output in the spring pendulum system: (a) Output voltage of  $H_1$ ; (b) output voltage of  $H_2$ ; (c) output power of  $H_1$  with varied excitation frequencies, (d) output power of  $H_2$  with varied excitation frequencies.



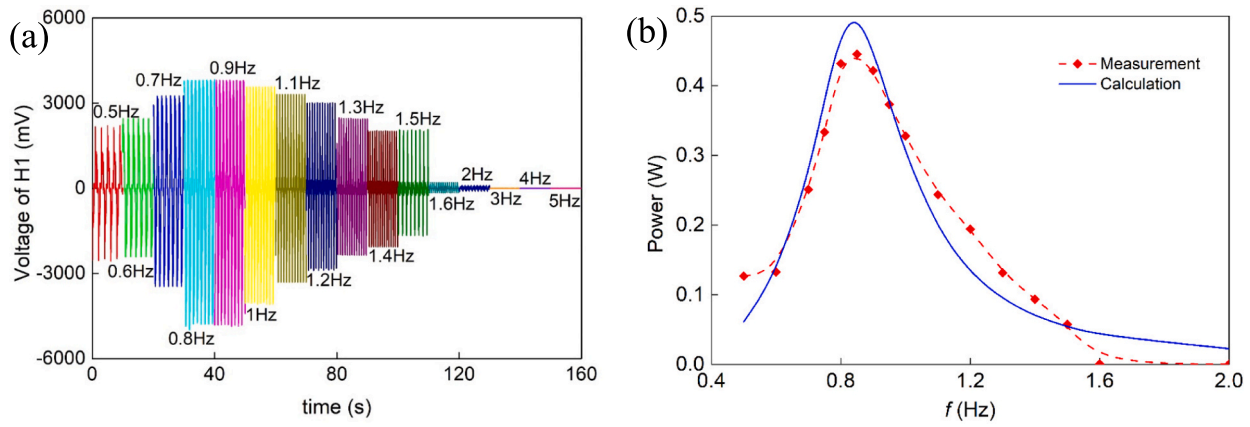


Fig. 9.  $H_1$  in single pendulum system: (a) Output voltage; (b) output power with varied excitation frequency.

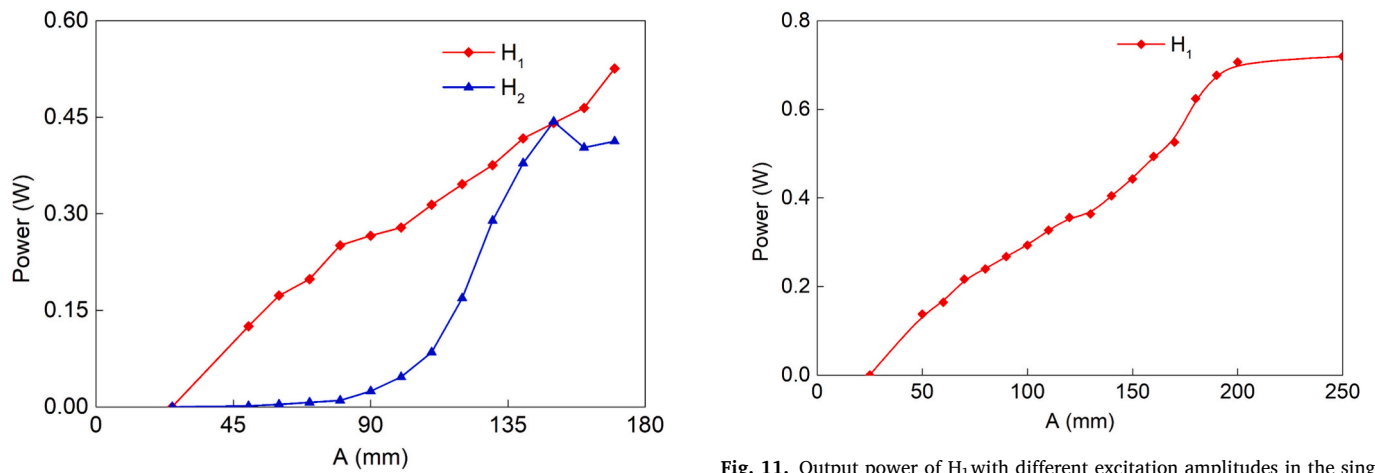


Fig. 10. Output power of dual-EMEHs with different excitation amplitudes in spring pendulum system under 0.85 Hz excitation.

increasing with the excitation amplitude  $A$ . However, the output power of  $H_2$  possesses a peak point at  $A \approx 150$  mm. The decreasing reason after the peak point is that the vibration amplitude exceeds its effective working range. Reaching  $A \approx 175$  mm, the vibration amplitude is too large so that impact occurs between the eyebolt and the limiting plates in Fig. 3(d). When  $A > 150$  mm, the output voltage of  $H_2$  is not a regular sinusoidal wave that can hardly be utilized by electrical appliances directly. Compared with a single pendulum system, the spring pendulum system with the added translational DOF contains lower stiffness, which contributes to the large working stroke of the added DOF. Therefore, the maximum excitation amplitude is limited to avoid impact damage to internal structures.

Moreover, this impact phenomenon can also trigger the overloading situation with large ocean wave excitation. To avoid possible destruction of the proposed harvester in this kind of harsh situation, the damping coefficient can be increased by decreasing tunable resistance  $R_1$  and  $R_2$ . The tuning strategy will decrease the output power but safeguard the equipment. After the harsh excitation is over, the external resistance can be tuned back to the optimal matching resistance.

#### 4.2.2. Single pendulum system

Similar to the constant acceleration excitation test, a comparative experiment of the single pendulum is conducted to reach its maximum output power with the increasing excitation amplitude. As shown in Fig. 11, the output power with  $A = 150$  mm is 450 mW, which is near the  $H_1$  output in the spring pendulum system but only half of the total

Fig. 11. Output power of  $H_1$  with different excitation amplitudes in the single pendulum system under 0.85 Hz excitation.

output power. If the excitation amplitude increases to  $A = 250$  mm, the output power will be increased to around 720 mW, which is larger than the  $H_1$  output in the spring pendulum system but still less than the total output power with even smaller excitation. Moreover, when the single pendulum is excited with larger amplitudes, the increase in the output power slows down. The reason is that the pendulum period increases with the swing angle due to the nonlinear variation relationship between them. Therefore, when the swing angle is sufficiently large ( $90^\circ, 180^\circ$ ), the pendulum response is not suitable for energy harvesting. The pendulum-like system strives to cross the unstable equilibrium point at  $180^\circ$ , then the swing motion is converted into a circular motion. This might inspire a different design in future research.

To the best of the authors' knowledge, the output power with the proposed dual EMEHs is larger than the ones from similar pendulum-like harvesters of the same magnitude reported in the literature. For better comparison, the power density that informs on the output power per unit volume is calculated. The total volume of the two converters is  $117.07 \text{ cm}^3$ , namely  $20.61 \text{ cm}^3$  for  $H_1$  and  $96.46 \text{ cm}^3$  for  $H_2$ , based on the dimensions tabulated in Table 1. To achieve a fair comparison, in the single pendulum system,  $H_2$  acts as a proof mass whose volume is also included in the estimation of the total volume. The calculated output power densities are  $7.68 \text{ mW/cm}^3$  and  $6.15 \text{ mW/cm}^3$  for the spring pendulum system and the single pendulum system, respectively. Therefore, compared with the single pendulum, the spring pendulum offers higher energy output, a wider frequency output bandwidth, and effective energy output with the vertical motion excitation arising from the ocean wave heave motion.

## 5. Conclusions

Dual EMEHs design in spring pendulum structure is proposed in this paper for ultra-low frequency vibration energy harvesting. A rotational EMEH is in charge of harvesting the swinging energy and a translational EMEH of the linear vibration energy. To identify the system variables and compare the performance, the degenerative single pendulum system with one DOF is used by locking the relative motion of the translational EMEH. Theoretical and numerical analyses are performed on both systems through system modeling based on Lagrange's equation.

Experiments on both systems are conducted to verify and compare their respective energy harvesting performances. The structural parameters are identified step by step with several pre-tests. Then, the excitations with constant acceleration (swept sinusoidal waves) and constant frequency (increasing amplitudes) are implemented on both systems to elucidate the harvested energy. Experimental results with constant acceleration excitation confirm the effectiveness of the spring pendulum structural design. Dual EMEHs in the spring pendulum system can harvest higher energy (0.75 W) than that in the single pendulum system (0.45 W) with a 0.2 g excitation. Moreover, the spring mass oscillator, vibrating due to internal resonance, can trigger the frequency up-conversion feature while suppressing the swing angle of the main system. The measured maximum output power is doubled when the single pendulum system is changed as the spring pendulum system under the excitation (0.85 Hz, 0.29 g). The tunable damping of the dual EMEHs can protect the equipment from destruction under harsh situations.

### CRediT authorship contribution statement

**Ruqi Sun:** Writing – original draft, Validation, Software,

### Appendix A. Motion equation of the damped spring pendulum

For the damped spring pendulum Lagrange equation derivation, with the coordinate decomposition and variables substitution, the total kinetic energy of  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  becomes:

$$T = \frac{1}{2}m_1 \left( l_1^2 \dot{\theta}^2 + \dot{s}^2 - 2l_1 \cos\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} \cdot \dot{s} \right) + \frac{1}{2}m_2 \left\{ (l_2 + r)^2 \dot{\theta}^2 + \dot{r}^2 + \dot{s}^2 - 2\dot{s} \left[ (l_2 + r) \cos\theta \cdot \dot{\theta} + \dot{r} \cdot \sin\theta \right] \right\} \quad (A1)$$

The gravitational and elastic potential energy can be written as:

$$U = -m_1 g l_1 \cos\theta - m_2 g (l_2 + r) \cos\theta + \frac{1}{2} k \left( r + \frac{m_2 g}{k_2} \right)^2 \quad (A2)$$

For the coordinate  $\theta$ , corresponding components in Eq. (1) can be deduced, as follows:

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \theta} = m_1 l_1^2 \dot{\theta} - m_1 l_1 \dot{s} \cos\theta + m_2 (l_2 + r)^2 \dot{\theta} - m_2 (l_2 + r) \dot{s} \cos\theta \quad (A3)$$

$$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{\theta}} \right) = \left[ m_1 l_1^2 + m_2 (l_2 + r)^2 \right] \ddot{\theta} - \left[ m_1 l_1 + m_2 (l_2 + r) \right] \cos\theta \dot{s} + \left[ m_1 l_1 + m_2 (l_2 + r) \right] \dot{s} \sin\theta + 2m_2 (l_2 + r) \dot{r} \dot{\theta} - m_2 \dot{r} \dot{s} \cos\theta \quad (A4)$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{\theta}} = \left[ m_1 l_1 + m_2 (l_2 + r) \right] \dot{s} \sin\theta - m_2 \dot{r} \dot{s} \cos\theta \quad (A5)$$

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial \theta} = m_1 g l_1 \sin\theta + m_2 g (l_2 + r) \sin\theta \quad (A6)$$

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial \dot{\theta}} = c_1 \dot{\theta} \quad (A7)$$

For the coordinate  $r$ , corresponding components in Eq. (1) can be deduced, as follows:

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{r}} = m_2 \dot{r} - m_2 \dot{s} \sin\theta \quad (A8)$$

$$\frac{d}{dt} \left( \frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{r}} \right) = m_2 \ddot{r} - m_2 \ddot{s} \sin\theta - m_2 \dot{s} \dot{\theta} \cos\theta \quad (A9)$$

Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Data curation, Conceptualization. **Shengxi Zhou:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Resources, Project administration, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis. **Zhongjie Li:** Writing – review & editing, Validation, Supervision, Methodology, Investigation, Funding acquisition, Formal analysis. **Li Cheng:** Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis.

### Declaration of competing interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

### Data availability

Data will be made available on request.

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$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial r} = m_2(l_2 + r)\dot{\theta}^2 - m_2\dot{s}\dot{\theta}\cos\theta \quad (\text{A10})$$

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial r} = kr + m_2g - m_2g\cos\theta \quad (\text{A11})$$

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial \dot{r}} = c_2\dot{r} \quad (\text{A12})$$

Then, taking Eqs. (A3) ~ (A12) into Eq. (1), the Lagrange equation of  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  can be obtained as Eqs. (5) and (6).

## Appendix B. Motion equation of the single spring pendulum

For the damped spring pendulum Lagrange equation derivation, the kinetic energy of total mass  $m$  can be expressed as:

$$T = \frac{1}{2}m(\dot{l}^2\dot{\theta}^2 + \dot{s}^2 - 2l\cos\theta \bullet \dot{\theta} \bullet \dot{s}) \quad (\text{B1})$$

Concerning the only variable  $\theta$ , corresponding components in Eq. (1) can be deduced as:

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{\theta}} = m\dot{l}^2\dot{\theta} - ml\cos\theta \bullet \dot{s} \quad (\text{B2})$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}\left(\frac{\partial T}{\partial \dot{\theta}}\right) = m\dot{l}^2\ddot{\theta} + m\dot{l}\sin\theta \bullet \dot{\theta} \bullet \dot{s} - ml\cos\theta \bullet \ddot{s} \quad (\text{B3})$$

$$\frac{\partial T}{\partial \theta} = m\dot{l}\sin\theta \bullet \dot{\theta} \bullet \dot{s} \quad (\text{B4})$$

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial \theta} = mg\dot{l}\sin\theta \quad (\text{B5})$$

$$\frac{\partial D}{\partial \dot{\theta}} = c_1\dot{\theta} \quad (\text{B6})$$

Then, taking Eqs.(B1) ~ (B6) into Eq. (1), the Lagrange equation of  $m$  can be obtained as Eq. (12).

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