

Event Generator for R^3B

Master Thesis in Physics and Astronomy

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Gothenburg, Sweden 2015

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MASTER'S THESIS

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Gothenburg, Sweden 2015

EventGenerators
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FUFX03 - Master's thesis at Fundamental Physics
Master's Thesis No. FUFX03-15-??

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Printed by Chalmers Reproservice
Göteborg, Sweden 2015

Cover: The preferred decay modes for various nuclei at an excitation energy of 15 MeV, according to the code developed in this project. A red box signifies that the nucleus preferentially decays by emitting a proton, while a blue box means that neutron emission is the most common decay mode. Cyan boxes correspond to nuclei who deexcite primarily by emitting an alpha particle.

Abstract

This thesis describes various models implemented in a code to simulate nuclear reactions that go through a compound nucleus state, an intermediate excited state long lived enough that the nucleus has time to reach equilibrium between each subsequent decay. This implies that the decay is effectively characterized by macroscopic conserved quantities such as the excitation energy E^* and its spin J , in addition to the proton and neutron number, Z and N , respectively.

Specifically, the reactions under consideration are quasi-elastic scattering reactions, in which the collision is modeled as taking place between essentially free nucleons or clusters in the target and projectile. A Feynman diagram formalism is used to describe this first, fast knock-out reaction. The unaffected nucleons in the projectile will then form an excited compound nucleus, and the final reaction products are determined by decaying this compound system.

The codes to simulate the initial fast reaction and subsequent decay are separate programs. Results are presented regarding the preferred decay modes of nuclei with a given excitation energy, utilizing the decay part of the code. The results obtained for an excitation energy of 20 MeV were compared with the output of another program, TALYS, for nuclei with $Z \in [10,90]$ and $N \in [10,130]$.

Finally, the quasi-elastic scattering code and the compound nucleus deexcitation code were coupled in order to allow the code to be used as an event generator. The output of the event generator was used in simulations to benchmark the performance of the addback algorithm used to determine gamma energies and multiplicities from actual experimental data. The tentative results indicate that the addback algorithm is unable to identify the number of γ -rays emitted in the reaction, although further investigations are needed to arrive at a conclusive result.

Acknowledgements

This project would not have started or finished without Andreas Heinz, who both suggested the topic and provided support and supervision throughout this project.

The TALYS simulations, which were used to partially compare the output of the code, would obviously not have been possible without the TALYS team. In particular, I am indebted to Arjan Koning for being helpful over mail, providing me with the latest version of TALYS, and for adding a TALYS keyword that enabled me to do the comparison between the emission spectra of my program and TALYS.

Also good at alleviating technology related pain is Håkan Johansson, who (mostly) has kept the computers at the subatomic physics group happy.

On the few occasions when the computers weren't happy, I could usually blame Simon Lindberg, who – in addition to tormenting the intranet – inspired me to have a look at gamma-multiplicities and explained the addback routine used to analyze the energy deposits in the Crystal Ball detector.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the entire subatomic physics group for bearing with me and making me feel welcome – and the University for all the cake.

Stefan Buller, Gothenburg, June 2015

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1. Introduction

As a part of the construction of the international FAIR (Facility for Antiproton and Ion Research), the LAND experimental setup will be succeeded by the R³B (Reactions with Relativistic Radioactive Beams) setup, which includes a score of new detectors. During all stages of this process – from designing and calibrating the new individual detectors and the entire setup, to analyzing the data and extracting the underlying physics – simulations are or will be used.

The R³B experiment aims to study nuclear physics, in particular the properties of exotic nuclei far from the valley of stability [1]. The experiments will be performed with radioactive beams, and the aim is to be able to determine the complete kinematics of the reaction. We will here describe a generic experiment of this kind.

The radioactive beam impinges on a target surrounded by detectors. In the case of a reaction at the target – a so called *event* – the reaction products are to be identified by the experimental setup. This is done by recording where they hit the detector, when they hit the detectors (which allows detector output to be attributed to individual events, which yields the initial and final momentum); how much energy they deposit in the detectors (yielding the charge); and their deflection in a magnetic field, which gives their charge-to-mass ratio, and thus their mass.

That being said, the identification procedure outlined above is a simplification. Complications arise from several factors: the reaction products may decay in-flight, they may be deflected by interactions with air, or a detector. This is why simulations are used, specifically Monte-Carlo simulations, since the underlying physics is non-deterministic.

While simulations are used to study how a given reaction product propagates throughout the experimental setup, they are not necessarily needed for the actual reactions at the target, since the purpose of the experiment is to investigate those. In many cases, it is enough to simulate particles with specified initial momenta – matching the kinematic constraints of the reaction – and see how they propagate through the experimental setup, which should be able to identify them even if they are not the result of an actual reaction. Often, detector efficiencies are evaluated by simulating individual particles and their propagation through the setup, see for example Simon Lindberg, 2013 [2]. This may lead to an overestimation of the detector efficiencies, since, in general, more than one particle is produced in each event, which makes the analysis more complicated. The current simulation software (specifically, GGLAND [3], see section 1.2) can generate multiple particles sharing momentum according to a phase-space distribution, but this does

not take the matrix element into account, or internal degrees of freedom in the nuclei. The latter is crucial, since nuclear physics is all about these internal degrees of freedom.

1.1. Event Generator for R^3B

As briefly mentioned in the previous section, an experimental event is the result of a reaction between the target and a projectile. An *event generator*, on the other hand, is in this context a code that mimics certain reactions as part of a larger simulation code. The output of such an event generator would be final state momenta and energies of the reacting particles, which can then be propagated through the simulated experimental setup by another code.

In principle, one can think of an event generator that exactly simulates the reactions at the target and returns a final state with a probability mimicing the experiment. Considering our present knowledge of nuclear physics, this would be an unfeasible project. Instead, this work will be limited to a certain class of reactions, where a *compound nucleus* is created as part of a *quasi-elastic scattering* event. These terms are explained in more detail in section 2.1, but in essence, an excited nucleus is created by knocking out an internal cluster or nucleon from an existing nucleus.

1.1.1. Design of an Event Generator

An event generator for R^3B needs to have certain features: Firstly, it does not need to reproduce every feature of the experimental spectra, as long as it reproduces the general features. The actual experiment will determine the details. On the other hand, it needs to be easy to change the underlying model and see how this influences the resulting spectra, since quantities in the model – nuclear level densities, transition rates, etcetera – are influenced by the presence of phenomena the experimenters are actually interested in finding – such as giant resonances or halo structures – which are not directly observable in the experimental data.

It is also desirable to be able to steer the event generator to generate specific kinds of events, so that the efficiency of the experimental setup can be evaluated for specific reactions.

The software also needs to be suitable for use with other programs in use in the R^3B collaboration. These programs are presented in the next section.

1.2. Already existing software

The event generator is intended to be used together with GEANT4, which is a widely used toolkit for simulating the interaction of particles in matter [4]. It takes advantage of the wrapper program GGLAND [3], which is designed to make it easy to run the simulations needed for the analysis of the LAND/ R^3B experiments. GGLAND passes on information about the experimental setup and tells GEANT4 which particles to propagate through this setup.

In addition to the software the event generator is intended to work with, there are a few codes which have been helpful during the development process:

The code is largely based upon CODEX [5], which simulates fusion and the subsequent decay of a compound nucleus. The choice of models in this work is largely based on a setting in CODEX. The quasi-elastic scattering part of the code (described in subsection 2.1.1) has been adapted from the QUASI_ELASTIC code, written by Leonid Chulkov.

Finally, part of the output of the event generator was compared to that of an already existing code, TALYS [6]. TALYS is a more advanced code for simulating the formation and decay of excited nuclei, and thus serves as an appropriate bench mark.

2. Theoretical Background

In the following section, the theoretical models implemented in the event generator code are presented. We use units in which $c = 1$, which means that mass, momentum and energy are given in the same units, customary taken to be *electron-volt*, or, for the energies of interest in nuclear physics, MeV or GeV. We do not set \hbar to one.

2.1. Nuclear Collisions

From a macroscopic perspective, nuclei can be viewed as charged particles, and thus collisions (here in a loose sense) between them are governed by the Rutherford scattering formula. This is how the nucleus was discovered in the first place. However, this simple picture breaks down at higher energies, when the particles are able to cross the Coulomb barrier. At yet higher energies, when the de Broglie wave-length ($\lambda \sim p^{-1}$) becomes sufficiently small to resolve the inner structure of the nuclei, it becomes feasible to model the collision as not taking place between the two nuclei, but by individual protons and neutrons (nucleons).

This leads us to the *participant-spectator* picture of nuclear collisions, in which the collision is viewed as if taking place between a few *participant* nucleons, while the remaining *spectator* nucleons remain mostly unaffected. Such a reaction is known as *quasi-elastic scattering*, since the kinetic energy of the projectile is much greater than the binding energy of the participants, which further motivates treating them as approximately free particles. This also means that the kinetic energy will almost be conserved, hence *quasi-elastic*. The collision between the participant nucleons takes place at a time scale of about 10^{-23} s [7], and is sometimes called a *fireball* or *firestreak*.

However, this is just the first part of the collision. The spectator nucleons may have gone unaffected through it, but the resulting system (a so-called pre-fragment) will be highly excited, and will decay to the final fragment – often by ejecting nucleons, in this context known as evaporating them. The characteristic time-scale for these ejections varies between $10^{-21} - 10^{-16}$ s, depending on the energies and emitted particle [7].

In this picture, a two-step process can be used to describe nuclear fragmentation. Various models to describe both steps exist in the literature, and these can be combined more or less freely – restrictions arise since they do not necessarily use the same parameters. Models which mainly use parameters like A , the number of nucleons, Z the number of protons, the total nuclear-spin J and the excitation energy E of the nucleus

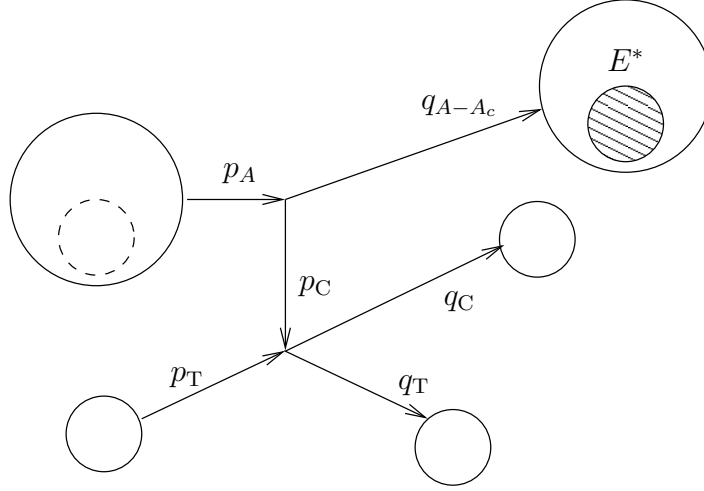


Figure 2.1.: *The fast process. The projectile (A) is viewed as a system of a cluster and prefragment. The collision then takes place between the cluster and the target.*

are termed *macroscopic*, while models that directly treat the states of individual nucleons are called *microscopic*. Examples of the former are the *abrasion-ablation model* [8], while the *intranuclear-cascade model* [9] is an example of a microscopic model. As it is often the case in nuclear physics, no one model is valid for the whole range of nucleon numbers A and incident energies [10].

Since the focus of this report is to describe an event-generator for a physics experiment, we can afford to use less detailed models if this reduces computation time. In addition, since the macroscopic properties of nuclei are more easily related to experimental observables, we will restrict our attention to those.

2.1.1. The fast processes – the Goldhaber model

In the participant-spectator picture, the fast process consists of a collision between the target and a cluster within the projectile nucleus. This is determined by momentum conservation, but in order to apply this, we need to know the initial momentum of the internal cluster, which will have a momentum relative to the projectile. The situation is illustrated in Figure 2.1.

The *Goldhaber model* states that the cluster 3-momentum distribution in the projectile frame is given by a Gaussian with zero mean and with a width determined by the expectation value of the momentum of an individual nucleon,

$$\sigma^2 = \langle \mathbf{p}_{\text{nucleons}}^2 \rangle A' \frac{A_C}{A-1}. \quad (2.1)$$

Here, A is the number of nucleons in the projectile, $A' = A - A_{\text{cluster}}$ the nucleon number of the prefragment, and $\langle \mathbf{p}_{\text{nucleons}}^2 \rangle$ is the expectation value of the 3-momentum of an

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individual nucleon. This model assumes that the prefragment and cluster momenta can be expressed as a sum of individual nucleon momenta drawn from the same distribution

$$\sigma^2 = \left\langle \left[\sum_i^A \mathbf{p}_i \right]^2 \right\rangle. \quad (2.2)$$

For a Fermi-gas, $\langle \mathbf{p}^2 \rangle$ may be written in terms of the Fermi-momentum \mathbf{p}_f as $\frac{3}{5}\mathbf{p}_f^2$ [11]. Assuming a constant nuclear density, the nuclear Fermi-momentum is about 270 MeV, which is in reasonable agreement with experiments for heavier ($A > 40$), non-exotic nuclei [12].

However, R^3B experiments are not necessarily concerned with $A > 40$ (and non-exotic) nuclei. For lighter nuclei, the Fermi momentum may be considerably lower [13], and for exotic nuclei, such as halo nuclei, the individual nucleons will not have the same momentum distribution.

Another model – also a “Goldhaber model”, since it uses a Gaussian momentum distribution – gives σ^2 as

$$\sigma^2 = 2(M_{A'} + M_C - M_A) \frac{M_C M_{A'}}{M_C + M_{A'}} = -2Q\mu(M_C, M_{A'}), \quad (2.3)$$

where M_C is the mass of the participant cluster, M_A the mass of the projectile and $M_{A'}$ the mass of the prefragment. If we take $-Q = T = \mu v^2/2$, we get $\sigma^2 = \mu^2 v^2$, which is the initial squared momentum of the cluster. This model is suitable for lighter particles, since it requires that $M_{A'} + M_C - M_A = -Q > 0$, or σ^2 becomes negative. This is the model used in this work.

Momentum conservation implies that

$$p_A = p_C + q_{A'} \quad (2.4)$$

$$p_C + p_T = q_C + q_T \quad (2.5)$$

where the momenta are defined in Figure 2.1, with the additional definition of $A' = A - A_C$. The initial momentum of the cluster, p_C , in addition to being partly defined by the Goldhaber model, is also fully specified by the external momenta: viewing Figure 2.1 as a Feynman diagram even makes it clear that the cluster is *off-shell*. With this in mind, we solve the first of the above equations for p_C by squaring, which gives

$$M_{C,\text{off}}^2 \equiv p_C^2 = p_A^2 + q_{A'}^2 - 2p_A \cdot q_{A'} = M_A^2 + M_{A'}^2 - 2M_A \sqrt{M_{A'}^2 + \mathbf{p}_C^2}, \quad (2.6)$$

where we have evaluated $p_A \cdot q_{A'}$ in the rest-frame of the prefragment. Note that since the prefragment is excited $M_{A'}$ will have to be adjusted by adding the excitation energy.

Since we are interested in constructing an event generator, we next transform the 4-momentum of the cluster from the projectile to the laboratory frame (the projectile and target momentum are already known in the laboratory frame – the former being zero is practically the definition of that frame). The relevant gamma factor is $\gamma = 1 + T/M_A$, where T is the kinetic energy of the projectile.

Since the collision between the target and the cluster is easier to do in their center-of-mass (CM) frame¹, we also need to transform between the laboratory and that frame. This is readily done by noting

$$\bar{\mathbf{P}} \equiv \mathbf{p}_C + \mathbf{p}_T = \gamma(\beta_{\text{CM}})\bar{m}\beta_{\text{CM}} = \bar{E}\beta_{\text{CM}} \implies \beta_{\text{CM}} = (\mathbf{p}_C + \mathbf{p}_T)/\bar{E}, \quad (2.7)$$

where the barred quantities are of the system of both particles. Since we want the β between the laboratory and the CM frame, we evaluate all the quantities in the laboratory frame

$$\beta_{\text{CM}} = \frac{\mathbf{p}_C}{E_C + M_T}. \quad (2.8)$$

The scattering between target and cluster is back-to-back in the CM frame, and we generate the scattering angle from an isotropic $\frac{d\sigma}{dt}$, which in practice means that the Mandelstam variable $t = (p_C - q_C)^2$ is a uniform random number. The CM energy, momentum and scattering angle can be readily expressed in terms of the invariant Mandelstam variables

$$E_C = \frac{s + M_{C,\text{off}} - M_T}{2\sqrt{s}} \quad (2.9)$$

$$|\mathbf{p}_C| = \sqrt{E_{C,\text{initial}}^2 - M_{C,\text{off}}^2} \quad (2.10)$$

$$|\mathbf{q}_C| = \sqrt{E_{C,\text{final}}^2 - M_C^2} \approx |\mathbf{p}_C| \quad (2.11)$$

$$\cos \theta \approx \frac{t - M_C^2 - M_{C,\text{off}}^2 + 2E_C^2}{2|\mathbf{p}_C|^2}, \quad (2.12)$$

the approximations being valid under the assumption of a quasi-elastic scattering, more explicitly when $M_{C,\text{off}} \approx M_C$, so that $\mathbf{p}_C = -\mathbf{q}_C$ in the CM frame, which is the assumption used in deriving the equation for $\cos \theta$.

A random polar angle ϕ in $[0, 2\pi]$ is then generated, which together with $|\mathbf{p}_C|$, θ and E_C fixes the CM 4-momentum of the cluster, and also the target by $\mathbf{p}_t = -\mathbf{p}_c$. Using (2.8), these results are boosted to the lab frame, in which we now have an expression for all the relevant momenta.

2.1.2. The slow process – decay of a compound nucleus

To describe the decay of a compound nucleus in a given macro state (E^*, J, Z, A) , we need the probabilities to go from this state to any other macro state. Since the only way an isolated nuclei can lose energy, angular momentum, or nucleons is by emitting particles, it is natural to view the transition probability probabilities for particle emission.

The probability of decaying by emitting a particle ν can be written as

$$\frac{d^2 P_\nu}{dE_f^* dt} = \frac{1}{\hbar} \frac{\rho(E_f^*, J_f)}{\rho(E_i^*, J_i)} \sum_{S=|J_f-S|}^{|J_f+S|} \sum_{l=|J_i-S|}^{|J_i+S|} T_l(\epsilon_\nu), \quad [14] \quad (2.13)$$

¹Strictly speaking, their zero momentum frame, or center-of-momentum frame.

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where P is the probability, E_f^* the final-state excitation energy, J_f the spin of the daughter nucleus, ρ the level densities and

$$\epsilon_\nu \approx E_f^* - E_i^* - S_\nu \quad (2.14)$$

the kinetic energy of the evaporated particle², S_ν being its separation energy $S_\nu = M_f + m_\nu - M_i$. Continuing: s is the intrinsic spin of the evaporated particle, S is the spin of the system consisting of the final state nucleus and evaporated particle, with l being the orbital angular momentum of the evaporated nucleus with respect to the center of mass. The sums express all the ways to couple these angular momenta while conserving the total angular momentum $\mathbf{J}_f + \mathbf{s} + \mathbf{l} = \mathbf{S} + \mathbf{l} = \mathbf{J}_i$. Finally, T_l is the transmission coefficient. We will describe this in more detail later in this section, along with the level densities.

By integrating over E^* , we get $\hbar \frac{dP_\nu}{dt} = \Gamma_\nu$, which is proportional to the probability to decay via the channel ν , $P_\nu = \Gamma_\nu / \Gamma_{\text{tot}}$.

Provided that the characteristic life-time $\hbar \Gamma_{\text{tot}}^{-1}$ of the system is short compared to the time resolution of the experimental setup, we may treat the decays as instantaneous. Note that the system may undergo multiple decays before it reaches its ground-state, and that time-scale of this entire decay chain must be short by the experimental standards. The time-of-flight resolution of the future R³B setup will be in the picosecond range (10^{-12} s) [1], which is well above the time-scales of single evaporation given by Gaimard and Schmidt ($10^{-21} - 10^{-16}$ s) [7]. Hence we will view Γ_x as the probability to decay by a given process in an unspecified but short time step.

The emitted particle, ν , can in principle be anything a nucleus may decay by emitting. However, since the photon is massless, and thus fully relativistic, it must be treated differently. For a relativistic particle, the distinction between l and the intrinsic spin unnatural, and massless particles have one less polarization state. With this in mind, we modify the sums in (2.13), and obtain the decay width for gamma emission

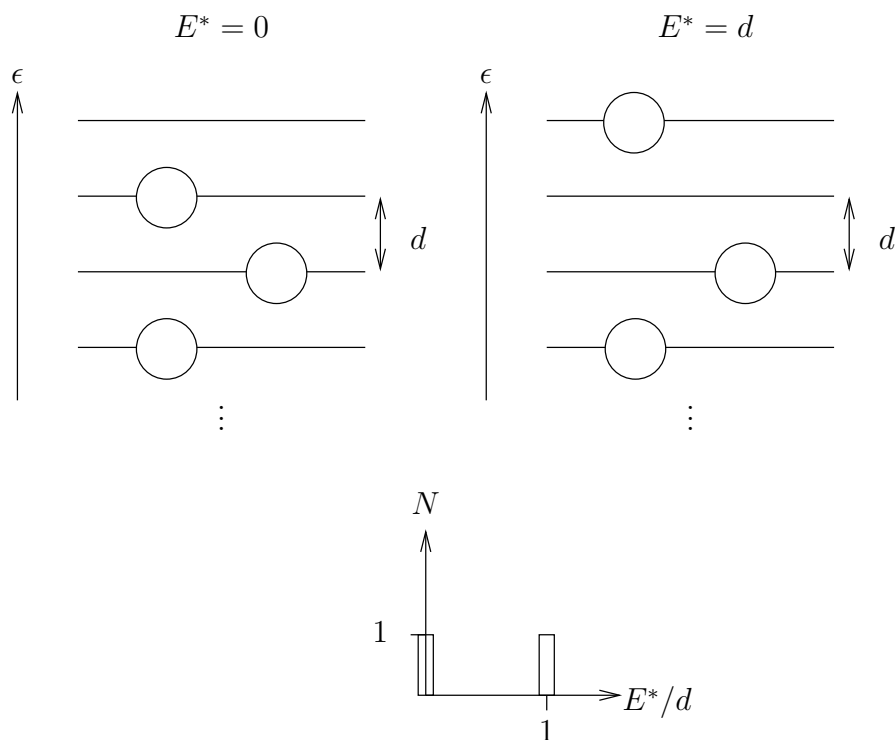
$$\frac{d\Gamma_\gamma}{dE_f} = \frac{\rho(E_f, J_f)}{\rho(E_i, J_i)} \sum_{l=|J_f-J_i|}^{|J_f+J_i|} T_l(\epsilon_\gamma) \quad (2.15)$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{d\Gamma_{\gamma,l}}{dE_f} = \frac{\rho(E_f, J_f)}{\rho(E_i, J_i)} T_l(\epsilon_\gamma), \quad (2.16)$$

where $l > 0$ is an integer.

Although ν could be any particle, it becomes more appropriate to model the decay as a fission process if ν becomes sufficiently heavy in relation to the compound nucleus. Fission is usual modeled as a transition first to a *transition state*, beyond which the nucleus will inevitably fission [15]. The present work does not include fission, and we

²The approximation is due to neglecting the kinetic energy of the daughter nucleus, which should be a good approximation when the evaporated particle ν is light. This is not a necessary approximation, though, and a more exact formula is $\frac{m_\nu}{\mu} \epsilon_\nu \approx E_f^* - E_i^* - S_\nu$. The separation energy does not, strictly speaking, enter as a cost of removing the particle ν , but rather to relate the two excitation energies E_f^* and E_i^* to an absolute scale.


 Figure 2.2.: *Fermions with equidistant single-particle levels.*

will thus not discuss its details here. Swiatecki discussed the possibility of treating particle emission and fission in an essentially symmetric fashion, by using a transition state formalism also for lighter particles [16].

We will now describe models for the level density ρ and transition probability T_l .

Level densities

The level density $\rho(E, J)$ enumerates the number of energy levels of a given nucleus in an energy range $[E, E + dE]$ with a given spin J . We have in our notation suppressed the dependence on A and Z . The nuclear level density increases rapidly with energy, which suggests that the nuclear levels are not simply built up by exciting single nucleons, since the spacing of these levels do not decrease nearly fast enough.

To see how the rapid increase in level densities may be accounted for by collective excitations, and to introduce some of the terminology, it is illustrative to have a look at a simple example.

The simple example Consider a “nucleus” in which we have A identical nucleons, that occupy single particle states with spacing d . The situation is illustrated in Fig-

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ure 2.2. The energy of the nuclues is given by

$$E = \sum_i^{\infty} \epsilon_i n_i, \quad (2.17)$$

where $\epsilon = id$ is the energy of level i , and n_i is the occupation number of that level, which can be 0 or 1, since nucleons are fermions. If we take the Fermi energy as the reference energy, we get the excitation energy

$$E^* = \sum_i^{\infty} \epsilon_i n_i - \sum_i^A \epsilon_i. \quad (2.18)$$

The picture is more illustrative than the formulas. We now have one way to excite our system to $E^* = d$, namely by exciting the nucleon just below the Fermi level. For $E^* = 2d$ we may proceed from our $E^* = d$ system in two ways, either by further exciting the lone excited nucleon $E^* = 2d$, or by exciting the highest nucleon in the $A - 1$ system, $E^* = d + d$. For $E^* = 3d$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} &1d + 1d + 1d \\ &2d + 1d \\ &3d, \end{aligned} \quad (2.19)$$

and at this point, it may be apparent that we are really investigating the number of ways to write a natural number as a sum of natural numbers, a problem which engaged Euler as early as 1720 [17]. It turns out to be a very rapidly growing function, with the number of ways to partition 100 being 190569292 [17].

A few things to note: Firstly, there is a distinction between the level density, discussed above, and the *density of states*. In our example above, we may imagine that each configuration of nuclei corresponds to a state with a given spin J , which would give us $(2J - 1)$ different spin projections for each state. The density of states takes this degeneracy into account, while the level density does not. The density of states is thus greater than the level density. Often, we do not know the J of our states, but there is a general argument for the J dependence of the level density. Following the derivation by Grossjean and Feldmeier [18] we assume that the states are build up from single-particle states with a random spin orientation. More precisely, let the single-particle states spin projection m be a random number. Time reversal symmetry demands that the expectation value of m is zero, and that their distribution is symmetric, since $t \rightarrow -t$ changes the direction angular momentum. Now, if we assume that our state is formed by exciting a large number of nucleons, the central limit theorem gives the probability of the total spin projection M as

$$P(M) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\langle M^2 \rangle}} \exp\left(-\frac{M^2}{2\langle M^2 \rangle}\right), \quad (2.20)$$

and hence the density of states ω with spin-projection M specified becomes

$$\omega(E^*, M) = \frac{\omega(E^*)}{\sqrt{2\langle M^2 \rangle}} \exp\left(-\frac{M^2}{2\langle M^2 \rangle}\right). \quad (2.21)$$

Finally, using the fact that for each fixed J , say J' , there is only one state of each $M \in [-J', \dots, J']$, we may subtract contributions from all states with higher³ J by:

$$\rho(E^*, J') \equiv \omega(E^*, M = J', J = J') = \omega(E^*, M = J') - \omega(E^*, M = J' + 1), \quad (2.22)$$

where the equivalence is due to the fact that $\rho(E^*, J) = \omega(E^*, M, J)$ for any fixed value of M . For $J \ll \sqrt{\langle M^2 \rangle}$, this is approximated as

$$\rho(E^*, J) \approx -\frac{d}{dM} \omega(E^*, M) \big|_{M=J+1/2}, \quad (2.23)$$

which gives the J dependence as

$$\rho(E^*, J) \approx \frac{\omega(E^*)}{\sqrt{2\langle M^2 \rangle}} \frac{2J+1}{2} \exp\left(-\frac{(J+1/2)^2}{2\langle M^2 \rangle}\right). \quad (2.24)$$

Secondly, for higher excitation energy, it makes sense to smear out the discrete levels in order to get a continuous function, and get it on a closed form. The usual way this is done is by observing that the grand partition function

$$Z(\alpha, \beta) = \sum_{i, A} \omega(E, A) \exp(\alpha A - \beta E_i(A)), \quad (2.25)$$

formally is the Laplace-transform of the density of states. Here, E is the energy and A is any other quantum number, often taken to be the number of nucleons since those grand partition functions often are known or possible to derive. Performing the inverse Laplace transform gives us

$$\omega(E, A) = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{-i\infty}^{i\infty} Z(E, A) \exp(\beta E - \alpha A), \quad (2.26)$$

and the “smearing out” is now done by applying a saddle-point approximation to the above integral; see, for example, Goutis et al. [19].

The above fact will be useful to understand the form and some results surrounding the level density used in this work, which we do not derive here:

$$\rho(E^*, J) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \frac{1}{24 a^{1/4} U^{5/4}} \exp(2\sqrt{aU}) \frac{2J+1}{\Theta_{\text{eff}}^{3/2} / (\hbar^3 \beta^{3/2})} \exp\left(-\left(J + \frac{1}{2}\right)^2 / (2\Theta_{\text{eff}} / (\hbar^2 \beta))\right). \quad (2.27)$$

This is a version of the widely-used expression for the level density of a *Fermi gas* that takes angular momentum J into account, in accordance with the theory presented above [20]. Here, U is an effective excitation energy above the *yrast line*, corrected for shell and pairing effects. It is given by

$$U = E_{\text{eff}} + f(E_{\text{eff}})\delta S + g(E_{\text{eff}})\delta P, \quad (2.28)$$

³states with lower J , $J < J'$, do not contribute, since they do not contain a $M = J'$ state.

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where f and g describe the damping of shell and pairing effects with increasing energy, and $E_{\text{eff}} = E^* - E_{\text{yrast}}$. The *yrast energy*⁴, E_{yrast} , is the lowest energy for a given angular momentum, here taken to be

$$E_{\text{yrast}} = \frac{J(J+1)\hbar^2}{2\Theta_{\perp}}, \quad (2.29)$$

which is the energy corresponding to a quantum-mechanical axial-symmetric rotor rotating around a symmetry axis perpendicular to its elongation. Θ is the moment of inertia of the nucleus, which also enters into (2.27). This yrast energy is not, strictly speaking, the lowest energy for a given J , but the energy of a collective rotational excitation [22]. As may be interfered by comparing (2.24) with (2.27), the expectation value $\langle M^2 \rangle$ is closely connected to the moment of inertia Θ . Ericson [22] provides a simple, although not especially rigorous, explanation for this: If we assume that a nucleus of spin J has some of its energy in a rotational excitation of the form expected of a classical rotor, $\frac{\hbar^2 J^2}{2\Theta}$, then it will not have this energy available for intrinsic excitations⁵. Hence, we adjust the energy according to $E^* \rightarrow E^* - \frac{\hbar^2 J^2}{2\Theta}$, as we have done above in the effective excitation energy (2.28). Furthermore, if we approximate the rapidly growing $\rho(E^*)$ as an exponential, we can write

$$\rho(E^* - \frac{\hbar^2 J^2}{2\Theta}) = \rho(E^*) \exp(-\frac{\hbar^2 J^2}{2\Theta}), \quad (2.30)$$

and comparing this equation with (2.24) gives a direct relation between Θ and $\langle M^2 \rangle$. We now return to Equation 2.28.

Shell and pairing energy The pairing energy δP can be estimated from the average separation energy for the surrounding nuclei (in an (N, Z) plot, like an isotope chart), which is close to the actual observed shift between odd and even nuclei [22]. Neutrons and protons have different pairing energies, which is to be added or subtracted when neutron or proton number, respectively, is odd or even. The shell energy δS can either be calculated from a microscopic model, or – as we have done – can be estimated together with the pairing energy by subtracting masses predicted by a macroscopic models from experimental masses, as suggested by Schmidt and Morawek [14]. This yields the microscopic contribution to the masses, which is identified with the sum $\delta S + \delta P$. For this purpose, the macroscopic part of the 1992 edition of the Finite-Range Droplet Model (FRDM-1992) [23] was used. This model is presented in more detail in section 2.2.

The damping of shell effects with energy can be described by an exponential function

$$f(E_{\text{eff}}) = 1 - \exp(-E_{\text{eff}}/E_d), \quad (2.31)$$

where E_d is the shell-damping energy

$$E_d = \frac{0.4}{a} A^{4/3}, \quad (2.32)$$

⁴From the Swedish word “yrast”, which in this context means “whirliest” [21].

⁵The \hbar being there to compensate for the fact that J is dimensionless in our notation.

where a is the level-density parameter, which for a spherical nuclei can be approximated by

$$a = \frac{A}{14.61 \text{ MeV}} (1 + 3.114A^{-1/3} + 5.626A^{-2/3}). \quad [14] \quad (2.33)$$

This parameter also enters directly into (2.27), and is directly related to the inverse level spacing at the Fermi level, $a = \frac{\pi^2}{6} \frac{1}{d}$.

Likewise, the damping of pairing effects with energy can also be described by a simple function, in this case

$$g(E_{\text{eff}}) = \begin{cases} 1 - (1 - E/E_c)^2 & E_{\text{eff}} < E_c \\ 1 & E_{\text{eff}} \geq E_c. \end{cases} \quad [14] \quad (2.34)$$

The critical energy E_c is approximately 10 MeV and is taken to vary with angular momentum,

$$E_c = 10 \text{ MeV} \sqrt{1 - (J/J_c)^2}, \quad (2.35)$$

where the critical angular momentum J_c^6 has been set to $12\hbar$.

Moment of inertia Since we have restricted ourselves to spherical nuclei in (2.33), we also have the moments of inertia $\Theta_{\perp} = \Theta_{\parallel}$. In particular, for a sphere with constant density, we have

$$\Theta = \frac{2}{5} M R_0^2 \approx \frac{2}{5} A^{5/3} \times u \times r_0^2 \quad (2.36)$$

The approximation is obtained by inserting $R_0 = r_0 A^{1/3}$ and $M = uA$, where $r_0 = 1.16 \text{ fm}$ is the nuclear radius constant, with the same value as in the macroscopic model [23]. u is the atomic mass units, $u \approx 931.5 \text{ MeV}$.

Reciprocal temperature β Finally, β in (2.27) is the reciprocal nuclear temperature⁷ $\beta = 1/T$. It can be calculated from $\frac{a}{\beta}$, which is obtained by solving

$$a/\beta = \sqrt{(aU)[1 - \exp(-a/\beta)]}, \quad [18] \quad (2.37)$$

which can be done numerically by iterating

$$(a/\beta)_{n+1} = \sqrt{aU[1 - \exp(-(a/\beta)_n)]} \quad (2.38)$$

from a suitable initial guess $(a/\beta)_0$. $(a/\beta)_0 = \sqrt{aU}$ was used here, which solves (2.37) for $(a/\beta) \rightarrow \infty$ and is known to be a good initial guess [18].

The level density of ^{20}Ne for different spin with and without subtracting the yrast-energy is illustrated in Figure 2.3. As can be seen in the figure, the level densities for

⁶The value of the critical angular momentum and the momentum dependence in general is from the CODEX code. I have not been able to find any other source.

⁷It really is the reciprocal temperature at the saddle-point, see e.g. Feldmeier [18].

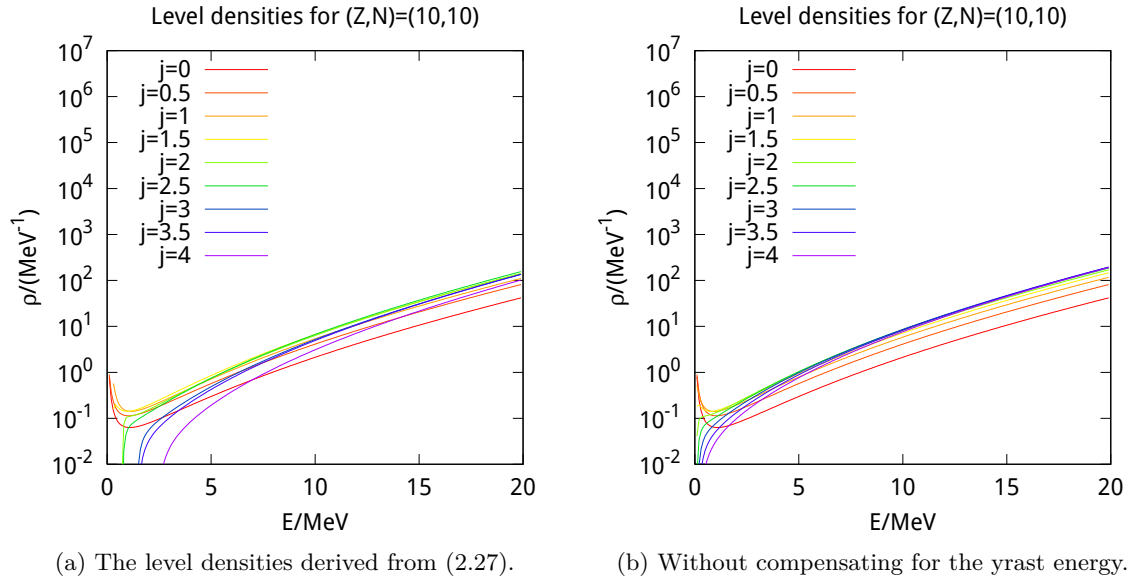


Figure 2.3.: The energy dependence of the level density of ^{20}Ne for spin $J = 0, \frac{1}{2}, \dots, 4$. In order to be able to compare level densities for different spin at the same effective energy above the yrast line, the yrast energy has not been subtracted from E_{eff} in 2.3b.

higher spin start at a lower value for low energies, way lower than 1 level/MeV, which indicates that the continuous view of energy levels fails at these energies. The spins appear to be split up in 2 groups, one for $J \leq 1$ and one for $J > 1$. The level densities for $4 \geq J > 1$ initially grow rapidly, until they overtake the lower spin level densities and settle at a seemingly proportional relationship with each other. The J dependence seem to saturate at higher J , but the $(2J+1) \exp(-\hbar^2 \beta (J+1/2)^2 / 2\Theta)$ factor indicates that there is a maximum in J . The actual behaviour may be a bit different, though, since U has a complicated dependence on J . Note that the approximation (2.23) is not valid for higher J , so this maximum in J is probably not physical. The same general behaviour is seen for the other nuclei at the $A = 20$ isobar.

In order to see if these are general feature of our model, we also investigate ^{99}Zr – this nucleus is being chosen arbitrarily as an example of a non-fissile nucleus far from the $A = 20$ isobar. The corresponding plots of the level densities are seen in Figure 2.4. We note that the inclusion of the yrast energy is not nearly as significant for the spins under consideration, since the larger value of Θ reduces the yrast energy of a given J . This also explains why $J = 4$ has the highest density of states in this case: a higher Θ means that the $\exp(-(J+1/2)^2/\Theta)$ factor does not suppress the level density as rapidly with increasing spin. Another thing to note is that it is only for $J \geq 3$ that we see a hint of a dip for lower energies. This could perhaps indicate that the pronounced spin dependence seen for lower energies in the $A = 20$ isobar will reveal itself for yet higher spin. This would be a consequence of the greater moment of inertia, since the spin only appears in ρ together with Θ .

In any case, this is low-energy behaviour, and both the Fermi gas model [18] and the very notion of a continuous level density has problems for low energies. Most notably, the Fermi gas model itself, without compensating for shell and pairing effects, predicts a singularity at $U = 0$, which is why we see an increase in the level density for lower energies and spin in both Figure 2.4 and in Figure 2.3, which have been truncated at $E = 0.1$ MeV in order to avoid this.

The level density was also investigated for a fixed spin for different isotopes of the $A = 20$ isobar, but no conclusive trends were found.

On the other hand, for the isotope $Z = 10$, the level density for higher energies generally increases with additional neutrons, which is to be expected, since there are more ways to arrange the nucleons for a given excitation energy, this is illustrated in Figure 2.5, where the brighter lines correspond to heavier nuclei.

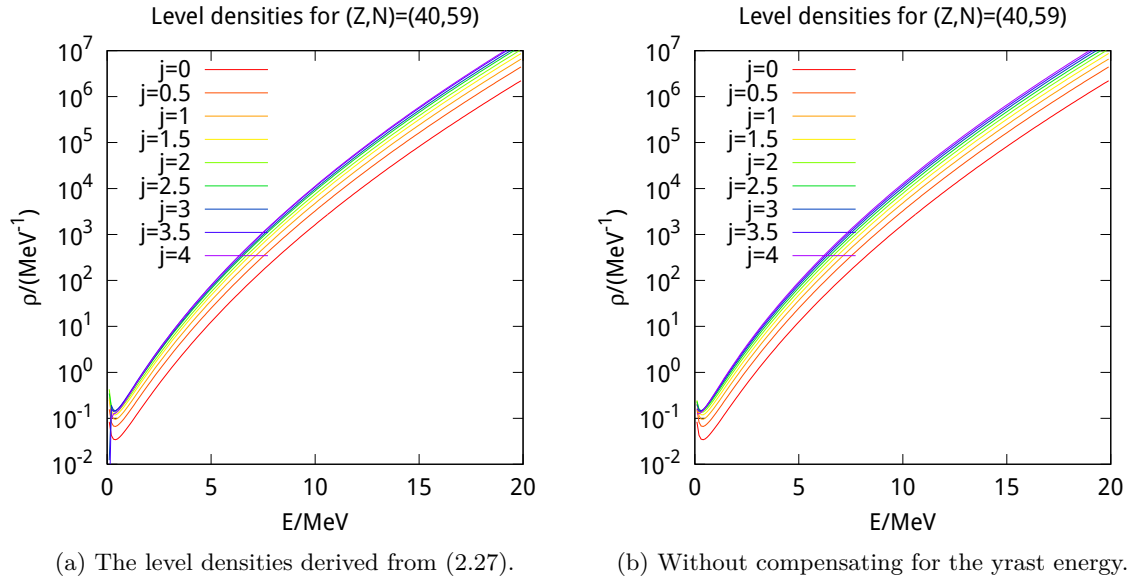


Figure 2.4.: The energy dependence of the level density of ^{99}Zr for spin $J = 0, \frac{1}{2}, \dots, 4$. In order to be able to compare level densities for different spin at the same effective energy above the yrast line, the yrast energy has not been subtracted from E_{eff} in 2.4b.

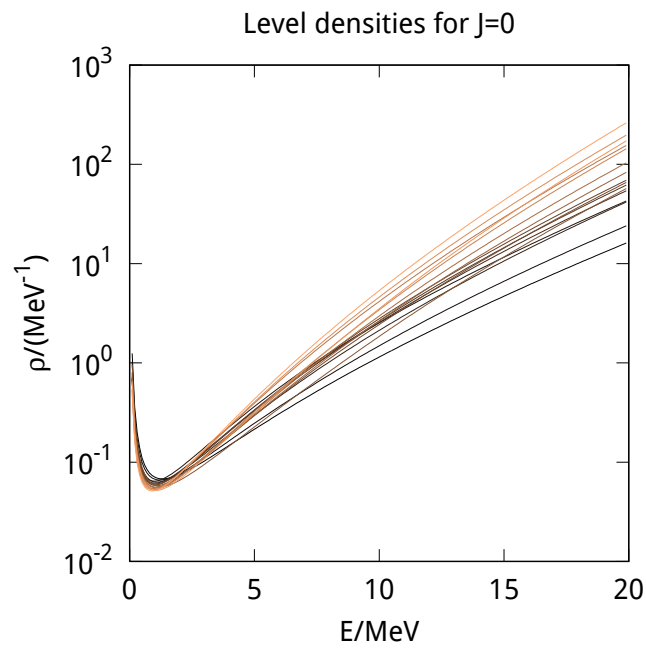


Figure 2.5.: The level densities for ^{17}Mg to ^{32}Mg , where brighter lines correspond to heavier nuclei.

Transition Probabilities

The decay width $\Gamma_{\nu,l}$ into a given final energy interval $[E_f, E_f + dE]$ by particle ν with orbital angular momentum l also depends on the transition probability $T_l(\epsilon_\nu)$.

One of the more well-known models of a transition probability by particle decay is the Gamow model for alpha decay, in which the mother nucleus (Z, N) is modeled as essentially being composed of a “ready-to-go” alpha particle and the daughter nucleus $(Z - 2, N - 2)$ and the probability to decay is given by the probability for the alpha particle to tunnel through the potential due to the daughter nucleus, with an additional factor depending on how often the alpha particle has a chance to tunnel.

This model is readily generalized to other particle decays: we may just as well imagine a proton being formed inside the mother nucleus (Z, N) , and tunneling through the potential from the daughter nucleus $(Z - 1, N)$.

In order to make this model quantitative, we need an actual potential. Approximating the charge distribution of the daughter and tunneling particle as spherical, we may model the potential due to electrostatic interaction as a simple Coulomb potential, which gives us

$$V = V_{\text{Col}} + \dots = Z_1 Z_2 \frac{e^2}{r_{12}} + \dots, \quad (2.39)$$

in non-rationalized units. If we go ahead and assume that not only the charge distribution, but the potential as a whole is spherically symmetric, we can employ the standard procedure of separating the problem into a radial and angular part, where the radial potential is given by

$$V_r = Z_1 Z_2 \frac{e^2}{r_{12}} + \frac{l(l+1)\hbar^2}{2\mu r^2} + \dots \quad (2.40)$$

Here we still need additional terms to take the effective nucleon-nucleon interaction into account. The assumption of spherical symmetry also gives us the angular part of the wave function as a spherical harmonic, determining the angular distribution of the emitted particle in the center-of-mass frame.

The nuclear part of the potential used by CODEX is a proximity potential [5] [24]. Proximity potentials may be derived from a more general approximation method, in which two nearby surfaces are divided into several parallel surfaces, close enough to be approximated as semi-infinite, see Figure 2.6 [25]. The contributions from the different sets of parallel surfaces are assumed to be additive. The potential energy is calculated for these slabs, and factors to correct for the actual geometry are introduced. This approach is widely used in Casimir force calculations between objects of a more arbitrary shape [26]. This approximation is also known by “Derjaguin approximation” in other fields [25].

In the nuclear case, the situation is somewhat complicated by the fact that the form of the nucleon-nucleon interaction is unknown. As such, there exist several proximity potentials [27]. Dutt et. al. showed that 12 common proximity potentials were able to predict fusion barrier heights within 10% of the experimental values for asymmetric fusion reactions ranging from $^{12}\text{C} + ^{17}\text{O}$ to $^{86}\text{Kr} + ^{208}\text{Pb}$ [27]. Proximity-type potentials

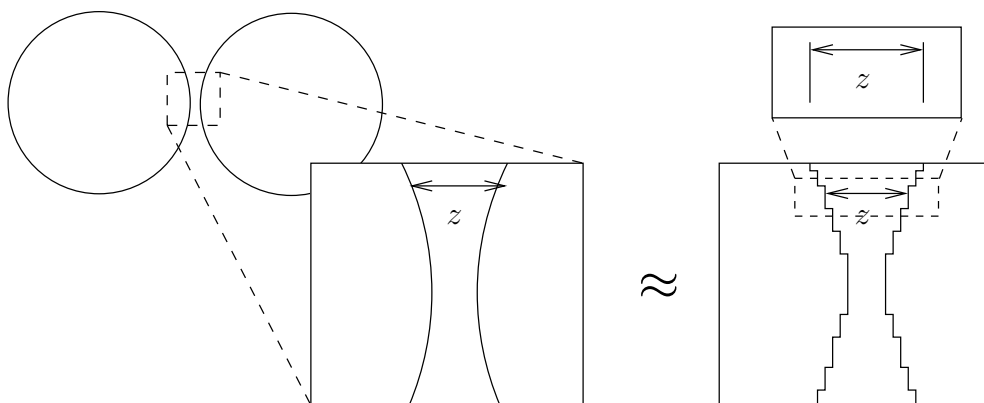


Figure 2.6.: A schematic sketch of how the proximity approximation is carried out. Two close surfaces are approximated as a series of parallel surfaces, which in turn are approximated as infinite parallel surfaces, for which the potential energy is easier to calculate. This result is then summed up for all parallel surfaces.

have also been used to study alpha and proton decay [28] [29], which is closer to our intended application⁸.

The proximity potential is given by

$$V_N = C\phi(\zeta), \quad (2.41)$$

where $\phi(\zeta)$ is the so-called *universal function*, which for a given nucleon-nucleon interaction is independent of the geometry of the nuclei in the proximity approximation. ζ is a unitless distance between the two nuclei, see below. Geometrical factors are contained in the proportionality “constant” C , which is given by

$$C = 4\pi\gamma b \frac{r_{c,1}r_{c,2}}{r_{c,1} + r_{c,2}} \quad (2.42)$$

where γ is the surface energy coefficient, which can be approximated by

$$\gamma = 0.9517(1.0 - 1.78260 \times I^2), \quad (2.43)$$

where $I = (N - Z)/A$ is the neutron excess.

We use the universal function by Blocki, 1997,

$$\phi(\zeta) = \begin{cases} -0.5(\zeta - 2.54)^2 - 0.0852(\zeta - 2.54)^3 & \zeta < 1.2511 \\ -3.437 \exp(-\zeta/0.75) & \zeta > 1.2511, \end{cases} \quad [24] \quad (2.44)$$

⁸It is not immediately obvious to the author if the assumptions of the proximity potential formalism applies to proton or alpha decay. It does however reproduce experimental half-lives to a reasonable degree, see e.g. Balasubramaniam and Arunachala [28], this is for emission from heavier nuclei, though.

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where ζ is the distance between the two nuclear surfaces, normalized with respect to the typical surface diffuseness b of the nuclei, here taken to be 1 fm [24]. More explicitly, we have

$$\zeta = \frac{r - r_{\text{sum}}}{b}, \quad (2.45)$$

where b is the surface diffuseness, and r_{sum} is roughly the sum of the radii of the two nuclei, so that $r - r_{\text{sum}}$ gives the distance between the nuclear surfaces [24]. An effective sharp nuclear surface may be estimated by the formula

$$r_{\text{sharp}} = 1.28A^{1/3} - 0.76 + 0.8A^{-1/3} \quad \text{fm.} \quad [24] \quad (2.46)$$

Equation 2.46 is used to estimate the radii of all nuclei, and as a result $r_{\text{sharp}} = 1.32$ fm for protons and neutrons, which is slightly different from the value of r_0 that is normally used. In the proximity potential, it is preferable to use the *central radius* r_c rather than the effective sharp radius [24], which is given by

$$r_c = r_{\text{sharp}} \left(1 - \left(\frac{b}{r_{\text{sharp}}} \right)^2 \right) \quad . \quad [30] \quad (2.47)$$

Hence, $r_{\text{sum}} = r_{c,1} + r_{c,2}$.

Since the proximity model takes the spatial extent of the nuclei into account, we modify the Coloumb-interaction accordingly, from that of a point particle to that of a homogenously charged, solid sphere

$$V_C = \begin{cases} \frac{Z_1 Z_2 e^2}{r} & r > r_{\text{ch}} \\ \frac{Z_1 Z_2 e^2}{r_{\text{ch}}^2} (3 - (r/r_{\text{ch}})^2) & r < r_{\text{ch}}, \end{cases} \quad (2.48)$$

where we here use the more common formula for the charge radius, $r_{\text{ch}} = r_0 A^{1/3}$.

In Figure 2.7, we illustrate the total potential of ^{20}Ne for tunneling of protons and neutrons. The individual contributions to the total potential may be discerned by looking at the potential for the emission of $l = 0$ neutrons (which are only affected by the proximity potential) and $l = 0$ protons (which have to tunnel through the sum of the Coulomb and the proximity potential). On this energy scale, the barrier the protons have to tunnel through is merely 2 MeV high, but since the proton separation energy for ^{20}Ne is 12 MeV, it will only happen for excitation energies above 12 MeV, as the proton does not have a positive energy otherwise⁹. Neutrons with a positive energy and $l = 0$ do not have to tunnel at all, and exist as resonances above the potential barrier. The tunneling formalism does not apply in this case, and we instead use (2.54), which we discuss later.

We also see that the centrifugal part quickly dominates, essentially a result of protons and neutrons being relatively light particles: for α -decay, the centrifugal part is about a fourth of the values displayed above, and the l -dependence of the tunneling probability is

⁹Note that this separation does not coincide with the depth of the potential well: we only use the potential to calculate transmission coefficients.

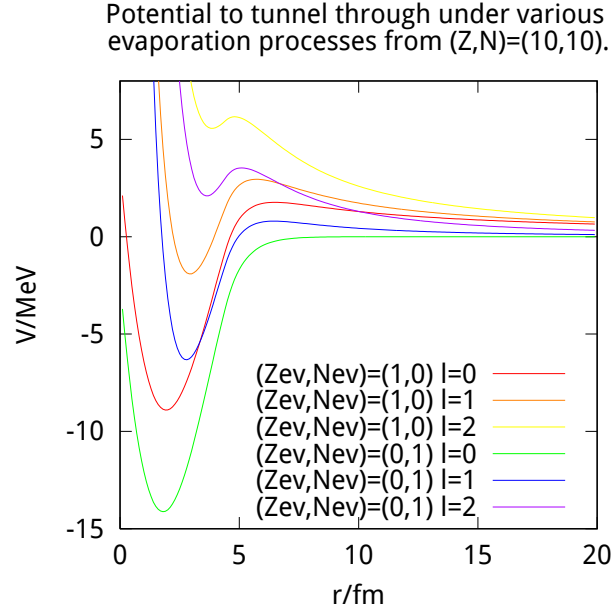


Figure 2.7.: *The potential used for tunneling of neutrons and protons with $l = 0, 1, 2$ from ^{20}Ne . The potential for $l = 0$ neutrons is exactly the proximity potential (2.44), while the $l = 0$ proton's potential show the sum of the proximity and Coulomb potential.*

not very significant for low l [31]. This strong l -dependence makes proton radioactivity a sensitive probe for the orbital angular momentum of valence protons for proton emitting nuclei [28]. However, in this case, it also poses a problem, since, for high l -values, it removes the potential well created by the Coulomb and proximity potential. Even for moderate l values, it makes particles with low energy classically forbidden within the the radius of barrier (see Figure 2.7), which appears inconsistent with the picture of a preformed particle tunneling through said barrier. The solution adopted in this work is to assign probability zero to tunnel for particles that are classically forbidden within the nucleus. This will suppress decay for higher l , since the bottom of the potential well rises as l does. For a higher l , the potential well disappears entirely¹⁰.

Given the potential, the transition probability can be calculated in the WKB approx-

¹⁰Another solution, attractive since we do not use the potential to estimate separation energies, is to model the strong interaction as an infinitely deep potential that cancels the centrifugal part, so that bound particles can always exist in the nucleus. The common $V = -\infty$ for $r < r_{\text{nucleus}}$ potential achieves this. Another solutions found in the literature is to have other, finite potentials below certain radii, but – in non-relativistic quantum mechanics – this goes against the assumption of spherical symmetry unless the effective nucleon-nucleon interaction depends on l so to exactly cancel the centrifugal part.

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imation as

$$T_l(\epsilon_\nu) = \exp(-2G), \quad [15] \quad (2.49)$$

where

$$G = \sqrt{\frac{2\hbar}{\mu}} \int_{r_1}^{r_2} \sqrt{V_l(r) - \epsilon_\nu} dr. \quad (2.50)$$

The classical turning points, r_1 and r_2 , are the inner and outer radii for which the kinetic energy is equal to the potential energy. It should be noted that the WKB approximation is not, strictly speaking, valid for regions where the potential is approximately constant over several wave-lengths $\lambda = \frac{2\pi}{k}$, which will not be valid for at the turning points, since $\lambda \rightarrow \infty$. A somewhat more refined WKB approximation formula is

$$T_l(\epsilon_\nu) = \frac{1}{1 + \exp 2G}, \quad [32] \quad (2.51)$$

which still suffers from the same short-comings as the previous formula. Nevertheless, the transition amplitudes calculated with the WKB formula are generally of the right order of magnitude, which should suffice for our purposes [33].

For $\epsilon > V_{\max}$, we can no longer view the emission as tunneling, because the particle passes “over” the barrier. Instead, we use

$$T_l = \frac{1}{1 + \exp\left(-\frac{2\pi}{\hbar\omega}(E - V_{\max})\right)}, \quad (2.52)$$

where

$$\hbar\omega = \hbar \sqrt{\frac{1}{\mu} \left(\frac{d^2 V_l}{dr^2} \right)_{r_{\max}}}. \quad [5] \quad (2.53)$$

We use yet another formula for $l = 0$ neutrons, which do not have a barrier to tunnel through, and for which Equation 2.52 cannot be applied, since no maximum exists. Instead, we use the transmission coefficient for transmission over a step

$$T_{0,n} = \frac{4\sqrt{E}\sqrt{E+V_0}}{(\sqrt{E} + \sqrt{E+V_0})^2}, \quad (2.54)$$

where we use the depth $V_0 = 40$ MeV, the value being chosen to approximate the depth of the nuclear potential [34]. This was the formula used in CODEX.

The transmission coefficients corresponding to the potentials in Figure 2.7 are presented in Figure 2.8. We see that the $l = 0$ neutrons do not behave as expected, in that they have a lower transmission coefficient than both protons and $l = 1$ neutrons. We also see the very sudden jump from zero to non-zero in the transmission coefficients for higher l -values, a result of our choice to set the transmission probability to zero for $E < V_{l,\min}$ and to not cut the centrifugal potential below some r -value.

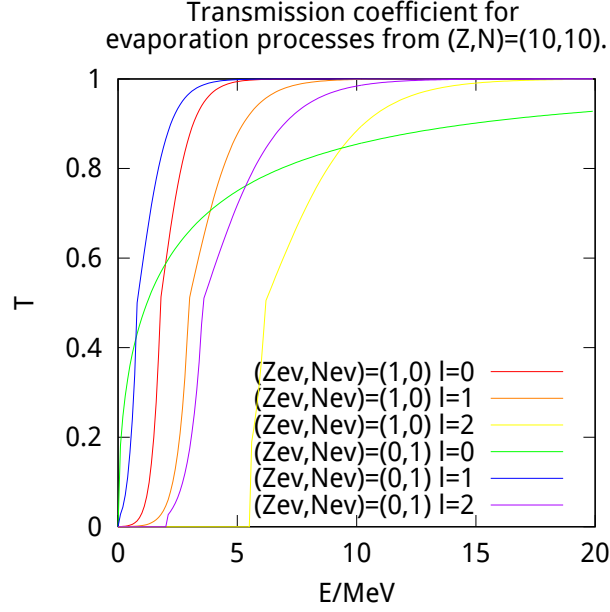


Figure 2.8.: The transmission coefficients for evaporation of neutrons and protons with $l = 0, 1, 2$; from ^{20}Ne .

γ -decay The above discription concerns the tunneling of a nucleon or cluster through a potential barrier, and is thus not applicable to γ -decay.

Gamma transition rates are usually expressed in terms of a strength function, f_{Xl} , like

$$T_l(E) = E^{2l+1} f_{Xl}(E). \quad (2.55)$$

The factor E^{2l+1} factorizes out the energy dependence from semi-classical radiation theory, so that the strength function contains the nuclear information. X here refers to the type of radiation, electric or magnetic.

There are many ways in which a nucleus can emit photons, and hence several kinds of strength functions. For our purposes, collective excitations are the most important, and the modes that dominate are the *Giant resonance*, in particular the $E1$, $E2$ and $M1$ modes [20]. These collective excitations are vibrational in nature, and give rise to Lorentzian strength functions.

The strength functions used in this work are

$$T_{E1} = \frac{ZN}{A} \frac{4e^2}{3\pi u \hbar} \frac{E_\gamma \Gamma_{E1}}{(E_\gamma^2 - E_{0j}^2)^2 + (E_\gamma \Gamma_{E1})^2}$$

$$T_{E2} = \frac{6Ze^2}{25\pi \hbar^3 u} R^2 \left(1 + \frac{5}{2} \frac{b^2}{R^2}\right) \sum_j \frac{1}{2} \frac{E_\gamma \Gamma_{E2}}{(E_\gamma^2 - E_{0j}^2)^2 + (E_\gamma \Gamma_{E1})^2}, \quad (2.56)$$

where $R = r_0 A^{1/3}$ is the nuclear radius and b the surface diffuseness, a parameter also used in the proximity potential. The presence of Z and N in the above equations are to account for the number of nucleons participating in the excitation [35]. The peak values are given by

$$\begin{aligned} E_{0,E1} &= \frac{80}{A^{1/3}} \text{MeV}, \\ E_{01,E2} &= \frac{63}{A^{1/3}} \text{MeV} \frac{130}{A^{1/3}} \text{MeV}. \end{aligned} \tag{2.57}$$

The value $80/A^{1/3}$ is supposedly a good fit for medium to heavy weight nuclei [35], while the $63/A^{1/3}$ and $130/A^{1/3}$ are too diffuse to reliably observe in light nuclei [36] [37]. As such, it may be desirable to use other values for light nuclei, as well as adding in the possibility of an $M1$ -transition.

2.2. Finite-Range Droplet Model

In order to find the shell and pairing energy, δS and δP in (2.28), we subtracted the mass deduced from a macroscopic model from the experimental mass. The macroscopic part of the *Finite-range droplet model* with parameters fitted to nuclear data in 1995 [23] was used for this. The macroscopic part of the FRDM is in essence a refined version of the *semi-empirical mass formula* (SEMF). Just like the SEMF, the FRDM contains volume, surface, Coloumb, asymmetry (in the form of a Wigner term) and pairing terms. It also contains numerous other terms, not discussed here, but see the original literature [23].

Important to note is that our macroscopic energy was obtained for spherical nuclei, while the model parameters of the FRDM were fitted to experimental mass exesses while using deformations from a previous iteration. As such, our calculated macroscopic mass excesses do not contain deformation energies, and when we calculate the microscopic (pairing and shell energy), we actually calculate

$$E_{\text{exp}} - E_{\text{mac}}(\text{sphere}) = E_{\text{s+p}} + E_{\text{deformation}}, \tag{2.58}$$

which means that for deformed nuclei, our estimate of shell and pairing effects will include contributions from the deformation energy. Since the rest of the code does not take deformations into account, this is not really an additional constraint.

3. The Code

The CODEZ code, based on CODEX [5], contains models for the various quantities needed in statistical models. It is written to be extendable and to a large extent modular, so that the various models can easily be replaced. Details on the specific models may be found in section 2.1. To achieve this modularity, the code is written in C++ and makes use of *object-oriented* programming concepts.

The program is roughly structured as follows: Decay processes are specified by model objects, which contain models for calculating transition probabilities to possible final states. “Probabilities” here refers to $d^2P_\nu/dtdE$, the probability to decay to a final state in energy interval dE during the time dt by the process ν . The probabilities do not need to be normalized. The model objects implement a function that for a given energy discretization tabulates a specification of the decay (The excitation energy of the final state, the spin of the final state, the particle ν which has been emitted in the decay, its orbital angular momentum) along with a corresponding cumulative probability. A complete table of cumulative transition probabilities and final states is generated by looping over all model objects.

A de-excitation step may then be performed by drawing a random number between 0 and the final cumulative probability, and looking up the corresponding decay in the table. Several one-step decays from the same state may thus be performed with little extra computational costs.

The tabulation of decay probabilities, the deexcitation and the models all compile to different object-files, which are linked to produce executable files with various purposes – such as deexciting a nucleus until its excitation energy reaches a certain value, finding the most common decay channel for several different nuclei with given excitation energies, export level densities, etc. This removes the need to excessively control the program flow in the individual main-files, which makes the code easier to read, since it mostly describes the physics – although it may lead to some code duplication.

The next section describes the individual executable programs, and demonstrates how they may be used together to solve more complicated tasks.

3.1. Programs

The CODEZ code contains three types of subprograms: programs to generate lists of nuclei, programs that run on a list of nuclei, and programs that process the output of

the latter programs. The different kinds of programs may be used in a pipe, like

```
list | run | process
```

In addition, there are a few OCTAVE scripts distributed with the code to generate plots.

3.1.1. List generating programs

The first kind of program simply generates lists of nuclei to perform calculations for. The output of these programs are of the form illustrated by this example output:

```
#comment
*Event 1
Z11 N11 E11 J11 px11 py11 pz11
Z12 N12 E12 J12 px12 py12 pz12
*Event 2
Z21 N21 E21 J21 px21 py21 pz21
```

where Z, N, E, J, p specify the proton number, neutron number, excitation energy, spin and 3-momentum of the nucleus. If no event numbers are present, each line is assumed to be a separate event. Simpler lists could easily be written by hand, but the list-type programs make it possible to run a specific calculation (as specified by a “run-type” program) easily for a range of nuclei, or nuclei generated by a specific process.

NUCLIST

The NUCLIST program simply generates a list of nuclei for a given N , Z or A range; with a given excitation energy, spin and initial momentum. This program can be used to determine spectra from excited nuclei of certain isotopes, isobars and isotones.

Each nucleus is placed in a separate event.

QUASI

This program simulates a quasi-elastic scattering event, producing an excited prefragment as well as the participating knocked-out cluster and target fragment. The beam energy, the number of events, the colliding nuclei must be specified, as well as the excitation energy and spin of the spectator prefragment.

The target and cluster fragments are assumed to be in their ground states, which should be a good assumption for lighter clusters and targets.

Each scattering event is placed in a separate event.

3.1.2. Programs to run on nuclei-lists

These programs can be run on a list produced by the above programs in order to perform various calculations.

SPECTRA

This program, primarily intended to be run on the output of NUCLIST, prints the probabilities of various decay modes from the initial states specified by the nuclide-list. The `-details` flag controls to which level of detail the spectra are printed. This is essentially a program to illustrate the decay widths as calculated by the program, and hence it ignores event numbers.

DEEXCITE

The bulk work of an event generator is performed in this program. Each nucleus in each event in the input file is deexcited until it is below a specified threshold energy, or, alternatively, a given number of deexcitation steps can be specified. The resulting nuclei are printed to a new list, with the event number inherited from their mother nuclei. Combined with the output of QUASI and the post-processing program LIST2GUN, this program is able to act as an event generator for GEANT4 through the wrapper GGLAND.

RHO

This program produces a *tab-separated value* (tsv) file of the level density for each nucleus in the input list. By default, only the Z , N and J of the nuclei is used, and the level density is plotted for a range of excitation energies, rather than the actual energy of the nuclei in the input files, which are ignored in this mode.

POT

Like RHO, this program produces a *tab-separated value* (tsv) file for each nucleus in the input list, this time of the potential a particle has to tunnel through to be emitted by the nuclei in the list. The potential for a given particle-decay can be exported for a range of l values.

TRANS

This program calculates transmission coefficients and prints these to a tsv-file. It takes the same input as POT.

3.1.3. Programs to process the output of the above programs

These programs are used to convert the output to formats more suitable for storage and analysis, or to make it possible to use them as input for other simulations.

OUT2GUN

This program creates a GGLAND *gun file*, which can be used to specify particles and their initial momenta in GGLAND. This allows the output of the above program to be propagated through a simulated experimental setup.

OUT2ROOT

This converts the tsv-files produced by the above programs to a ROOT-file with a tree. This makes it easier to analyze how the output of the ismulation depends on the input.

OUT-SPECTRA2ROOT

Like OUT2ROOT, this creates a ROOT-file with a tree. Unlike the previous program, this is intended to be run on the output of the SPECTRA program, and thus does not represent informations about stochastically generated particles, but rather the underlying propabilities.

4. Results

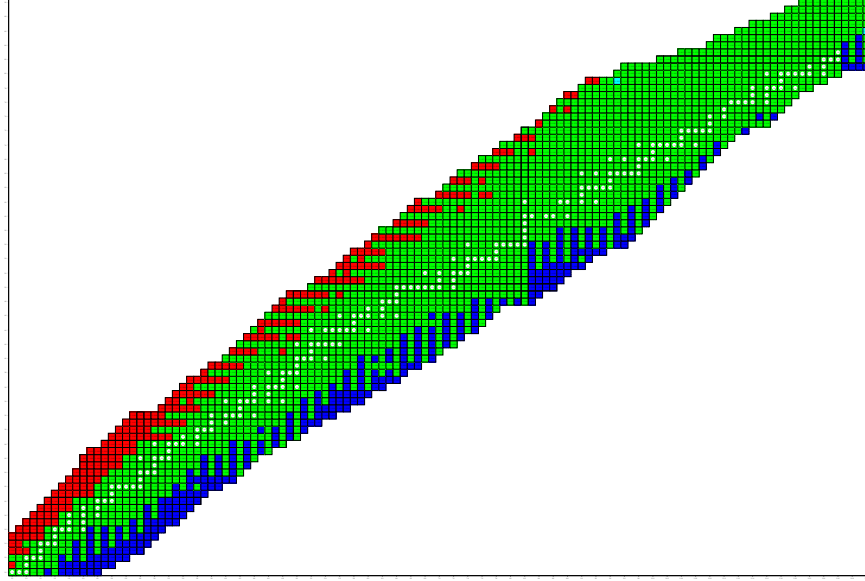
4.1. Preferred Decay Channels

As a first qualitative test to the code, we consider the decay of a wide range of nuclei, from $(Z,N) = (10,10)$ to $(90,130)$. A list of all eligible nuclei was generated by NUCLIST, for 4 different excitation energies, $E^* = 5, 10, 15, 20$ MeV, and $J = 0$. The most likely decay channel of these nuclei were then calculated with SPECTRA.

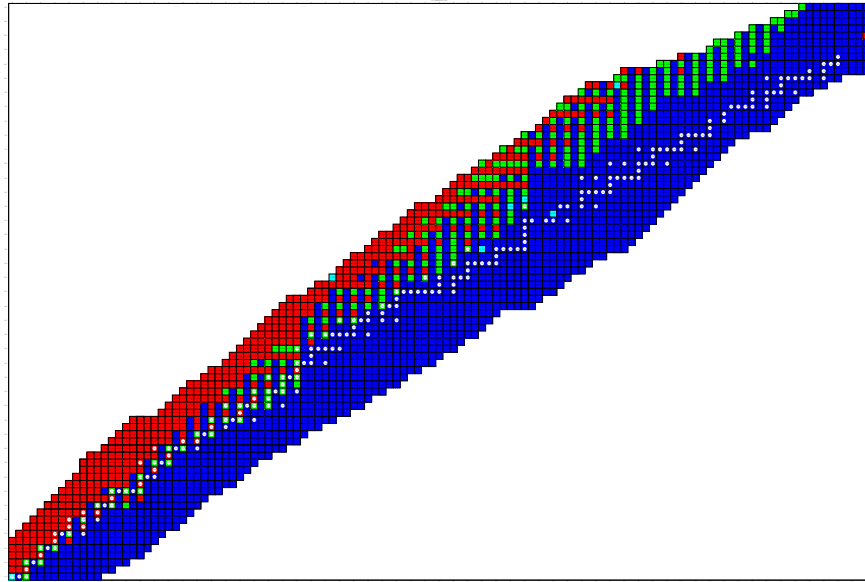
The results, which were run through an OCTAVE script to plot each nuclei on a chart, is presented in Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2. In the first picture, we see how the nuclei close to the line of β -stability preferentially decay by emitting a gamma at $E^* = 5$ MeV, but already at $E^* = 10$ MeV, most nuclei are *particle unstable*. Proton separation energies for stable nuclei are in the range of 7 – 9 MeV [38]. We also see a distinct odd-even effects: nuclei with an even number of a nucleon tend to have higher separation energies, due to pairing. Finally, we note that neutron evaporation is by far more common across the chart, which is to be expected, since protons have to tunnel through the Coulomb barrier. Note however that our Fermi-gas level density will not be valid for low energies, where the discreteness of the levels should be taken into account – these results should be viewed more like a benchmark of the code, than physical predictions.

At yet higher energies, a few potential oddities appear. According to CODEZ, relatively neutron rich nuclei decay by emitting a proton – neutron rich meaning below the region of “proton instability”, and in one case even below the line of β -stability! It could perhaps be that once the energy is high enough for protons to readily tunnel through the Coulomb barrier, a high level density in the daughter nucleus makes the program favor proton decay. This kind of reasoning could also be applied to alpha particles, which have a higher Coulomb barrier, but may be allowed to dominate at sufficiently high energies if the level density of the daughter is favorable. However, we see a few nuclei, $(Z,N) = (17,15); (32,33); (33,34)$ that decay by proton evaporation at $E^* = 10$ MeV, then by α at $E^* = 15$ MeV and by proton at $E^* = 20$ MeV, which could indicate that there is no simple energy threshold above which more *density favored* decay start to dominate. However, α and protons have vastly different centrifugal barriers, which perhaps may explain the more complicated shifts in preferred decay modes.

These results were compared with the output of another nuclear reaction code, TALYS [6]. Specifically, TALYS-1.73 was used, since it adds a keyword to make TALYS print the

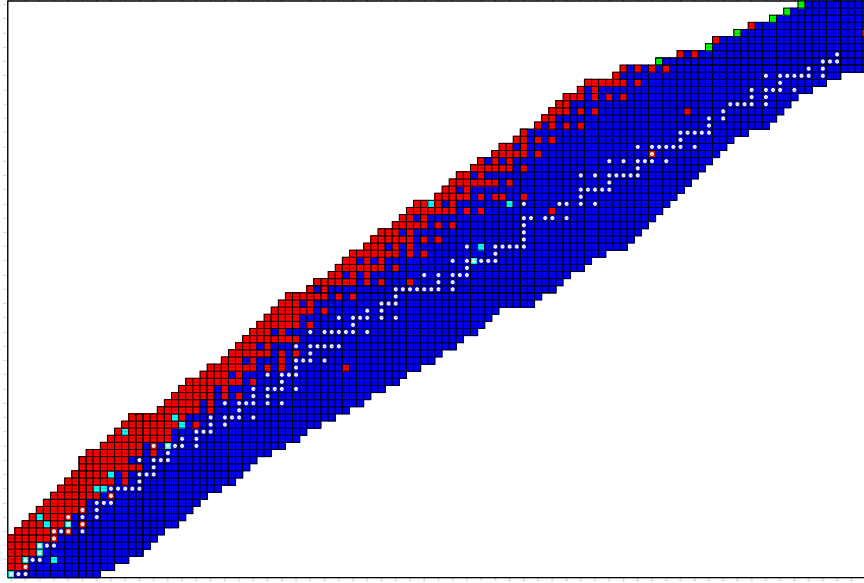


(a) $E^* = 5 \text{ MeV}$

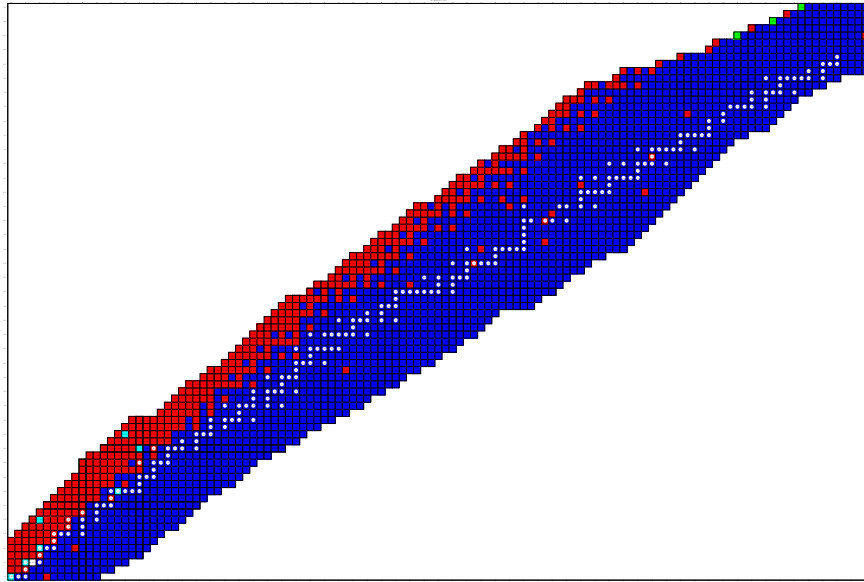


(b) $E^* = 10 \text{ MeV}$

Figure 4.1.: The preferred decay mode of a wide range of nuclei according to CODEZ, for various excitation energies and $J = 0$. The dominant decay mode is indicated as follows: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, cyan=alpha. Nuclei that are beta-stable in their ground-state are marked with a white dot.



(a) $E^* = 15 \text{ MeV}$



(b) $E^* = 20, \text{ MeV}$

Figure 4.2.: The preferred decay mode of a wide range of nuclei according to CODEZ, for various excitation energies and $J = 0$. The dominant decay mode is indicated as follows: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, cyan=alpha. Nuclei that are beta-stable in their ground-state are marked with a white dot.

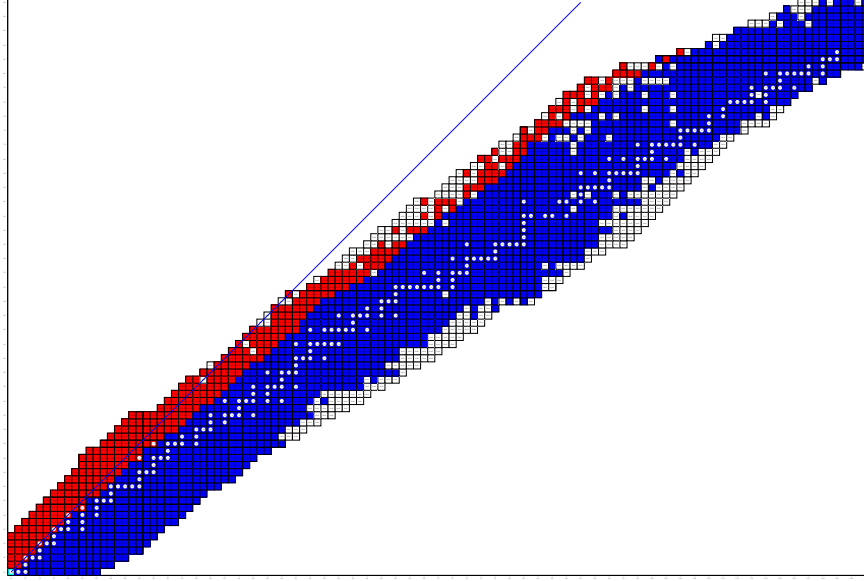


Figure 4.3.: *The preferred decay mode of various nuclei according to TALYS, for the excitation energy $E^* = 20$ MeV. The dominant decay mode is indicated as follows: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, cyan=alpha. Nuclei that are beta-stable in their ground-state are marked with a white dot. Nuclei which had no suitable level near $E^* = 20$ MeV are displayed in white.*

emission spectra from a specific excited level¹. The results of the TALYS simulations can be seen in Figure 4.3, for $E^* = 20$ MeV. Since TALYS uses discrete levels when these are known (complemented with theoretical models up to the 100th level [6]), it is not always able to populate a $E^* \approx 20$ MeV level, and for these nuclei (white in Figure 4.3), no spectra was simulated. No restriction on the spin of the levels were imposed, and in the cases where two levels were suitably close to $E^* \approx 20$ MeV, the highest level was chosen. This is also why we only compare with TALYS for higher excitation energies.

We see that the spectra are in qualitative agreement, and that the oddities of the CODEZ output is not present in the TALYS results, which on the whole has a less jagged boundary between the region of proton and neutron instability.

¹Thanks to Arjan Koning for implementing this!

Nucleus	S_p	S_n	S_α (MeV)
^{28}F	19.0	-0.228	16.7
^{28}Ne	21.0	3.90	10.3
^{28}Na	15.3	3.54	11.0
^{28}Mg	16.8	8.50	11.5
^{28}Al	9.55	7.72	10.9
^{28}Si	11.6	17.2	9.98
^{28}P	2.06	14.5	9.53
^{28}S	2.50	21.5	9.10

Table 4.1.: *The separation energies of nuclei on the $A = 28$ isobar, for proton, neutron and alpha-particle emission.*

4.1.1. A more detailed spectra of the $A = 28$ isobar.

In order to investigate how the region of proton and neutron instability evolves with higher excitation energies, we look at the particle spectra of the $A = 28$ isobar. This isobar was chosen since it displays some of the anomalous behavior discussed above, and since we eventually want to focus on lighter nuclei when we later apply the code. The behaviour for lower energies is illustrated in Figure 4.4. ^{28}F is neutron unbound, while the other nuclei start to decay dominantly by neutron and proton emission almost as soon as they pass over the separation energies, which is presented in Table 4.1. At even higher energies, as presented in Figure 4.5, alpha evaporation starts to become energetically possible, and also – apparently – tritium evaporation, although that has a low probability of occurring. At yet higher energies, Figure 4.6, the probability for alpha decay starts to decrease again – possibly due to evaporation of particles in higher l -states becoming possible for the lighter particles. For comparison, the output spectra from TALYS at $E^* = 20$ MeV is presented in Figure 4.7. Notably, the α -branching ratio is significantly lower for ^{28}Si .

To investigate how the individual decay modes vary with energy, we finally take a look at the full, energy dependent emission spectrum of a single nucleus. To see how the α -decay mode manages to compete with proton and neutron evaporation, we have plotted the likelihood of ^{28}Mg emitting protons, alphas and neutrons, for various l ; see Figure 4.8 and Figure 4.9. As we see in these figures, which shows the energy cost off emitting the particles², $E_i^* - E_f^*$, each particle has a most likely excitation energy to be emitted at. This is due to the fact that highly excited particles “saturate” their transmission coefficients, one l at a time, but because the lowest energy to tunnel through the centrifugal barrier (in our model) goes like $l(l+1)$, the particles are only able to

²We plot $E_i^* - E_f^*$ rather than the kinetic energy of the emitted particle, $E_i^* - E_f^* - S$, in order to shift the graphs so that the probabilities become non-zero at $\Delta E = S$, which makes it easier to relate the likelihoods of emission to the excitation energy of the mother nucleus. Note however that the relative emission probabilities are unrelated to the excitation energy of the initial state provided that it has enough energy to emit the most likely particle: the $\rho(E_i^*, J_i)$ cancel each other.

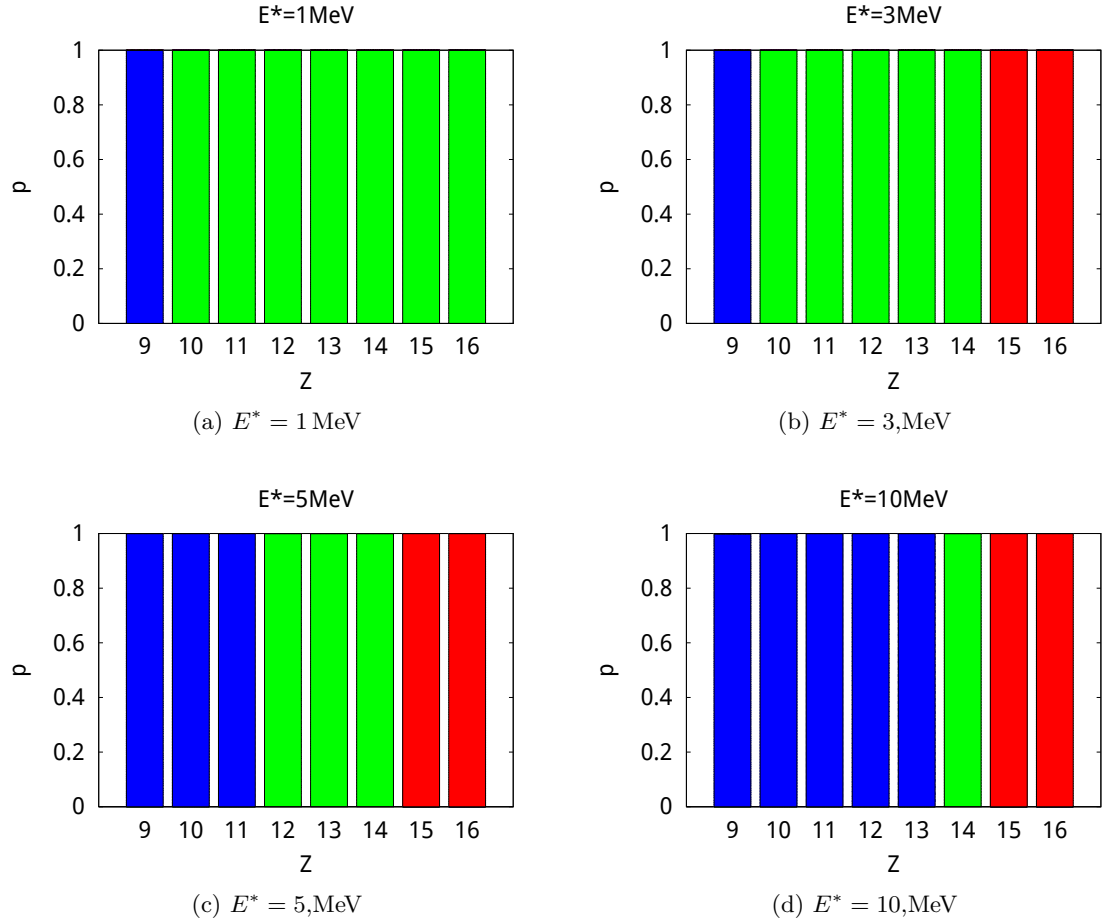


Figure 4.4.: The branching ratios for various decay modes at various energies for nuclei in the $A = 28$, according to CODEZ. The spin is $J = 0$ in all cases. The energies have been chosen to display changes in the spectrum. The colors signify the different decay modes: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma.

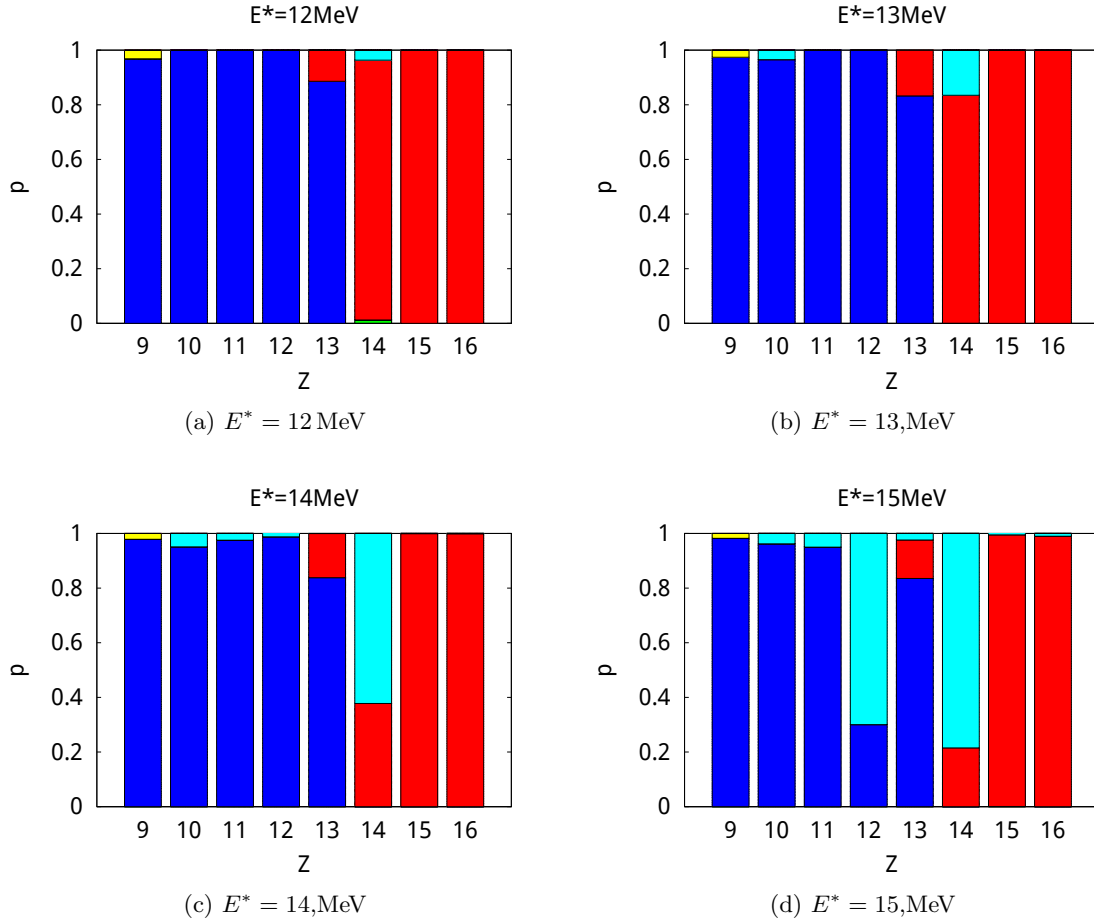


Figure 4.5.: The branching ratios for various decay modes at various energies for nuclei in the $A = 28$, according to CODEZ. The spin is $J = 0$ in all cases. The energies have been chosen to display changes in the spectrum. The colors signify the different decay modes: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, yellow=triton, black=deuteron

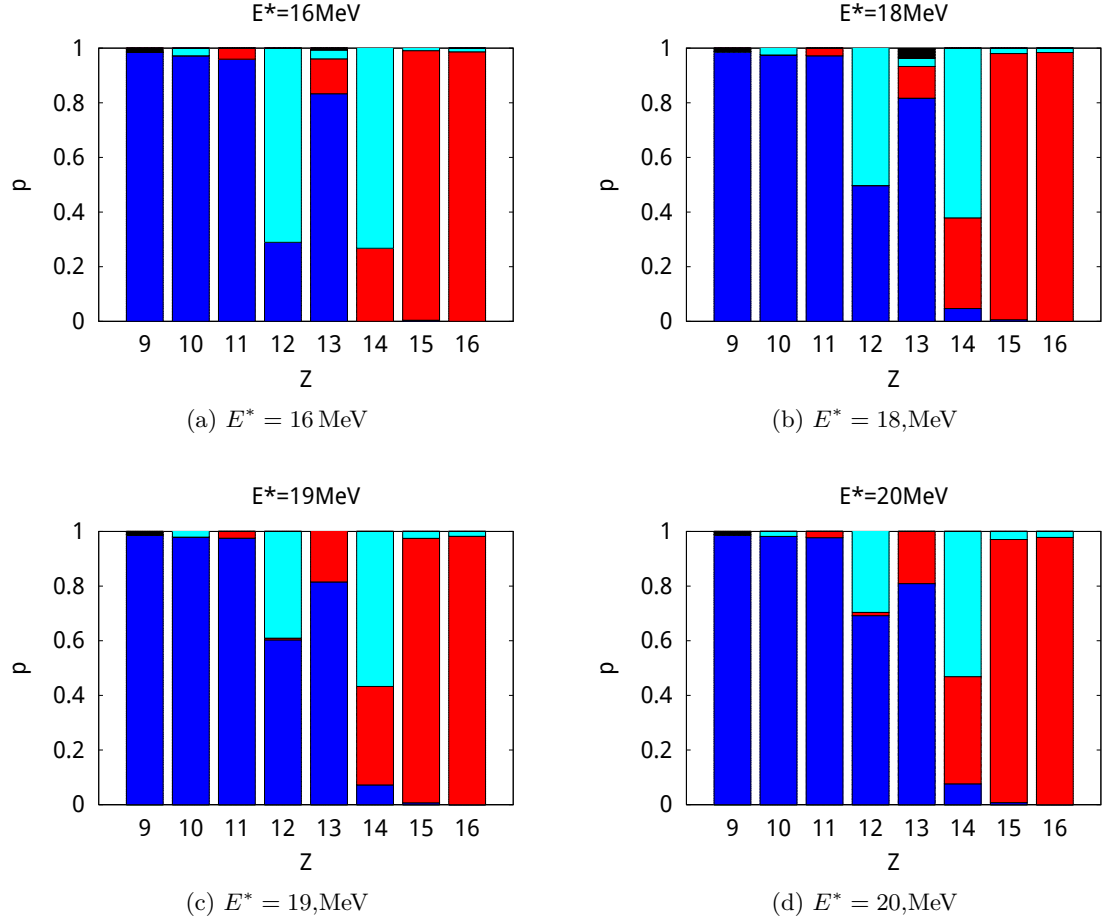


Figure 4.6.: The branching ratios for various decay modes at various energies for nuclei in the $A = 28$, according to CODEZ. The spin is $J = 0$ in all cases. The energies have been chosen to display changes in the spectrum. The colors signify the different decay modes: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, yellow=triton, black=deuteron

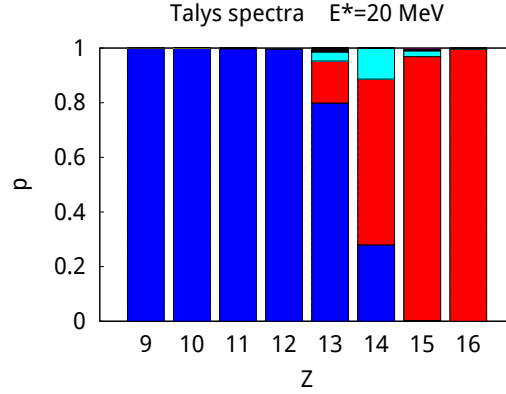


Figure 4.7.: *The branching ratios for various decay modes at $E^* = 20$ MeV for nuclei in the $A = 28$ isobar, according to TALYS. The colors signify the different decay modes: blue=neutron, red=proton, green=gamma, black=deuteron. The spin has been determined by TALYS, which populates discrete levels close to 20 MeV. Plotted is the decay modes from the highest such level.*

saturate a relatively low number of T_l 's until they carry away so much energy that $\rho(E_f^*)$ becomes negligible in comparison to its value at higher E_f^* . Alpha particles, which have a lower centrifugal barrier, are able to saturate five l -values, while protons and neutrons only saturate two, which is reasonably given that $4(4 + 1)/(2(2 + 1)) = \frac{10}{3} \approx 4$, which is the ratio relating the nucleon and alpha centrifugal barrier. We also see that each l for neutron and proton emission has two curves, related to the fact that there are two ways to couple the spin of the nucleons (the initial state has $J = 0$). The alpha particle, being a spin zero particle, only has one curve for each l .

In short: a particle carrying away a lot of energy will easily tunnel, but the level density of the final state is much, much higher if the particle carries away just a small amount of energy, and thus high energy emission is effectively suppressed, and we get a peak in the emission probabilities for the respective particles. Once our excitation energy is above these peaks, they may be emitted by the most likely way, and hence that probability gets saturated. That being said, the branching ratios can of course benefit from less likely ways to emit, and excitation energies beyond the peak makes the tail of the distribution available for the decays, but we do not expect to see dramatic swings like in the alpha spectrum for ^{28}Mg between 14 MeV and 15 MeV in Figure 4.5, which coincides rather nicely with the peak in Figure 4.9.

4.2. Gamma Multiplicities

As an interesting application of the code, we have investigated how γ -rays are produced in a quasi-elastic ($p, 2p$)-event between ^{17}N and a proton target propagate through parts

4. Results

Figure 4.8.: *The simulated probability that ^{28}Mg decays by proton emission (4.9a) and neutron emission (4.9b), respectively.*

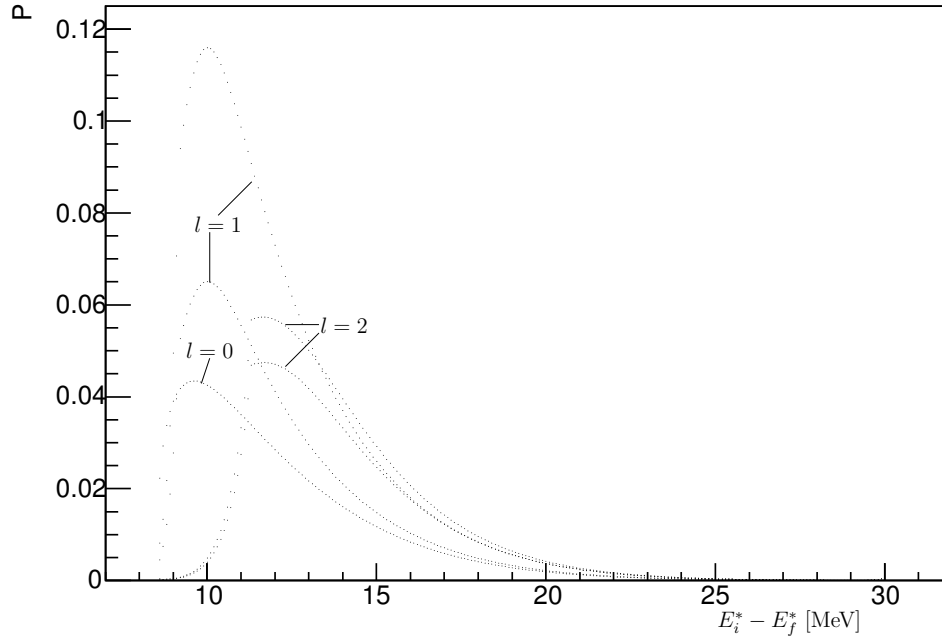
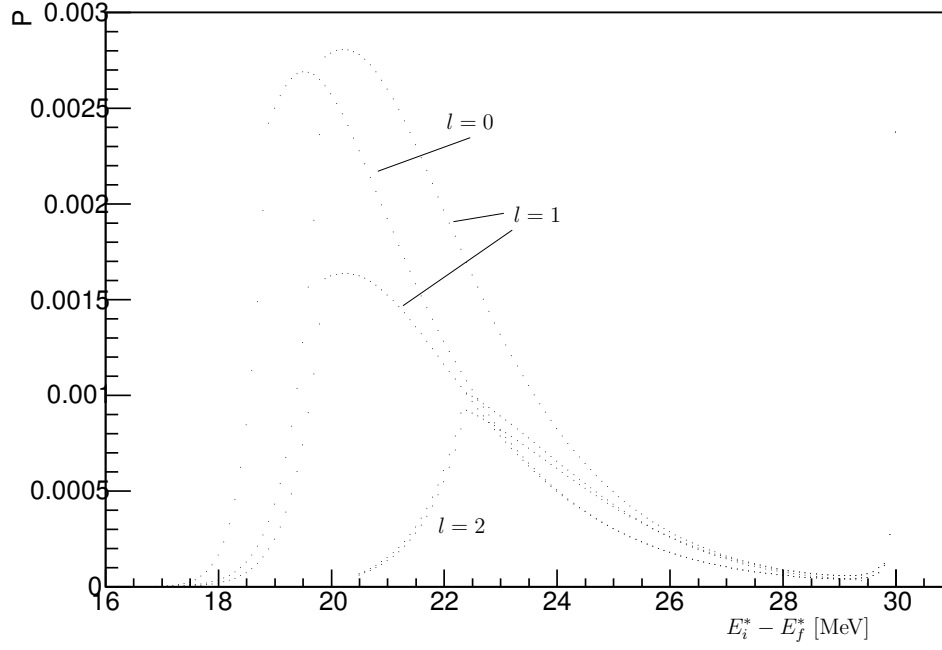
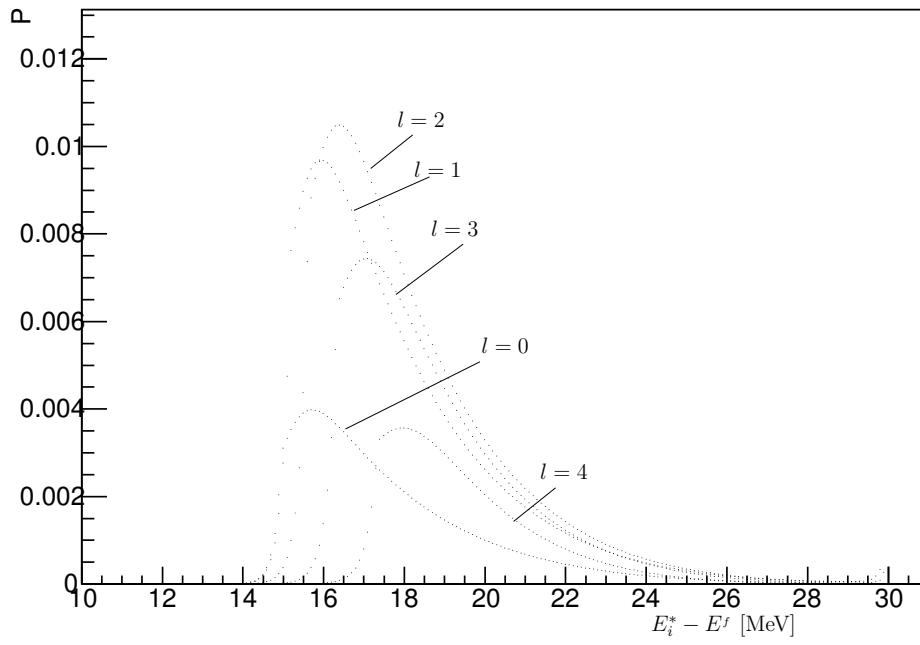


Figure 4.9.: The simulated probability that ^{28}Mg decays by alpha emission.



of the *S393* experimental setup in Cave C at GSI. The ^{17}N nucleus had a kinetic energy of $419\text{ MeV} = 7123\text{ MeV}$.

In order to compare CODEZ with the experimental data, its output was propagated through the experimental setup described in Table 4.2 by the Monte-Carlo GEANT4 – used through GGLAND. Furthermore, in order to account for the fact that photons Compton-scatter in the Crystal ball detector, energy deposits in nearby crystals are summed up according to an *addback routine*.

An addback routine is a heuristic method intended to compensate for the fact that γ -rays do not necessarily deposit all of their energy in one crystal. There are several ways to address this³, but since we are interested in comparing our simulations with experimental data, we will use this algorithm:

- Remove energy depositions over 10 MeV (they are too large to likely be photons)
- Take the highest of the remaining energy depositions.
- Add to this energy the energy deposited in neighbouring crystals at most 30 ns before or after the primary deposit, and remove these deposits afterwards. The resulting energy is taken as the total energy the γ -ray deposited in the Crystal Ball.
- Repeat until all energy deposits are exhausted.

In addition, it was required that the energy deposited be greater than 0.1 MeV: the real detector will have some threshold energy, and a lot of low energy electrons are produced in the simulations, so it is both practical and realistic to impose such a limit. The value used is somewhat arbitrary, but is low in relation to typical values.

This algorithm was applied to the output of several GEANT4 simulations for different initial excitation energies. The resulting E_γ energies, together with the actual gamma energies, are plotted in Figure 4.10. We note that the identified gamma spectrum does not change notably with the excitation energy in this range, while the actual gamma spectrum contains a larger number of outliers for higher excitation energies.

That being said, what is emitted by the excited nucleus and what reaches the detectors are two different things. Neither of the figures in Figure 4.10 necessarily tell us how much energy γ -rays actually deposited in the Crystal Ball.

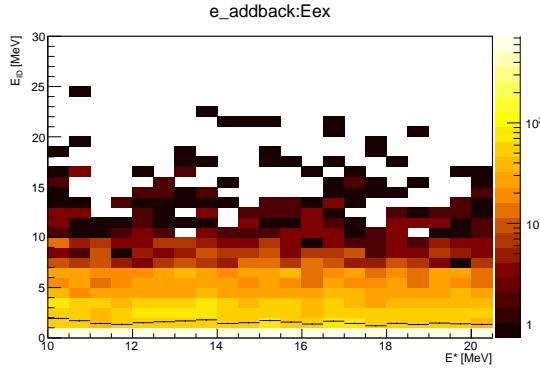
Finally, as a test of the addback routines ability to reconstruct the number of γ -rays emitted in an event, we have in Figure 4.11 the number of times γ -rays were identified, and the number of times they were actually generated in the reaction. Again, we see that what is identified has little to do with what is emitted in the actual simulated reaction.

That being said, it is not obvious that the number of photons CODEZ emits is entirely realistic, since the discreteness of the level density should be apparent at the energies where γ -rays are preferentially emitted. There were also a high number of low energy deposits attributed to electrons in the simulation. These so-called δ *electrons* are secondary radiation produced as a result of charged particles ionizing the medium they

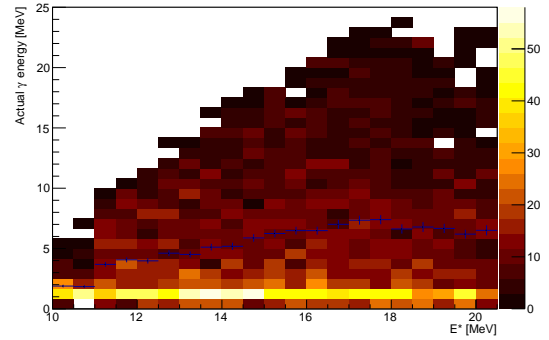
³see for example Simon 2013 [2] for an evaluation of a few different methods

Table 4.2.: *The simulated experimental setup, with detectors, the positions of their center, and the string used to place them in GGLAND. The axes are oriented so as to produce a right-handed coordinate-system with z in the beam direction, and y pointing upwards. Rotations refer to rotations around these axes with respect to the origin. The Crystal Ball covers the area around the reaction, which is located at the origin in between the thin silicone strip detectors (SST 3–6).*

Detector name	Position	GGLAND-string
SST-1	$z = 11$ cm	-sst-1=z0=11cm
SST-2	$z = 14$ cm	-sst-2=z0=14cm
SST-3	$y = 2.05$ cm	-sst-3=z0=2.05cm,roty=90deg
SST-4	$y = -2.05$ cm	-sst-4=z0=-2.05cm,roty=90deg
SST-5	$x = 2.05$ cm	-sst-5=z0=2.05cm,roty=90deg,rotz=90deg
SST-6	$x = -2.05$ cm	-sst-6=z0=-2.05cm,roty=90deg,rotz=90deg
Crystal Ball	At the origin	-xb=z0=0cm



(a) The identified γ energy.



(b) The actual energy the γ -rays were produced with.

Figure 4.10.: *The gamma-multiplicities from simulations with ^{17}N at a kinetic energy $T = 7123$ MeV undergoing a quasi-elastic ($p,2p$) reaction with a proton at rest in the origin. The simulations were performed for prefragment excitation energies E^* in the interval $[10,20]$ MeV with a 0.5 MeV spacing. The y-axis shows the gamma energy deposits – event by event – as determined by the addback routine and the actual gamma energy, respectively.*

4. Results

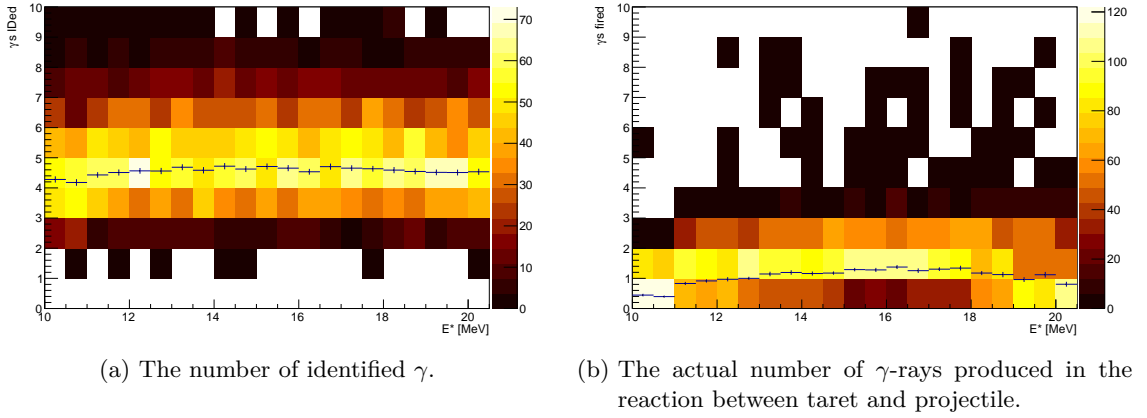


Figure 4.11.: *The gamma-multiplicities from simulations with ^{17}N at a kinetic energy $T = 7123 \text{ MeV}$ undergoing a quasi-elastic $(p,2p)$ reaction with a proton at rest in the origin. The simulations were performed for prefragment excitation energies E^* in the interval $[10,20] \text{ MeV}$ with a 0.5 MeV spacing.*

pass through, and they could largely be filtered by imposing another, higher, threshold energy.

5. Outlook and Conclusions

As of today, 2015-06-02, the CODEZ code is complete in the sense that it has models for all the quantities needed in a statistical decay code. However, there is a reason that the original, CODEX code had something close to seven models for everything: the code would be more accurate if it was used together with models suited for specific nuclei.

At this point, it should be fairly straightforward to implement new models. The object oriented structure of the code means that the user just has to inherit the appropriate model object, and override the model they wish to change. To allow for the multiple models to coexist without forcing the user to recompile, it may be suitable to implement a *factory method* to declare which model class to use, and a corresponding new command-line option to control this factor method.

Since most of the functions accept a *Nucleus object* as input, the interface should have no problems to accomodate more general input parameters. For example: nuclei with a given deformation could be implemented by inheriting the nucleus class, and the same interface could be used for all these classes. There are some potential design problems with different models for deformation dependent parameters, since this places a burden on the models to implement functions for all kinds of deformation; the program may need to signal to the user when it cannot handle their nucleus subclass, so that it does not just run the undeformed case without the users knowledge. To some extent, it may be possible to place some of these burdens on the person implementing the nucleus subclasses, by forcing them to write functions to convert their deformation parametrization to a standardized one, but that may not be straightforward, especially if nuclei at the saddle-point for fission were to be implemented, with their rather distinct x -parameter shapes.

The current setup, with the simulation steps split into separate programs, should be very easy to run in parallel with something like GNU PARALLEL, but passing large amounts of data through a pipe may not be optimal from a performance point of view. At one point, it seemed as if performance would not be an issue, which motivated the decision to split up the program, but it may be worth to consider rewriting it with higher performance in mind. Although this structure has the advantage of having a standardized flow control (all sub-programs parse command-line options in much the same way), the long command lines required to run a specific tasks means that the user will want to keep it in a script, and at that point, they might as well have created an input file.

In short, there are a lot of things that could be done for the code. Whether the code

5. Outlook and Conclusions

will actually do something for its users remains to be seen, and the curious reader is advised to read the relevant appendix¹ on how to get started!

¹To be implemented!

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A. Retrieving and running the CODEZ code

TODO.