

Shape coexistence and E0 transitions in neutron-deficient Hg isotopes studied through Coulomb excitation

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The neutron-deficient mercury isotopes around mid-shell point for neutrons ($N=104$) represent one of the most prominent examples of shape coexistence known so far [1]. This region has been extensively studied using various experimental techniques, such as laser spectroscopy [2,3], decay spectroscopy studies [4,5], lifetime measurements [10-12] and Coulomb excitations [6,7]. These studies point to the coexistence of two classes of states with strong mixing between the low-lying members at Hg-182,184 [1,5-7,12]. Especially, the presence of strong E0 components in the $I \rightarrow I(I \neq 0)$ transitions is interpreted as a fingerprint for mixing [1].

In order to probe the properties of yrast and non-yrast states of the exotic even-even $^{182-188}\text{Hg}$ isotopes Coulomb excitation experiments were performed at REX-ISOLDE facility at CERN. Reduced E2 matrix elements coupling lowest-lying states in the mercury isotopes were extracted for the first time, including their relative signs. These are a sensitive probe of shape coexistence and may be used to validate various nuclear models. Moreover, the analysis of the intense K X-ray peaks measured for $^{182,184}\text{Hg}$ revealed that the $2_2^+ \rightarrow 2_1^+$ transitions are strongly converted yielding prominent E0 transitions. This observation was supported by the large relevant conversion coefficients inferred from the β^+/EC decay of $^{182,184}\text{Tl}$ [5,9].

In the presentation the experimental results will be shown and discussed in terms of mixing of two different configurations along with the comparison with various theoretical model predictions: the Beyond Mean Field model, the Interacting Boson Model with configuration mixing and the General Bohr Hamiltonian [7].

A detailed studies on shape coexistence in the neutron deficient Hg isotopes will be continued using higher beam energies at HIE-ISOLDE. In view of the most recent experimental and theoretical achievements obtained in the scope of the Hg charge radii measurements [2,3] the Coulomb excitation studies will be for the first time performed for the odd-mass ^{185}Hg . These measurements will benefit from: (i) the use of the electron spectrometer SPEDE [8] which will provide direct information on intensities of conversion electrons; (ii) recently performed measurements of the β^+/EC decay of $^{182;184;186}\text{Tl}$ with the ISOLDE Decay Station (IDS) which yielding precise, complementary spectroscopic data in the Hg isotopes [9]. An overview of the future Coulomb excitation campaign in the neutron deficient Hg-Pb region at HIE-ISOLDE will be given.

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