Investigation of Inelastic Reactions in Deuteron Proton Collisions Between $T_d = 437$ and 559 MeV Using the PROMICE/WASA Detector at CELSIUS.

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Abstract

This work describes an experiment and its analysis aiming at a decomposition of contributions from different production mechanisms for $dp \to dN\pi$ reactions within the energy region of $T_d = 437 - 559\,\mathrm{MeV}$ (in terms of maximum pion momenta: $0.32 < \eta = p^{c.m.}_{\pi,max}/m_\pi c < 0.86$).

The experiment has been performed at the CELSIUS storage ring in Uppsala (Sweden) using the PROMICE/WASA detector setup, with its ability to detect and reconstruct charged particles under forward angles and γ's from e.g. π^o decays with a central calorimeter. Particles, which have not been detected have been reconstructed via missing mass.

The application of a (cooled) deuteron beam in conjunction with an internal H_2 cluster-jet target allowed to study regions of phase space where quasi-free $pN \to d\pi$ production mechanisms, as predicted by [MN 93], become visible.

This was of particular importance, since recently precise measurements on the reaction $pd \to pd\pi^o$ have been published for the first time in the near threshold region of $T_p = 208.4 - 294.6\,\mathrm{MeV}$ $(0.10 < \eta < 0.96)$ [Roh 94]. The results of [Roh 94] were indicating production mechanisms with all nucleons participating in the interaction, contradicting the predictions of [MN 93].

The results given in this thesis confirm the assumption of three nucleon mechanisms in [Roh 94] at lower energies close to the three nucleon threshold. On the other hand they show also a dominance for an underlying quasifree $pN \to d\pi$-process at the higher energies close to the two nucleon threshold. As a consequence the cross sections given in this work differ at the higher energies from those in [Roh 94], which is understood in terms of a different coverage of phase space.

In addition to the examination of the $dp \to dN\pi$ channels it has been possible to extract data for the four body channel $dp \to ppp\pi^-$.

For the 'Bremsstrahlungs'-reaction $dp \to dp\gamma$ data sets will be shown, which have never been measured before within this energy region. The analysis for $dp \to dp\gamma$ showed again contributions from quasi-free $np \to d\gamma$ but similar to the pion production process models have to be included, where all three nucleons participate in the production mechanism.

Zusammenfassung

Im Rahmen dieser Arbeit wird ein Experiment beschrieben, welches darauf abzielte, die Anteile unterschiedlicher Pion-Produktionsmechanismen in $dp \to dN\pi$ Reaktionen im Energiebereich von $T_d = 437 - 559\,\text{MeV}$ zu untersuchen. Der Energiebereich entspricht maximalen Pionimpulsen von $0.32 < \eta = p^{c.m.}_{\pi,max}/m_\pi c < 0.86$ im Schwerpunktsystem.

Das Experiment wurde unter Verwendung des PROMICE/WASA Detektors am CELSIUS Speicherring in Uppsala (Schweden) durchgeführt. Es machte von den besonderen Fähigkeiten des Detektors Gebrauch, geladene Teilchen unter Vorwärtswinkeln zu detektieren. Der Detektor lieferte Energien, Energieverluste und Winkel der auftreffenden Teilchen. Nicht beobachtete Teilchen wurden über die 'missing mass' identifiziert. γ's, die zum Beispiel beim Zerfall des neutralen π^o entstehen, konnten zusätzlich mit einem Zentralkalorimeter bestimmt werden.

Die Anwendung eines gekühlten Deuteronen-Strahls in Verbindung mit einem internen H_2 Cluster-Jet-Target erlaubte Regionen des Phasenraumes zu studieren, in denen quasifreie $pN \to d\pi$ Produktionsmechanismen, wie sie von [MN 93] vorhergesagt wurden, sichtbar werden.

Dies war von besonderer Relevanz vor dem Hintergrund, daß zuvor genaue Messungen der $pd \to pd\pi^o$ Reaktion im Bereich nahe der Schwelle, d.h. in der Energieregion von $T_p = 208.4 - 294.6\,\text{MeV}$ $(0.10 < \eta < 0.96)$ [Roh 94] veröffentlicht wurden. Die Ergebnisse dieser Messungen deuteten auf andere Produktionsmechanismen hin, welche die Teilnahme aller drei Nukleonen am Reaktionsmechanismus implizit voraussetzten und den quasifreien Annahmen von [MN 93] widersprachen.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit bestätigen die Annahme solcher Drei-Nukleon-Prozesse bei niedrigen Energien, d.h. nahe der Drei Nukleon Schwelle, aber sie zeigen auch eine zunehmende Dominanz des quasifreien $pN \to d\pi$ Prozesses bei höheren Energien nahe der Zwei Nukleon Schwelle. Dies hat zur Konsequenz, daß bei höheren Energien die gemessenen totalen Wirkungsquerschnitte von denen in [Roh 94] abweichen, zumal in beiden Experimenten verschiedene Bereiche des Phasenraumes abgedeckt wurden.

Zusätzlich zu den $dp \to dN\pi$ Reaktionen war es im Rahmen dieser Arbeit auch möglich, für den Vierteilchenkanal $dp \to ppp\pi^-$ Daten zu extrahieren.

Für die 'Bremsstrahlungs'-Reaktion $dp \to dp\gamma$ werden ebenfalls Daten gezeigt, die nie zuvor in diesem Energiebereich gemessen wurden. Die Analyse der $dp \to dp\gamma$-Daten zeigte ebenfalls deutliche Beiträge eines quasifreien $np \to d\gamma$ Prozesses. Ähnlich wie bei der Pion-Produktion müssen aber auch Modelle zur Beschreibung der Daten hinzugezogen werden, die die Teilnahme aller drei Nukleonen am Reaktionsprozeß voraussetzen.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Since 1935 when Yukawa [Yuk 35] suggested that particles with intermediate masses (compared to electrons and protons) could be responsible for the interaction between neutrons and protons, mesons have become *the* exchange quantums for the strong interactions, somehow in analogy to the role, which photons play in quantum electrodynamics. However, the understanding and the description of the strong nuclear interaction turned out to be more difficult than it was e.g. for the electromagnetic interaction. Now, more than fifty years after the discovery of the pion [Occ 47], there is still need for good experimental data to improve the understanding of these elementary forces.

The production of *real* mesons requires a high momentum transfer and it is therefore suited to probe the nucleon nucleon interaction at small distances. As a result the production of mesons in nucleon nucleon and nucleon nucleus collisions in intermediate energies has attracted much attention during the past decades. The data base on meson production in nucleon nucleon collisions has improved significantly, especially for pions, the lightest members in the meson family. The availability of a new generation of accelerator storage rings with 'cooled' particle beams, which is equivalent to a small momentum spread of the beam, now allows to study these reactions very close to the production threshold.

At these energies the theoretical treatment is easier, because the spectrum of accessible angular momentum states is limited and therefore only a few partial waves contribute. On the other hand the experiments are the more difficult the closer one gets to the threshold. One has to deal with very small cross sections, with larger relative uncertainties for the excess energies and with particles, which are emitted under small angles in the laboratory frame, where internal experiments have difficulties to detect them.

While the pion production in $NN \rightarrow NN\pi$ reactions, especially in proton-proton collisions, has been a focus of research, the pion production within the three nucleon system has not been of central interest. This changes now however for two reasons.

- First of all progress in the nucleon nucleon pion production requires also to increase the quality of the data on neutron induced reactions. The use of neutron beams has the disadvantage of relatively poor intensity and energy resolution, which prevents to look at the near threshold regions and free neutron targets do not exist. The use of deuterium as a target, however may solve this problem.

- The second point of interest is to examine the effects of a multinuclear environment on the pion production process and the three nucleon system with a deuteron in the initial state is the easiest one to understand, since the properties of the deuteron are known with a good accuracy.

These two points above are strongly related and any progress on one of them might influence the other especially in the near threshold regions.

It is the main aim of the experiment described in this thesis to improve the understanding of the pion production process in deuteron-proton collisions, with a special focus on $dp \rightarrow dp\pi^o$ within the deuteron kinetic energy range of 437 to 559 MeV.

The first and up to this work only attempt to examine this reaction within the near threshold region has been performed in 1991 at the IUCF cooler ring in Indiana [Roh 93],[Roh 94]. It yielded excellent results very close to threshold, but suffered from a limited acceptance at energies of more than 30 MeV above threshold (i.e. $\eta > 0.5$, compare equation 1.1). Therefore it was not possible to give reliable results concerning absolute cross sections and the fractions of the competing reaction mechanisms. For the energy region of $\eta > 0.5$ significant contributions from a pure $pn \rightarrow d\pi^o$ process have been predicted according to the only detailed calculations, which have been published so far for this reaction and energy region [MN 93].

This thesis therefore focuses on closing the gap between the experimental data in [Roh 94] and the theoretical predictions in [MN 93] and it is therefore quite natural, that these two works will be referred to frequently throughout the next 120 pages.

The following sections of this chapter will summarize the present experimental situation and the theoretical understanding of single pion production. After a short overview on nucleon nucleon single pion production the three nucleon system will be reviewed and a more detailed summary of [Roh 94] and [MN 93] will be given.

1.1 Pion Production in the 2-Nucleon System

Pion production in nucleon nucleon collisions has been a field of interest in nuclear physics for some decades now. The precise knowledge of the reaction cross sections for NN single pion production is an indispensable input for the understanding of NN interactions above the pion production threshold.

A list of the possible single pion production channels is given in table 1.1 together with their threshold beam energies. It is common to use the isospin invariance in strong interactions to reduce the ten reaction cross sections to the four independent cross sections σ_{11},σ_{10}^{d},σ_{10}^{np} and σ_{01}, where the indices i, f in σ_{if} denote the initial and final state isospins of the nucleons, respectively. The four cross sections can then be added incoherently to reproduce the observable $NN\pi$ cross sections ([Ros 54],[Ver 82]). It has to be noted, that the Coulomb interaction and the difference in the particle masses have an isospin breaking effect, which is however usually below the accuracy of the experimental data. Its most obvious effect is seen in the different threshold energies $E_{thr.}$.

Therefore in view of a comparison of the cross sections, the laboratory beam energy is not well suited as a parameter, especially in the near threshold region. Instead the cross sections are more conveniently plotted as a function of the maximum pion momentum in the center of mass system. The universal threshold parameter η is therefore, with c set equal to 1, defined as

$$\eta = \frac{p^{\pi}_{c.m.max.}}{m_{\pi}} \tag{1.1}$$

A second approach to express the energy dependence of cross sections is to parameterize it as a function of the excess energy Q in the center of mass system.