

FIRST EXPERIMENTAL OBSERVATIONS OF THE PLASMA-CASCADE INSTABILITY IN THE CEC PoP ACCELERATOR

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Abstract

Preservation of the beam quality is important for attaining the desirable properties of the beam. Collective effects can produce an instability severely degrading beam emittance, momentum spread and creating filamentation of the beam. Microbunching instability for beams traveling along a curved trajectory, and space charge driven parametric transverse instabilities are well-known and in-depth studied. However, none of the above include a microbunching longitudinal instability driven by modulations of the transverse beam size. This phenomenon was observed for the first time during the commissioning of the CeC PoP experiment. Based on the dynamics of this instability we named it a Plasma-Cascade Instability (PCI). PCI can strongly intensify longitudinal micro-bunching originating from the beam's shot noise, and even saturate it. Resulting random density and energy microstructures in the beam can become a serious problem for generating high quality electron beams. On the other hand, such instability can drive novel high-power sources of broadband radiation. In this paper we present our experimental observations of the PCI and the supporting results of the numerical simulations.



Fig. 1: Panoramic view of the CeC system installed in IP2.

Coherent electron Cooling Proof of Principle Experiment

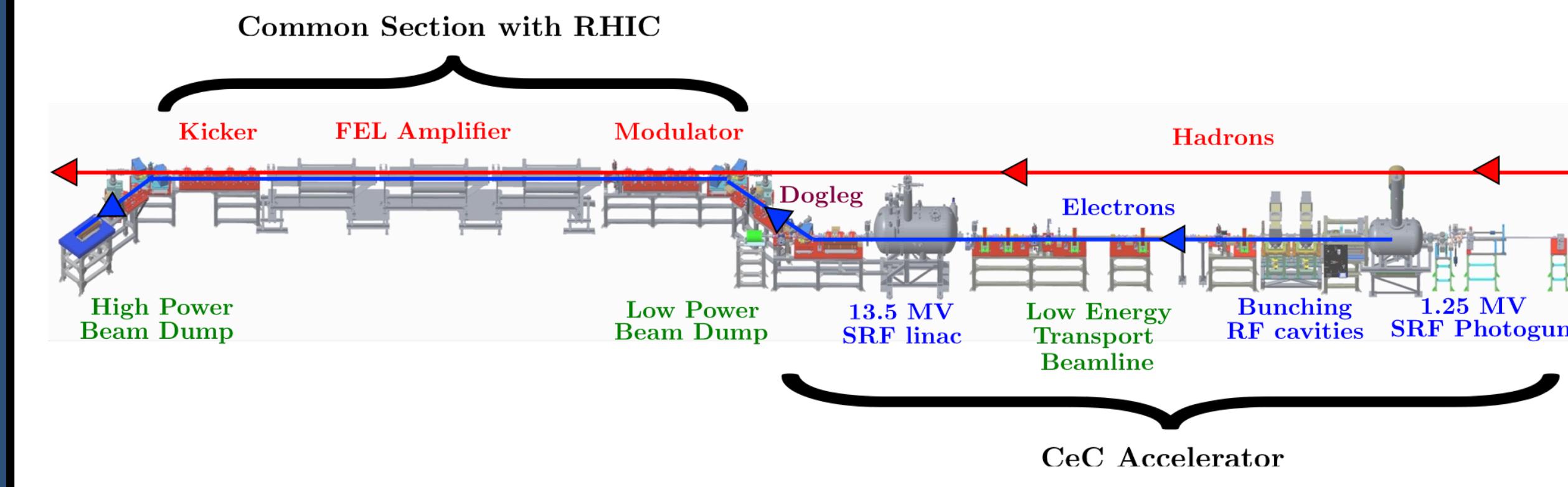


Fig. 2: Layout of the CeC system and its accelerator

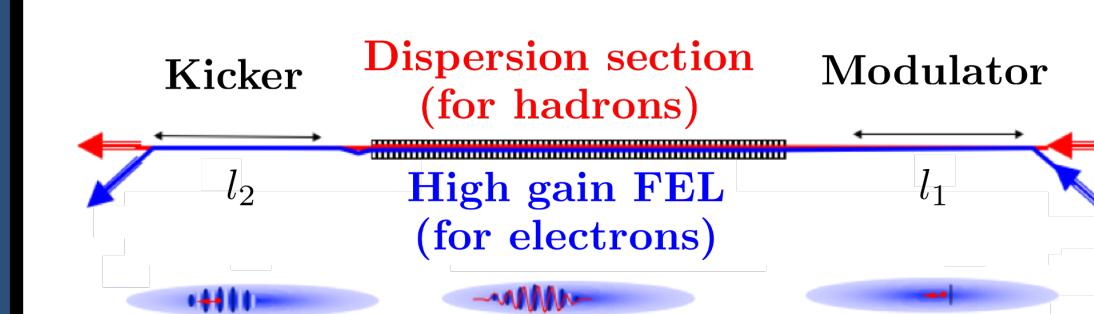


Fig. 3: Economical version of CeC, where electron and hadron beams are not separated.

Parameter	Design	Status	Comment
Species in RHIC (GeV/u)	Au ⁺⁷⁹ 40	Au ⁺⁷⁹ 26.5	to match e-beam
Electron energy (MeV)	21.95	14.56	linac quench
Charge per electron bunch (nC)	0.5-5	0.1-10.7	✓
Peak current (A)	100	50-100	✓
Bunch duration (psec)	10-50	12	✓
Normalized beam emittance (mm-mrad)	< 5	3-5	✓
Energy spread, RMS (%)	0.1	0.1	✓
FEL wavelength (μm)	13	31	new IR diagnostics
Repetition rate (kHz)	78.18	78.18	✓
CW beam (μA)	<400	150	✓

Fig. 4: Panoramic view of the CeC system installed in IP2.

Fig. 5: Low energy beam transport (LEBT) line.

Plasma-Cascade Instability

The PCI is a microwave instability occurring in beams which propagate in a straight line, and is driven by modulation of the electron beam density via transverse focusing. The resulting modulation of the frequency of the plasma oscillations can result in a strong exponentially growing longitudinal instability.

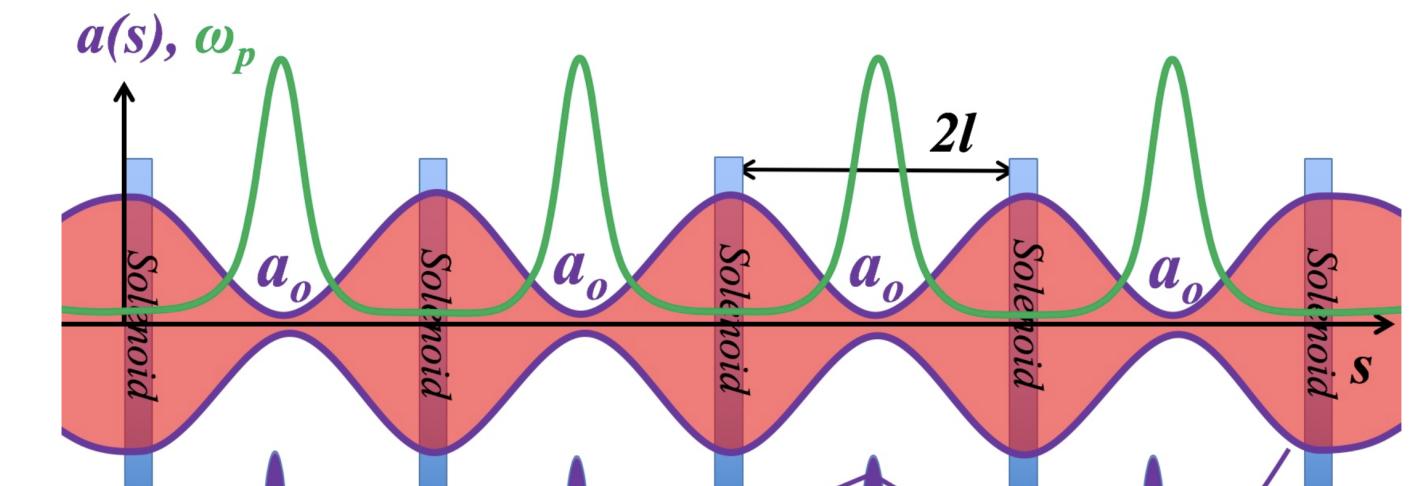


Fig. 6: A sketch of four focusing cells with periodic modulations of beam envelope, $a(s)$ (purple with red shading), and the plasma frequency, ω_p (green outline). Beam envelope has waists, a_0 , in the middle of each cell where plasma frequency peaks. Scales are attuned for illustration purpose. The bottom sketch illustrates an unstable ray trajectory in a system of periodic focusing lenses—an analog of unstable longitudinal oscillations. The waists of the beam serve as "short focusing elements" for the longitudinal plasma oscillations.

When the oscillator frequency is modulated with a period close to a half of oscillation period, it results in an exponential growth of oscillation amplitude: the phenomenon known as parametric resonance, which leads to an instability. The set of two coupled second order differential equations (see Eq. 2) gives a complete description of the PCI: the transverse envelope equation and the equation for the longitudinal density modulation \hat{q}_k .

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d^2\hat{a}}{ds^2} - \frac{k_{sc}^2}{\hat{a}} - \frac{k_\beta^2}{\hat{a}^3} &= 0, \\ \frac{d^2\hat{q}_k}{ds^2} + \frac{2k_{sc}^2}{\hat{a}^2}\hat{q}_k &= 0 \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Here we utilize a set of dimensionless parameters inherited from [3], with normalized beam envelope $\hat{a} = \frac{a}{a_0}$, where a_0 is the beam waist; $\hat{s} = \frac{s}{l}$ is the longitudinal distance s normalized to the half of the lattice period. The beam envelope inside the cell is fully determined by the two dimensionless parameters: the space charge, $k_{sc} = \sqrt{\frac{2}{\beta^3} \frac{I_0^2}{L_a a_0^2}}$, and the geometric (or emittance), $k_\beta = \frac{eI}{a_0^2}$. Here we denote the beam current as I_0 , and $L_a = \frac{mc^3}{e}$ is the Alfvén current.

Figure 7 demonstrates the growth rate in one cell of the system which depends on the above mentioned parameters. The plot defines the stable and unstable regions of the solution, indicating that the growth rate peaks along the ridge $k_\beta = 3(k_{sc} - 1.2)$.

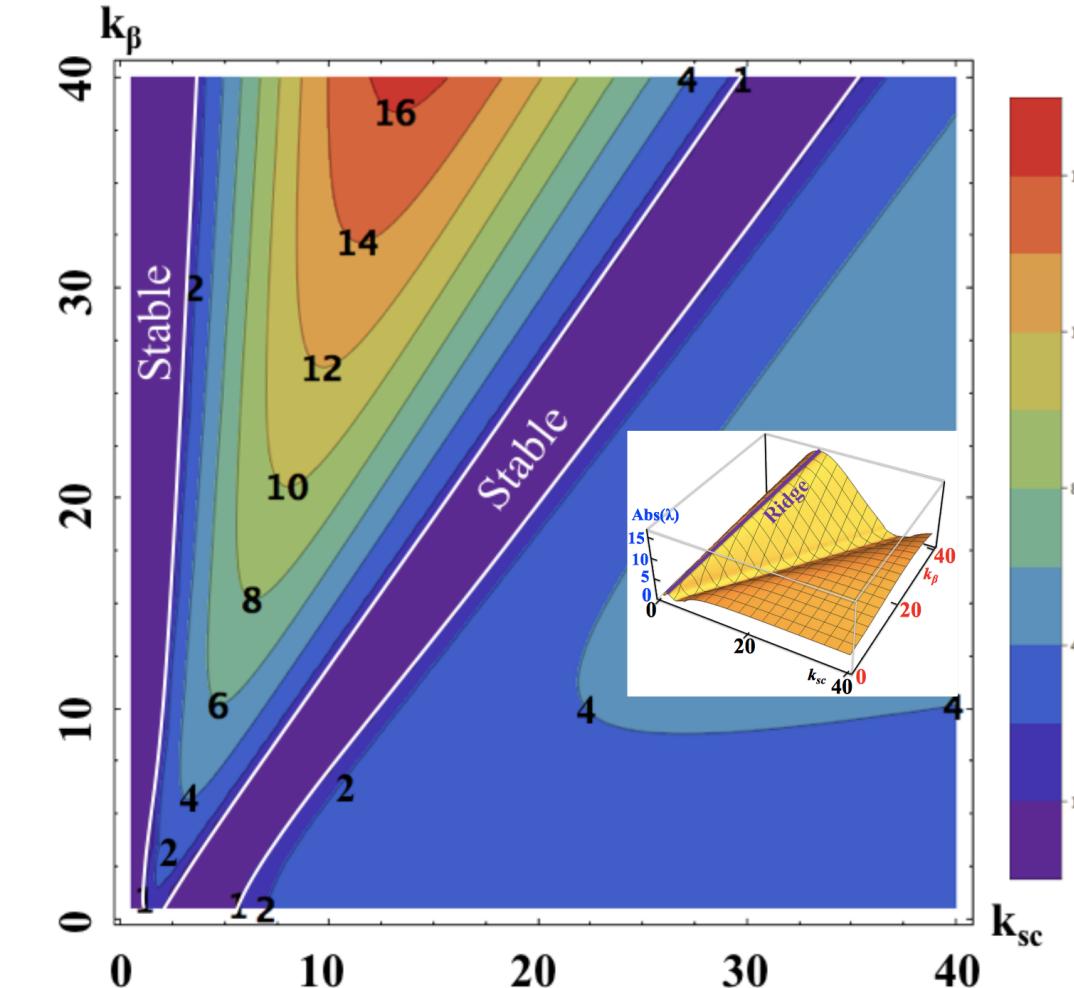


Fig. 7: Contour plots of the absolute value of the growth rate per cell. Purple area highlighted by white lines indicates the areas of the stable oscillations. Density modulation grows exponentially outside these areas. The 3D form of this graph in the inset shows clearly identifiable ridge along the $k_\beta = 3(k_{sc} - 1.2)$ line, where the growth rates peak.

Suppression of the PCI

We dedicated our experiment in 2019 to the extensive study of the PCI suppression with the goal to demonstrate the ability to deliver a quiet beam with the noise level applicable for the future cooling experiments. The IR detector was installed at the end of the beamline for the characterization of the synchrotron radiation in the THz range from the bending magnet due to the longitudinal density modulation in the beam.

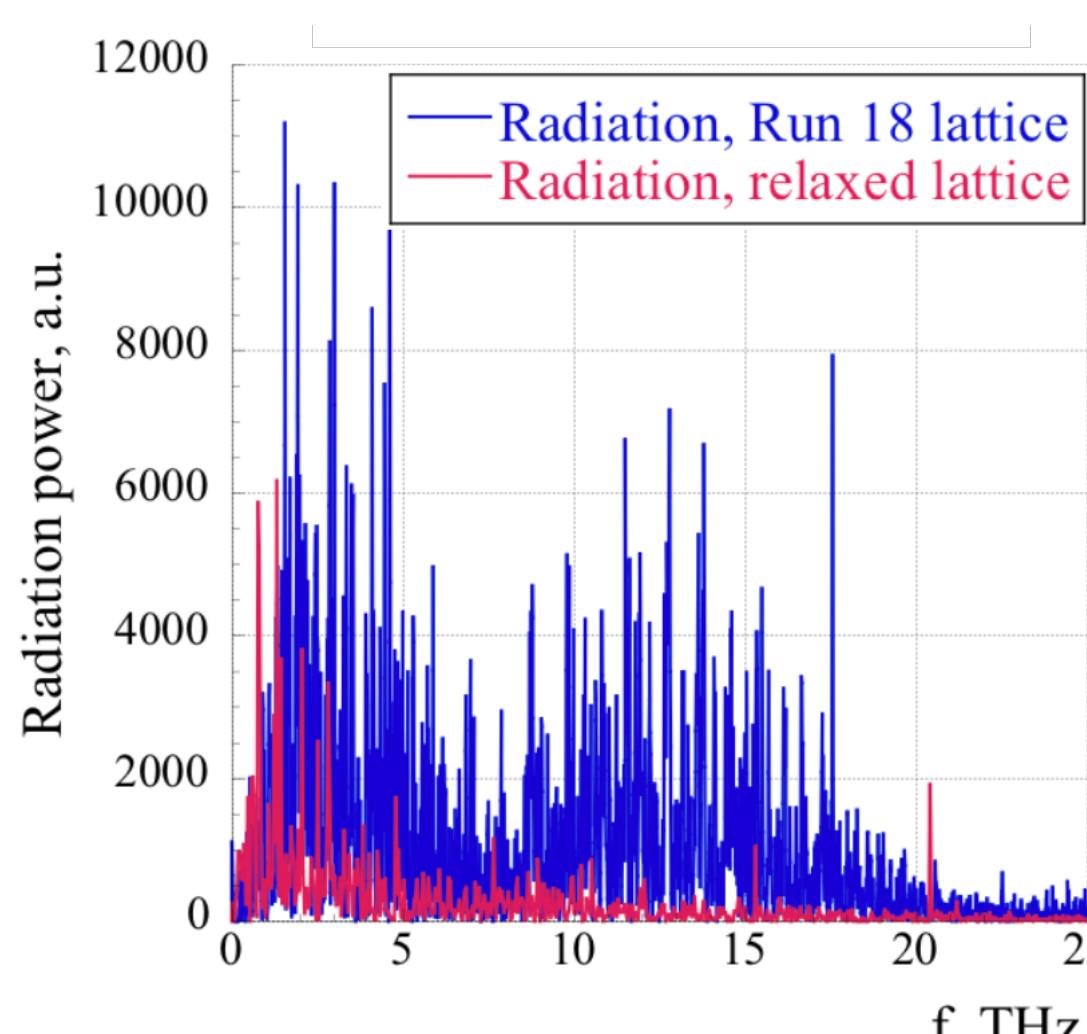


Fig. 8: Radiation spectrum of the compressed 0.7 nC electron bunch at the exit of the SRF linac simulated by IMPACT-T for standard CeC lattice (blue) and relaxed lattice (red).

The baseline of the radiation was established for a slightly (4-fold) compressed beam in a relaxed LEBT lattice. Averaged over 4 long scans, the lock-in amplifier signal for the baseline was found to be about 145 V/C. The minimal goal for the experiment was to demonstrate that the ratio of the noise from the PCI to the shot noise in the electron beam can be reduced to 100 and below. As a result of the lattice optimization we were able to achieve a noise level exceeding the shot noise by only a factor of 4 to 10 for a large range of the lattices.

Figure 8 shows the comparison between the radiation power spectra obtained for the lattice used during the CeC PoP demonstration experiment and a so-called relaxed lattice specifically designed for noise suppression. The result clearly demonstrates that the PCI can be suppressed at the frequencies around 10 THz, when compared to the radiation power spectra for the regular lattice.

Applications of the PCI—Plasma-Cascade Amplifier

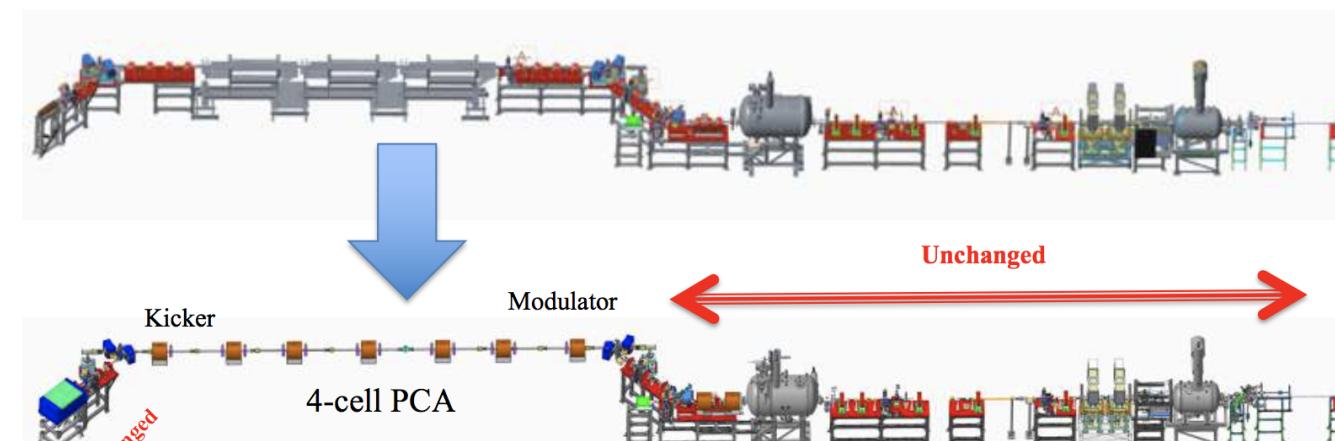


Fig. 10: Schematics of CeC with a Plasma-Cascade Amplifier.

The newly discovered instability has become the base of a new scheme for the CeC amplifier. The new amplifier scheme is broadband, rather simple, cost effective, and doesn't require separation of the ion and electron beams compared to the other schemes alternative to the FEL. A simple schematic of a PCI amplifier (PCA) is shown in Fig. 10. Figure 11 demonstrates the proposed layout for the future PCA-based CeC PoP experiment.

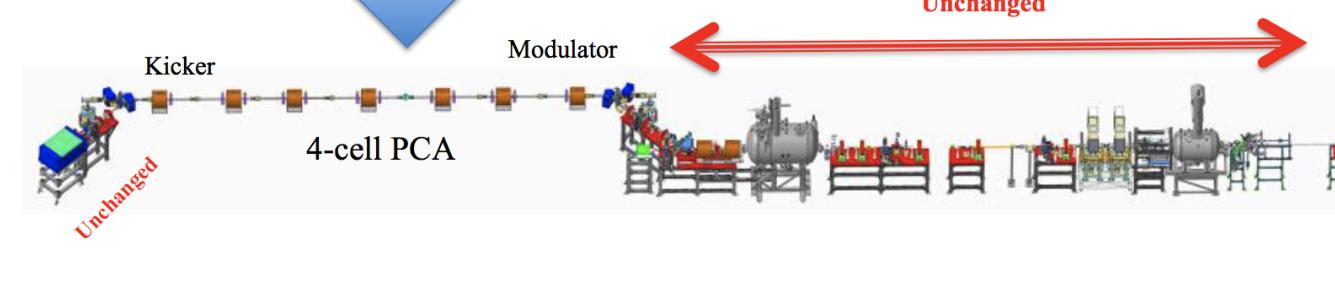


Fig. 11: Schematics of the transition between the FEL-based CeC and the PCA-based CeC.

Experimental Observations of the PCI

To detect the presence of a density modulation within the beam, we attempted to study the longitudinal beam profile by utilizing the combination of the 45° dipole and the off-crest operation of the 5-cell 704 MHz SRF cavity. Due to the lack of a dedicated beamline for diagnostics, we established operation of the 5-cell cavity at zero crossing with low accelerating voltage of $V \sim 100-200$ kV, which allowed us to correlate particle's energy with the arrival time. The dipole and the profile monitor located in the dogleg served as the energy spectrometer.

Figure 14 demonstrates a clear dependence of the PCI on the beam charge: the structures vanish below 100 pC, and enhance with increased charge.

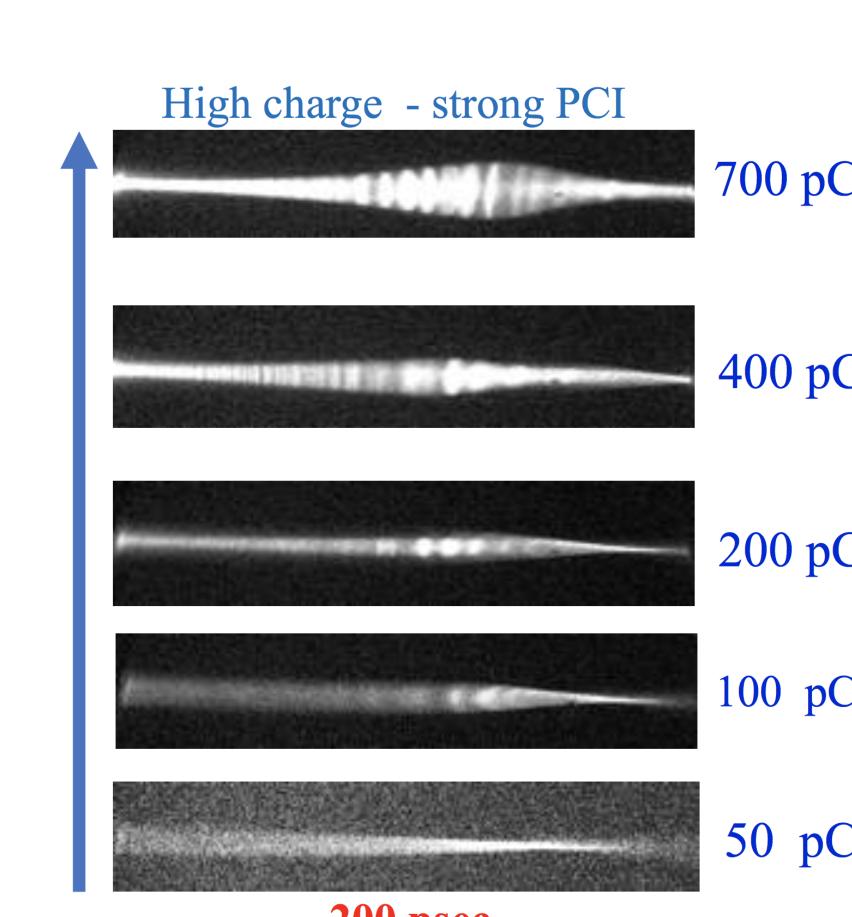


Fig. 14: A set of randomly selected structures measured for uncompressed electron bunches with charge ranging from 50 pC to 700 pC per bunch. Density modulation diminishes at low bunch charges < 100 pC, but becomes very prominent with increasing charge per bunch.

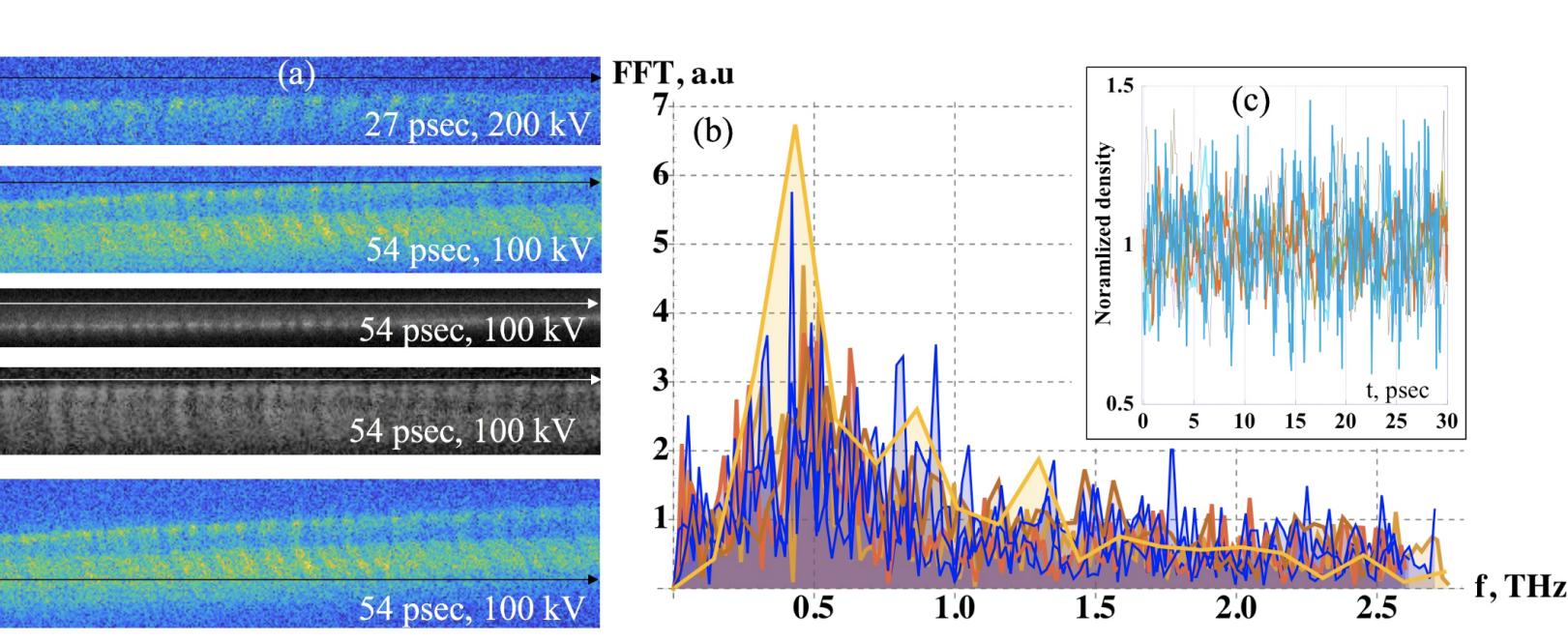


Fig. 15: Analysis of the bunch time profiles for various charges: (a) measured time profiles for charges from 0.45 nC to 0.7 nC (top to bottom); (b) seven overlapping spectra of measured bunch density modulation and the PCI spectrum simulated by SPACE (slightly elevated yellow line); (c) a 20-psec fragment of seven measured relative density modulations.

The post-processing of several randomly selected time profiles measured for various beam charges from 0.45 to 0.7 nC clearly indicated a strong density modulation along the beam. The FFT of the time profiles showed a good agreement with the result of simulations performed with the code SPACE [6, 7], and demonstrated a prominent peak at 0.4 THz.

For the CeC operation we were compressing 400 psec electron bunches with a charge of 0.7-1.4 nC to a peak current of 50-100 A. This required ~20-fold compression of the electron beam, which proportionally shifted the frequency of the density modulation to around 10 THz.

Acknowledgments

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