Characteristics of small-scale gravity waves in the Arctic winter mesosphere

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Using the long-term datasets observed with an OH all-sky imager, a Fabry-Perot Interferometer at Resolute Bay observatory, Canada (74.7°N, 94.9°W), Microwave Limb Sounder and reanalysis data, we study the characteristics of small-scale gravity waves (GWs) with the horizontal wavelength less than 20 km in the Arctic winter mesosphere during 2014-2016. The observed small-scale GWs may be excited in the mesopause region, such as secondary wave generated by primary wave breaking, or a result of baroclinic instability processed in the stratosphere, and the interaction of planetary waves with the background winds. In addition, almost all of the small-scale GWs occurred in 2015/2016 anomalous winter, when both the strong El Nino-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and anomalous Quasi-biennial Oscillation (QBO) happened. Further studies are needed to explore the mechanism of GW excitation and propagation.

Keywords: Small-scale gravity waves, Arctic winter mesosphere, OH airglow imager, Background wind, ENSO