

Chapter 5

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Weak interactions

Outline/Plan

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1- Introduction

- Experimental observations :
 - *large lifetimes for some particles :*

$$\mu^- \rightarrow e^- + \bar{\nu}_e + \nu_\mu$$

$$\pi^- \rightarrow \mu^- + \bar{\nu}_\mu$$

- *at 1st order the decay lengths (lifetimes⁻¹) are*

$$\Gamma \propto |T_{fi}|^2$$

=> low coupling constants governing the involved processes

1- Introduction

- Weak interactions affect **all** particles but their effects can be masked by the manifestation of strong or electromagnetic interactions.
- On the other hand the pions, which are the lightest hadrons, can not decay through strong interaction processes, only weak or e.m. processes:

$$\pi^0 \rightarrow \gamma\gamma \quad \pi^- \rightarrow \mu^- + \bar{\nu}_\mu$$

- Other specific feature : neutrinos interact through weak interactions **only**.

1- Introduction

- Experimental measurements :

- *branching ratios* :

$$B\left(\frac{\mu \rightarrow e + \gamma}{\mu \rightarrow \text{all}}\right) < 10^{-10}$$

$$B\left(\frac{\mu \rightarrow e + e + e}{\mu \rightarrow \text{all}}\right) < 10^{-12}$$

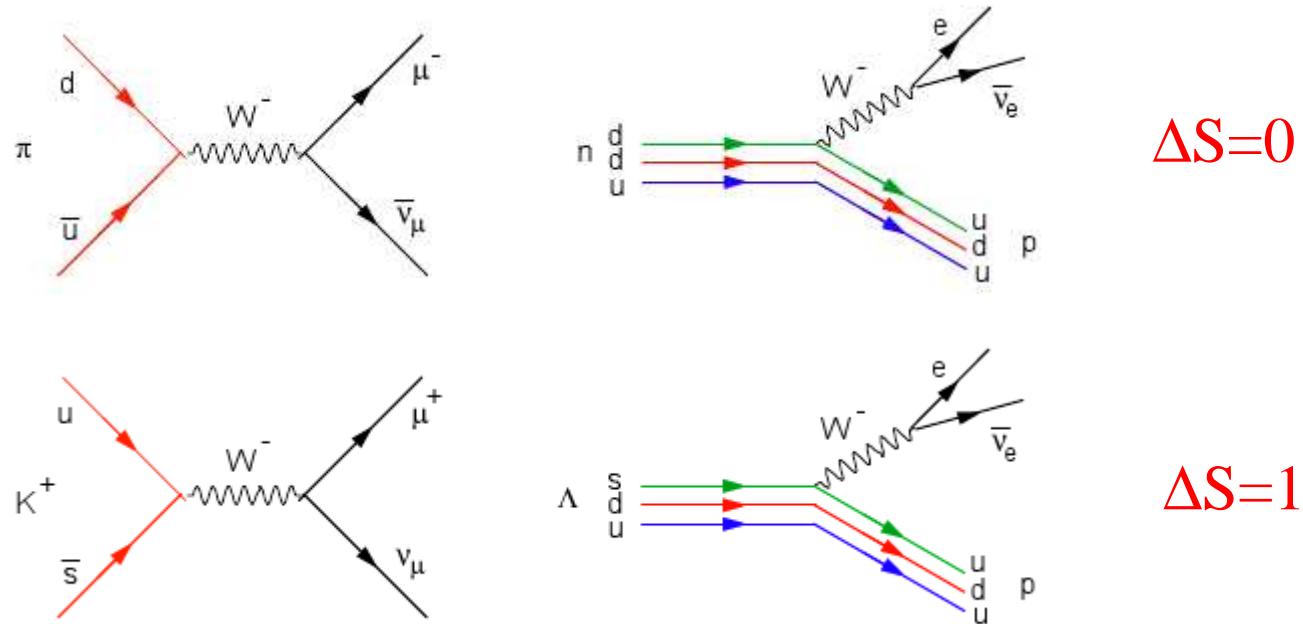
- *reason : separate conservation of the leptonic numbers*

- Theoretical predictions (gauge theories) of charged and neutral currents :



1- Introduction

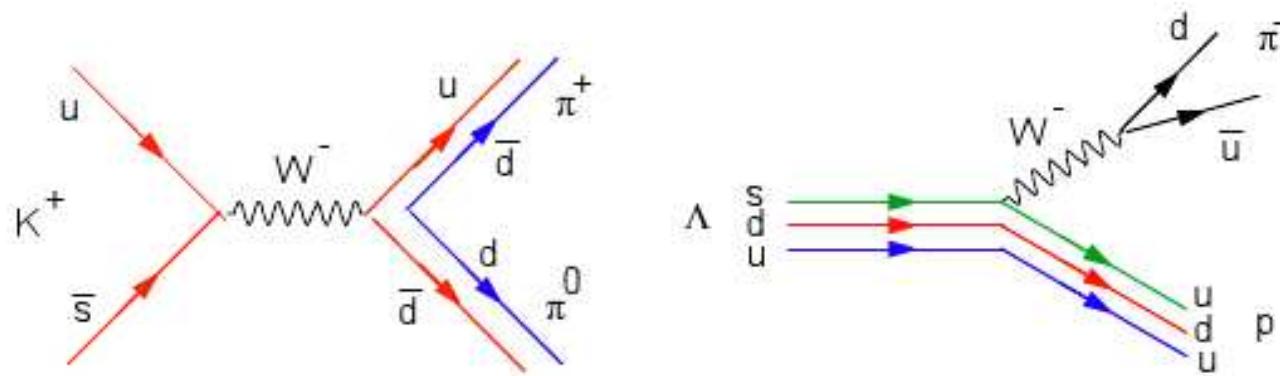
- Weak interactions classification :
 - *leptonic* : the gauge boson couple to leptons at both vertices
 - *semi-leptonic* : the gauge boson couple to leptons at one vertex and to quarks at the opposite vertex



Warning: “strange” content may be changed...

1- Introduction

- Weak interactions classification :
 - *non-leptonic (hadronic)* : the gauge boson couple to quarks at both ends.

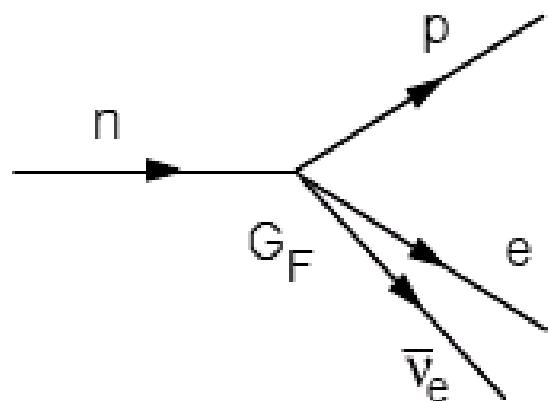


- In any case the W couples to fermions doublets (f, f') :

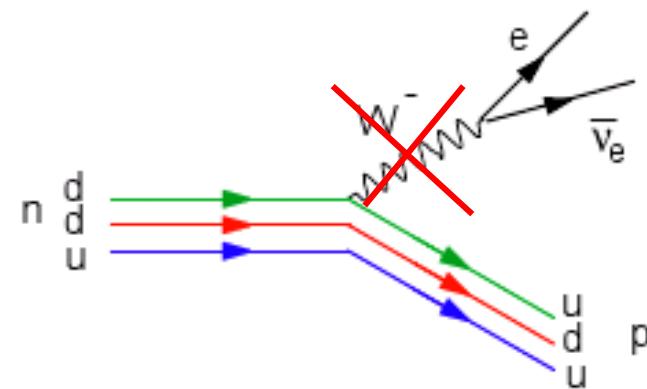
$$\begin{pmatrix} f \\ f' \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \nu_e \\ e \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} \nu_\mu \\ \mu \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} u \\ d \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} d \\ u \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} u \\ s \end{pmatrix} \dots$$

2-1- Introduction to Fermi's theory

- In 1930 Fermi postulated his theory based on the assumption of a point-like 4-bodies interaction governed by a coupling constant called G_F .
- In that approximation the standard beta decay process is described by the following graph :



i.e.



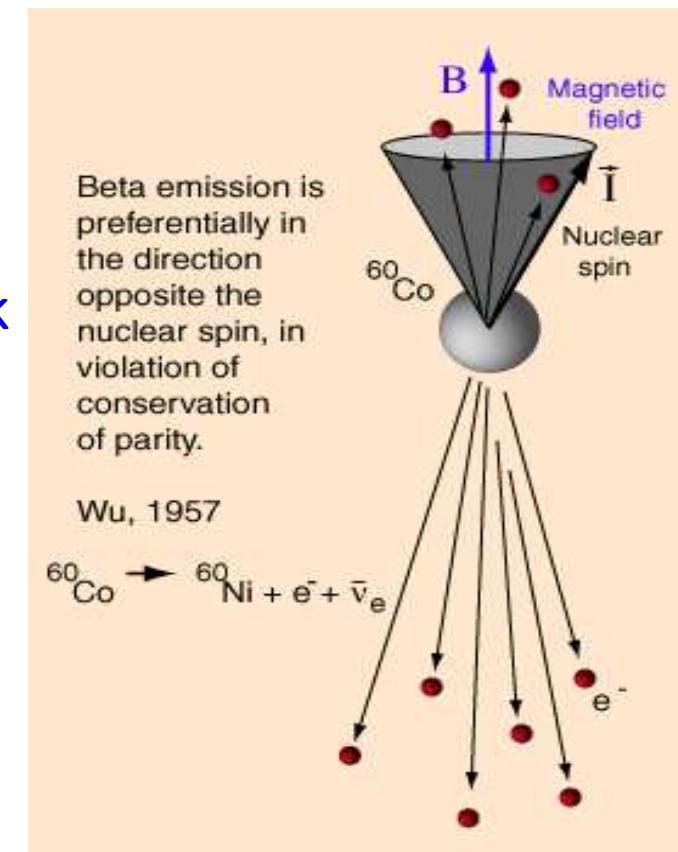
2-1- Introduction to Fermi's theory

- By analogy with QED the transition matrix element may be written in the form of a current-current product :

$$T \propto G \underbrace{\left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \gamma^\alpha u_e \right)}_{\text{leptonic current}} \underbrace{\left(\bar{u}_n \gamma_\alpha u_p \right)}_{\text{hadronic current}}$$

- The main difference vs QED is the behavior wrt the **parity symmetry**, since e.m. interactions are invariant under the parity transforms while weak are not...

The first experimental observations were performed in 1957 with ^{60}Co decays (Wu et al).



2-2- Parity violation

- Parity operation :

$$\vec{x} \xrightarrow{P} -\vec{x} \text{ i.e. } p^\mu(p^0, \vec{p}) \xrightarrow{P} p'^\mu(p^0, -\vec{p})$$

- How does a Dirac spinor transform?

$$u \xrightarrow{P} u'$$

$$(p-m)u = 0 \xrightarrow{P} (p'-m)u' = 0$$

- Details : $(p-m)u = (\gamma^0 p^0 - \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - m)u = 0 \quad (\rightarrow \gamma^0.)$

$$\Rightarrow (p^0 - \gamma^0 \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - \gamma^0 m)u = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow (p^0 + \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - m)\gamma^0 u = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow (p' - m)\gamma^0 u = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \boxed{u' = \gamma^0 u}$$

2-2- Parity violation

- Transform properties of bilinear covariants $(\bar{u}\gamma^\mu u, \bar{u}\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u\dots)$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \bar{u}\gamma^\mu u &\xrightarrow{P} \bar{u}'\gamma^\mu u' \\
 &= (u'^\dagger \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu u' \\
 &= ((\gamma^0 u)^\dagger \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu (\gamma^0 u) \\
 &= (u^\dagger \gamma^0 \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu (\gamma^0 u) \\
 &= u^\dagger \gamma^\mu \gamma^0 u
 \end{aligned}$$

- Example (cont'd) :

$$\begin{aligned}
 \mu = 0 : \bar{u}\gamma^0 u &\xrightarrow{P} \bar{u}\gamma^0 u \\
 \mu = k : \bar{u}\gamma^k u &\xrightarrow{P} u^\dagger \gamma^k \gamma^0 u = -u^\dagger \gamma^0 \gamma^k u = \underbrace{-u^\dagger \gamma^0}_{\bar{u}} \gamma^k u
 \end{aligned}$$

$$(\bar{u}\gamma^0 u, \bar{u}\vec{\gamma} u) \xrightarrow{P} (\bar{u}\gamma^0 u, -\bar{u}\vec{\gamma} u) \Rightarrow \varepsilon = -1$$

2-2- Parity violation

- Transform properties of bilinear covariants $(\bar{u}\gamma^\mu u, \bar{u}\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u\dots)$

$$\begin{aligned}\bar{u}\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u &\xrightarrow{P} \bar{u}'\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u' \\ &= (u'^\dagger \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u' \\ &= ((\gamma^0 u)^\dagger \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 (\gamma^0 u) \\ &= (u^\dagger \gamma^0 \gamma^0)\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 (\gamma^0 u) \\ &= u^\dagger \gamma^\mu\gamma^5 \gamma^0 u\end{aligned}$$

- Example (cont'd) :

$$\mu = 0 : \bar{u}\gamma^0\gamma^5 u \xrightarrow{P} \underbrace{u^\dagger}_{\bar{u}} \gamma^0\gamma^5\gamma^0 u = -\bar{u}\gamma^0\gamma^5 u$$

$$\mu = k : \bar{u}\gamma^k\gamma^5 u \xrightarrow{P} u^\dagger \gamma^k\gamma^5\gamma^0 u = -u^\dagger \gamma^k\gamma^0\gamma^5 u = \underbrace{u^\dagger}_{\bar{u}} \gamma^0\gamma^k\gamma^5 u$$

$$(\bar{u}\gamma^0\gamma^5 u, \bar{u}\gamma^k\gamma^5 u) \xrightarrow{P} -(\bar{u}\gamma^0\gamma^5 u, -\bar{u}\gamma^k\gamma^5 u) \Rightarrow \epsilon = +1$$

2-2- Parity violation

- Summary :

$\bar{u}u$	S	$\varepsilon = +1$
$\bar{u}\gamma^\mu u$	V	$\varepsilon = -1$
$\bar{u}\gamma^5 u$	PS	$\varepsilon = -1$
$\bar{u}\gamma^\mu\gamma^5 u$	PV	$\varepsilon = +1$

2-2- Parity violation

- Projection operators on the helicity states :

$$a_+ = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \gamma^5) \text{ and } a_- = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \gamma^5)$$

- Proof :

$$(p - m)u(p) = (\gamma^0 p^0 - \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - m)u = 0 \quad (\rightarrow \gamma^5 \gamma^0.)$$

$$\Rightarrow (\gamma^5 p^0 - \gamma^5 \gamma^0 \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - \gamma^5 \gamma^0 m)u = 0$$

$$\text{with } \gamma^5 \gamma^0 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \text{ and } \gamma^5 \gamma^0 \vec{\gamma} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \vec{\sigma} \\ -\vec{\sigma} & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \vec{\sigma} & 0 \\ 0 & \vec{\sigma} \end{pmatrix}$$

in the ultra-relativistic limit with $m \rightarrow 0$ one gets :

$$(\gamma^5 p^0 - \gamma^5 \gamma^0 \vec{\gamma} \vec{p} - \gamma^5 \gamma^0 m)u = 0 \Rightarrow \gamma^5 p^0 u = \begin{pmatrix} \vec{\sigma} \cdot \vec{p} & 0 \\ 0 & \vec{\sigma} \cdot \vec{p} \end{pmatrix} u$$

$$\Rightarrow \gamma^5 u = \begin{pmatrix} \vec{\sigma} \cdot \vec{p} / |\vec{p}| & 0 \\ 0 & \vec{\sigma} \cdot \vec{p} / |\vec{p}| \end{pmatrix} u = 2\tilde{h}u \quad \text{where} \quad \tilde{h} = \frac{1}{2} \frac{\vec{\Sigma} \cdot \vec{p}}{|\vec{p}|}$$

2-2- Parity violation

- Therefore :

$$a_+ u(p) = \frac{1}{2} (1 + \gamma^5) u(p) = \left(\frac{1}{2} + h \right) u(p) = \begin{cases} u(p) & \text{if } h = \frac{1}{2} \\ 0 & \text{if } h = -\frac{1}{2} \end{cases}$$

$$a_- u(p) = \frac{1}{2} (1 - \gamma^5) u(p) = \left(\frac{1}{2} - h \right) u(p) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } h = \frac{1}{2} \\ u(p) & \text{if } h = -\frac{1}{2} \end{cases}$$

- Right and left spinors :

$$u_R \equiv a_+ u = \frac{1}{2} (1 + \gamma^5) u \quad \text{and} \quad u_L \equiv a_- u = \frac{1}{2} (1 - \gamma^5) u$$

2-2- Parity violation

- Including anti-particles. Reminder on the correspondence prescription : $(E < 0, \vec{p}, \vec{s} \rightarrow -E > 0, -\vec{p}, -\vec{s})$

$$u_R = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \gamma^5)u \quad \text{and} \quad u_L = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \gamma^5)u$$

$$\bar{u}_R = \bar{u} \frac{1}{2}(1 - \gamma^5) \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{u}_L = \bar{u} \frac{1}{2}(1 + \gamma^5)$$

$$v_R = \frac{1}{2}(1 - \gamma^5)v \quad \text{and} \quad v_L = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \gamma^5)v$$

$$\bar{v}_R = \bar{v} \frac{1}{2}(1 + \gamma^5) \quad \text{and} \quad \bar{v}_L = \bar{v} \frac{1}{2}(1 - \gamma^5)$$

2-3- V-A theory

- The idea is to extend the Fermi's theory by looking for Lorentz scalars and pseudo-scalars (to account for the parity violation observed experimentally). Therefore one looks for a transition matrix element of the form :

$$T \propto G \sum_{\substack{i=s,v, \\ T,ps,pv}} \left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \theta_i^\alpha (c_i - c'_i \gamma_5) u_e \right) \left(\bar{u}_n \theta_{i\alpha} u_p \right)$$

with the operators taken as generic bilinear covariants :

$$i = s \quad \theta_i = 1$$

$$i = v \quad \theta_i = \gamma_\mu$$

$$i = T \quad \theta_i = \sigma_{\mu\nu}$$

$$i = ps \quad \theta_i = \gamma_5$$

$$i = pv \quad \theta_i = \gamma_\mu \gamma_5$$

2-3- V-A theory

- Inputs from experiments (Goldhaber, 1957)
=> neutrinos appear only in the left helicity state

$$c_i = c'_i$$

- The constraints on the different terms lead to the simplified form :

$$T \propto G \left[c_v \left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \gamma^\alpha (1 - \gamma_5) u_e \right) \left(\bar{u}_n \gamma_\alpha u_p \right) + \underbrace{c_a \left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \gamma^\alpha \gamma_5 (1 - \gamma_5) u_e \right) \left(\bar{u}_n \gamma_\alpha \gamma_5 u_p \right)}_{-c_a \left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \gamma^\alpha (1 - \gamma_5) u_e \right) \left(\bar{u}_n \gamma_\alpha \gamma_5 u_p \right)} \right]$$

which factorizes into :

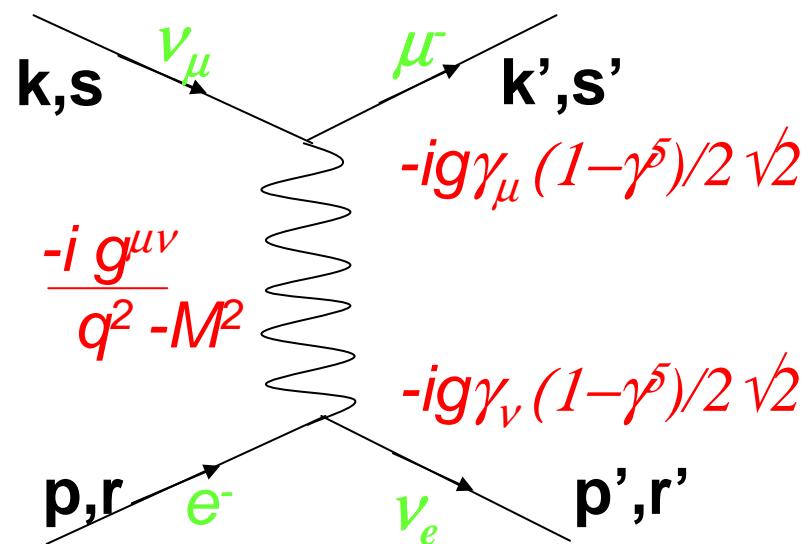
$$T \propto \frac{G}{\sqrt{2}} \left[\underbrace{\left(\bar{u}_{\nu_e} \gamma^\alpha (1 - \gamma_5) u_e \right)}_{V-A} \underbrace{\left(\bar{u}_n \gamma_\alpha (c_v - c_a \gamma_5) u_p \right)}_{V-A} \right]$$

$$\frac{c_a}{c_v} = 1,25$$

3-1- Leptonic processes

- What is the link between the Fermi approach and the general Feynman diagram formalism?
- Let's consider the leptonic process :

$$\nu_\mu(k) + e^-(p) \rightarrow \mu^-(k') + \nu_e(p')$$

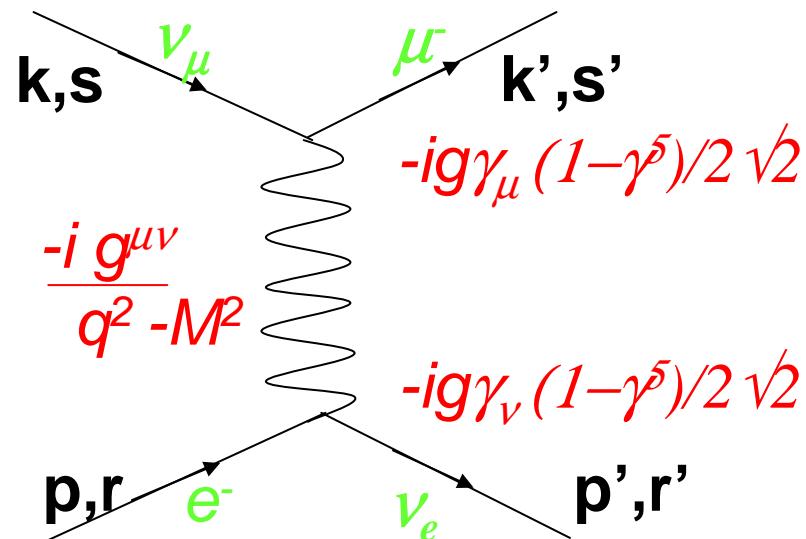


3-1- Leptonic processes

- Transition matrix element expression :

$$T = \bar{u}(k', s') (-i \frac{g}{2\sqrt{2}} \gamma^\mu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(k, s) \frac{-ig_{\mu\nu}}{q^2 - M^2} \bar{u}(p', r') (-i \frac{g}{2\sqrt{2}} \gamma^\nu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(p, r)$$

$$|\bar{T}|^2 = \frac{1}{(2s_e + 1)} \sum_{rr'ss'} TT^* = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{rr'ss'} TT^*$$



3-1- Leptonic processes

- The intermediate boson mass is quite large : $M_W \sim 80\text{GeV}$
- At low “transfer” ($q^2 \rightarrow 0$) the propagator is almost constant

$$\frac{-ig_{\mu\nu}}{q^2 - M^2} \rightarrow \frac{ig_{\mu\nu}}{M^2}$$

$$T = -i \frac{g^2}{8M^2} \underbrace{\bar{u}(k', s')(\gamma^\mu(1-\gamma_5))u(k, s)}_{V-A} \underbrace{\bar{u}(p', r')(\gamma_\mu(1-\gamma_5))u(p, r)}_{V-A}$$

- The coupling constant correspondence reads :

$$\boxed{\frac{g^2}{8M_W^2} = \frac{G_F}{\sqrt{2}}}$$

- Computation...

3-1- Leptonic processes

- Conjugate matrix element. Using :

$$\left[\bar{u}(k', s') (\gamma^\mu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(k, s) \right]^* = \left[\bar{u}(k, s) (\gamma^\mu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(k', s') \right] \text{(t.b.d.)}$$

one gets :

$$T^* = i \frac{g^2}{8M^2} \bar{u}(p, r) (\gamma_\nu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(p', r') \bar{u}(k, s) (\gamma^\nu (1 - \gamma_5)) u(k', s')$$

- Average square module :

$$\begin{aligned} |\bar{T}|^2 &= \frac{1}{2} \frac{G_F^2}{2} Tr \left((p + m_e) \gamma^\mu (1 - \gamma_5) p' \gamma^\nu (1 - \gamma_5) \right) \\ &\quad \times Tr \left(k' \gamma_\mu (1 - \gamma_5) (k + m_\mu) \gamma_\nu (1 - \gamma_5) \right) \\ &= \frac{G_F^2}{4} A^{\mu\nu} B_{\mu\nu} \end{aligned}$$

3-1- Leptonic processes

- Trace theorem :

$$Tr\left(\gamma^\rho \gamma^\mu \gamma^\sigma \gamma^\nu (1-\gamma_5)\right) Tr\left(\gamma_\alpha \gamma_\mu \gamma_\beta \gamma_\nu (1-\gamma_5)\right) = 64 g_\alpha^\rho g_\beta^\sigma$$

- Transition matrix element (at the limit of masses=0):

$$|\bar{T}|^2 = 64 G_F^2 (k'.p')(k.p) = 16 G_F^2 s^2$$

- Differential cross-section :

$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} (\nu_\mu + e^- \rightarrow \mu^- + \nu_e) = \frac{G_F^2 s}{4\pi^2}$$

- The same procedure yields to the result :

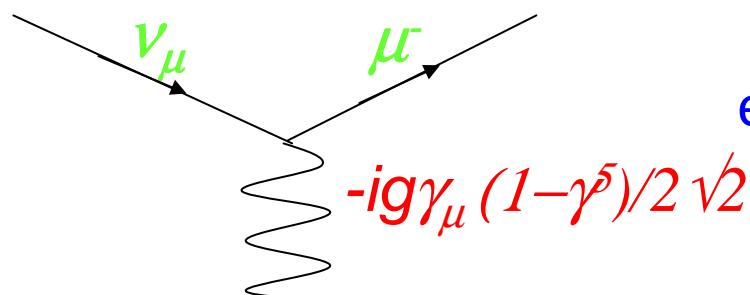
$$\frac{d\sigma}{d\Omega} (\bar{\nu}_e + e^- \rightarrow \bar{\nu}_\mu + \mu^-) = \frac{G_F^2 s}{16\pi^2} (1 - \cos\theta)^2$$

3-1- Leptonic processes

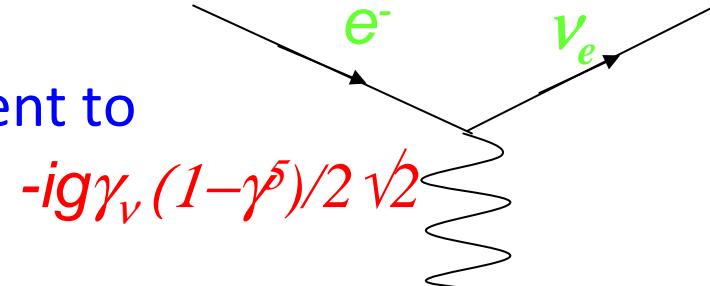
- Orders of magnitude :

$$\sigma = \frac{G_F^2 s}{\pi} \sim 10^{-41} E_\nu (\text{GeV}) \text{ cm}^2$$

- Remark : in the leptonic sector holds a coupling universality :

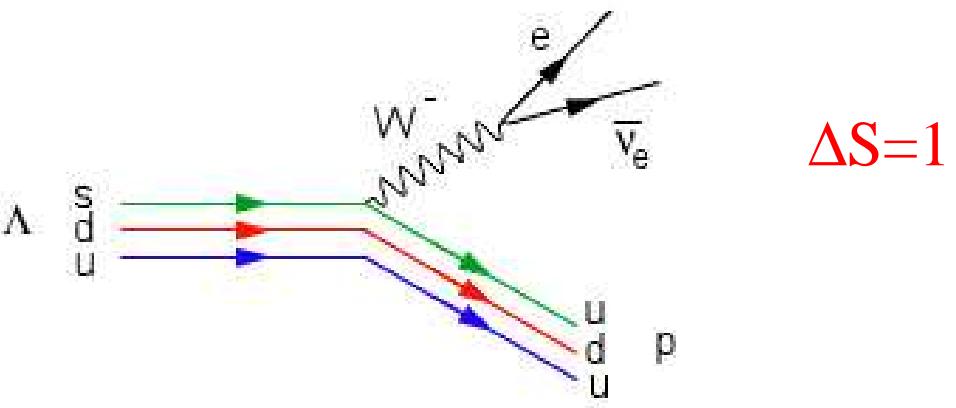
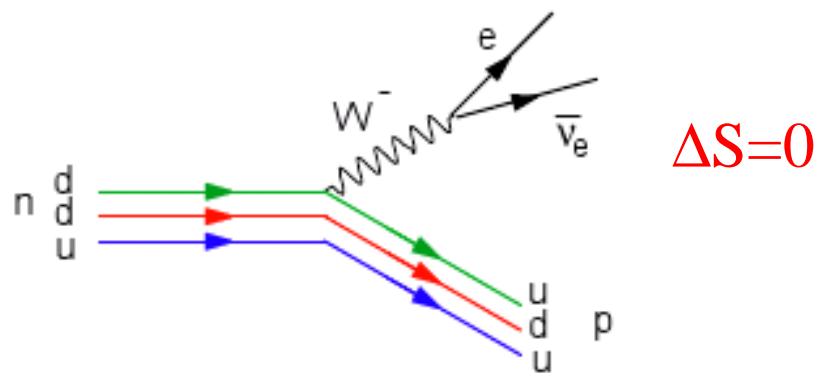


equivalent to



3-2- Quarks and flavor mixing

- Experimentally two types of transition are observed :

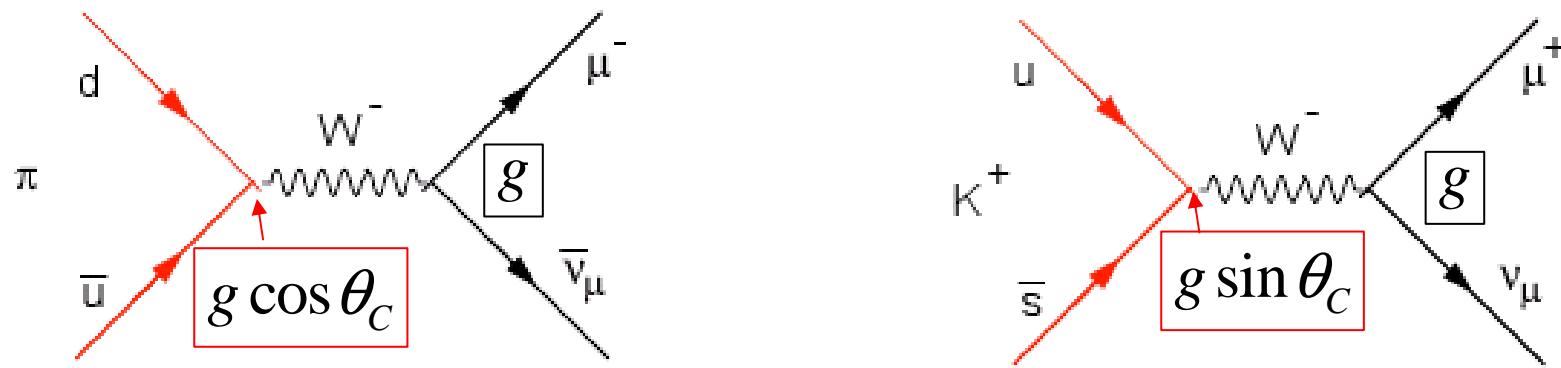


- The transition rates of the 2nd ones are ~ 20 times lower than the $\Delta S=0$ ones.
- Explanation proposed (Cabibbo, 1963) : the quarks weak doublets involve linear combinations of the quarks carrying same quantum numbers :

$$\begin{pmatrix} u \\ d \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c \\ s \end{pmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} u \\ d' \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c \\ s' \end{pmatrix} \text{ with } \begin{cases} d' = \cos \theta_C d + \sin \theta_C s \\ s' = -\sin \theta_C d + \cos \theta_C s \end{cases}$$

3-2- Quarks and flavor mixing

- The coupling strength are modified according to :



- In that approximation transitions implying a strangeness change are proportional to $T_{fi} \sim G_F \sin \theta_C$ while the ones implying no change in the strangeness are $T_{fi} \sim G_F \cos \theta_C$

$n \rightarrow p + e^- + \bar{\nu}_e$	$d \rightarrow u$	$G_F^2 \cos^2 \theta_C$
$\pi^+ \rightarrow \pi^0 + e^+ + \nu_e$	$u \rightarrow d$	$G_F^2 \cos^2 \theta_C$
$K^+ \rightarrow \pi^0 + e^- + \bar{\nu}_e$	$s \rightarrow u$	$G_F^2 \sin^2 \theta_C$
$\mu^+ \rightarrow e^+ + \nu_e + \bar{\nu}_\mu$	—	G_F^2

3-2- Quarks and flavor mixing

- The ratio between complementary processes allow to compute the value of the Cabibbo angle:

$$\frac{\Gamma(K^- \rightarrow \mu^- + \bar{\nu}_\mu)}{\Gamma(\pi^- \rightarrow \mu^- + \bar{\nu}_\mu)} \simeq \tan^2 \theta_C = 0.05 \Rightarrow \theta_C = 13^\circ$$

- This model extends to 6 quarks with the introduction of the C.K.M. matrix (Cabibbo-Kobayashi-Maskawa) :

$$\begin{pmatrix} d' \\ s' \\ b' \end{pmatrix} = M \begin{pmatrix} d \\ s \\ b \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{with} \quad M = \begin{pmatrix} c_1 & c_3 s_1 & s_1 s_3 \\ -c_2 s_1 & c_1 c_2 c_3 - s_2 s_3 e^{i\delta} & c_1 c_2 s_3 + c_3 s_2 e^{i\delta} \\ s_1 s_2 & -c_1 c_3 s_2 - c_2 s_3 e^{i\delta} & -c_1 s_2 s_3 + c_2 c_3 e^{i\delta} \end{pmatrix}$$

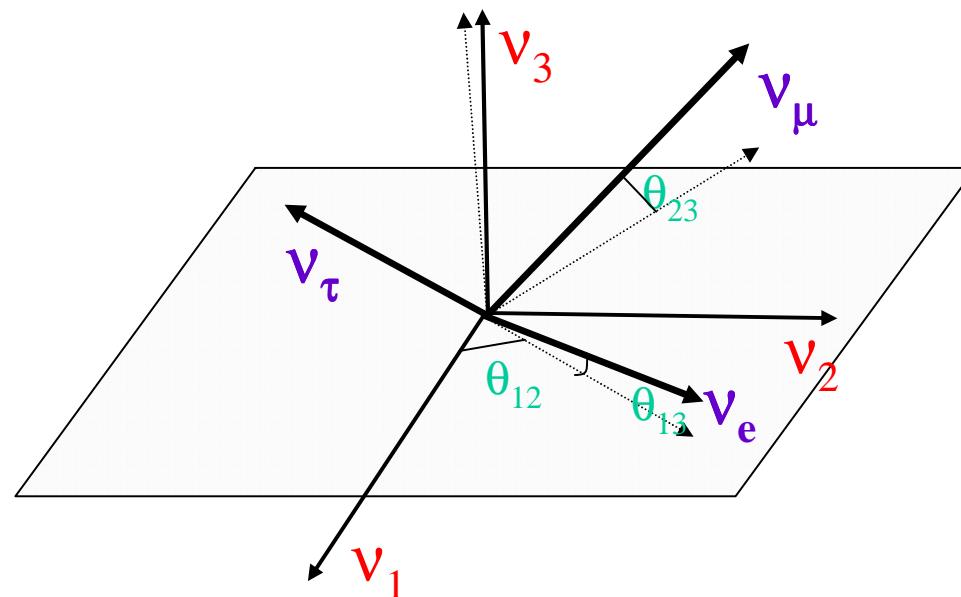
- Experimentally : $M = \begin{pmatrix} 0.97 & 0.22 & 0.004 \\ -0.22 & 0.97 & 0.04 \\ 0.004 & -0.04 & 0.99 \end{pmatrix}$

- N.B. $M \in \mathbb{C}$ because of CP violation

3-3- Neutrino properties

- What about leptonic sector? The CKM matrix is being extensively measured and is a quasi-diagonal matrix.
- Same procedure is believed to apply in the leptonic sector, responsible for the **neutrino oscillations**. Mass eigenstates differ from interaction eigenstates implying the existence of an unitary matrix (PMNS : Pontecorvo Maki Nakagawa Sakata)

$$\nu_\alpha = \sum_i U_{\alpha i} \nu_i$$



3-3- Neutrino properties

- In the case of non-vanishing neutrino masses there is a non-zero probability to observe a flavor transition from the source point to the detection point :

$$P_{\alpha\beta} = \delta_{\alpha\beta} - 4 \operatorname{Re} \sum_{i < j} U_{\beta i}^* U_{\beta j} U_{\alpha i} U_{\alpha j}^* \sin^2 \frac{\Delta m_j^2 L}{4E} + 2 \operatorname{Im} \sum_{i < j} U_{\beta i}^* U_{\beta j} U_{\alpha i} U_{\alpha j}^* \sin^2 \frac{\Delta m_j^2 L}{2E}$$

- Experimentally one can probe the different parts of the PMNS matrix using different neutrino sources :

$$U = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & c_{23} & s_{23} \\ 0 & -s_{23} & c_{23} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_{13} & 0 & s_{13}e^{-i\delta} \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ -s_{13}e^{i\delta} & 0 & c_{13} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} c_{12} & s_{12} & 0 \\ -s_{12} & c_{12} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix},$$

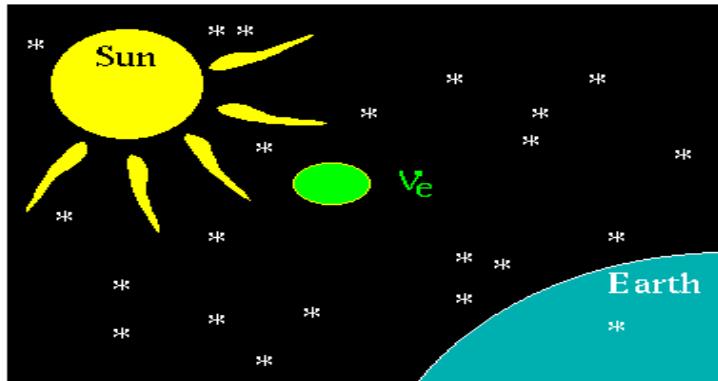
atmospheric v

reactors

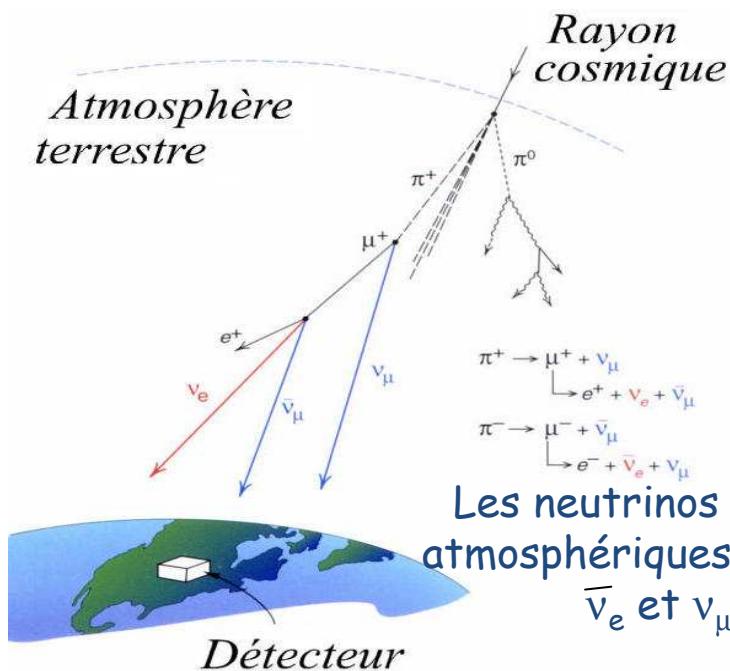
solar v

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3-3- Neutrino properties

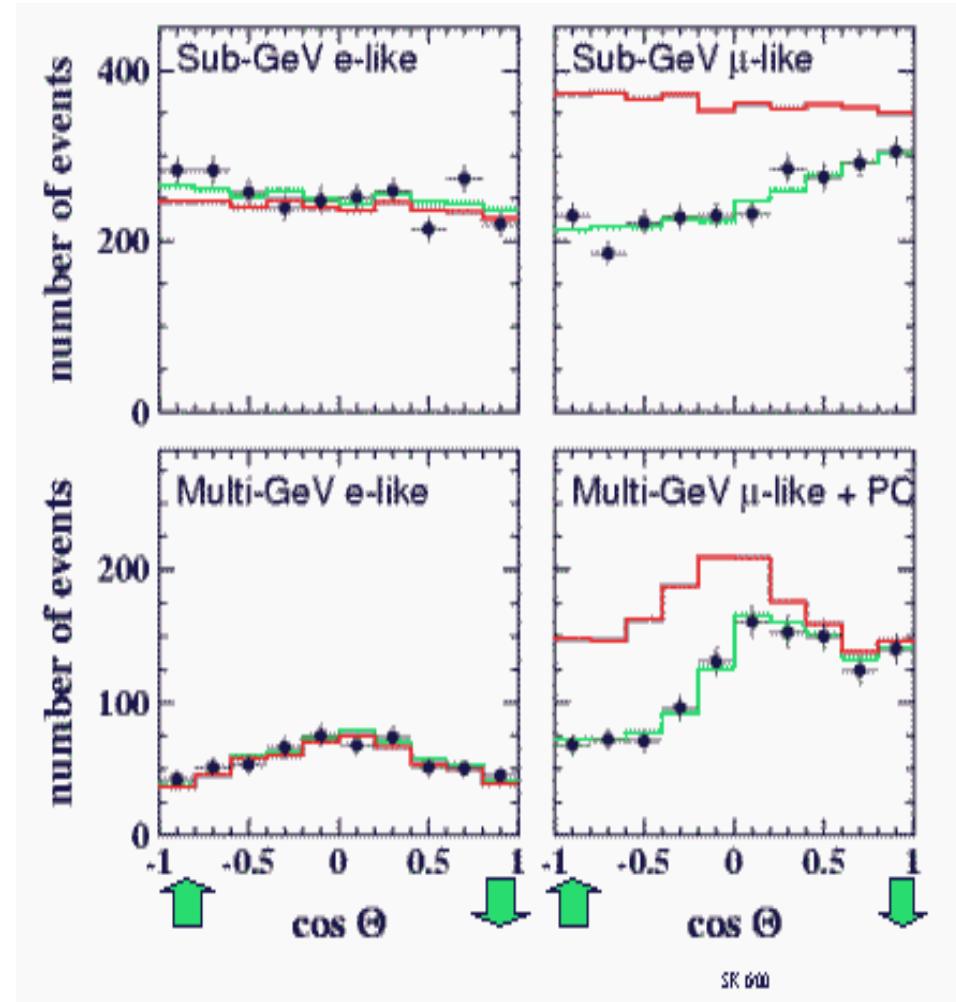
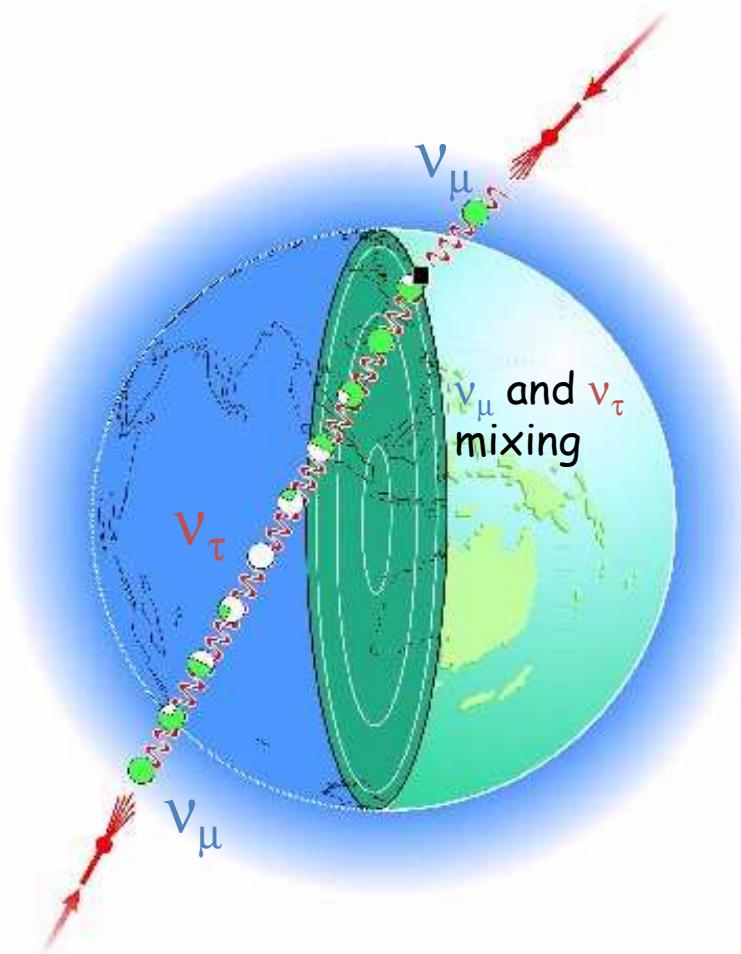


40 milliards / cm² / sec (some MeV)



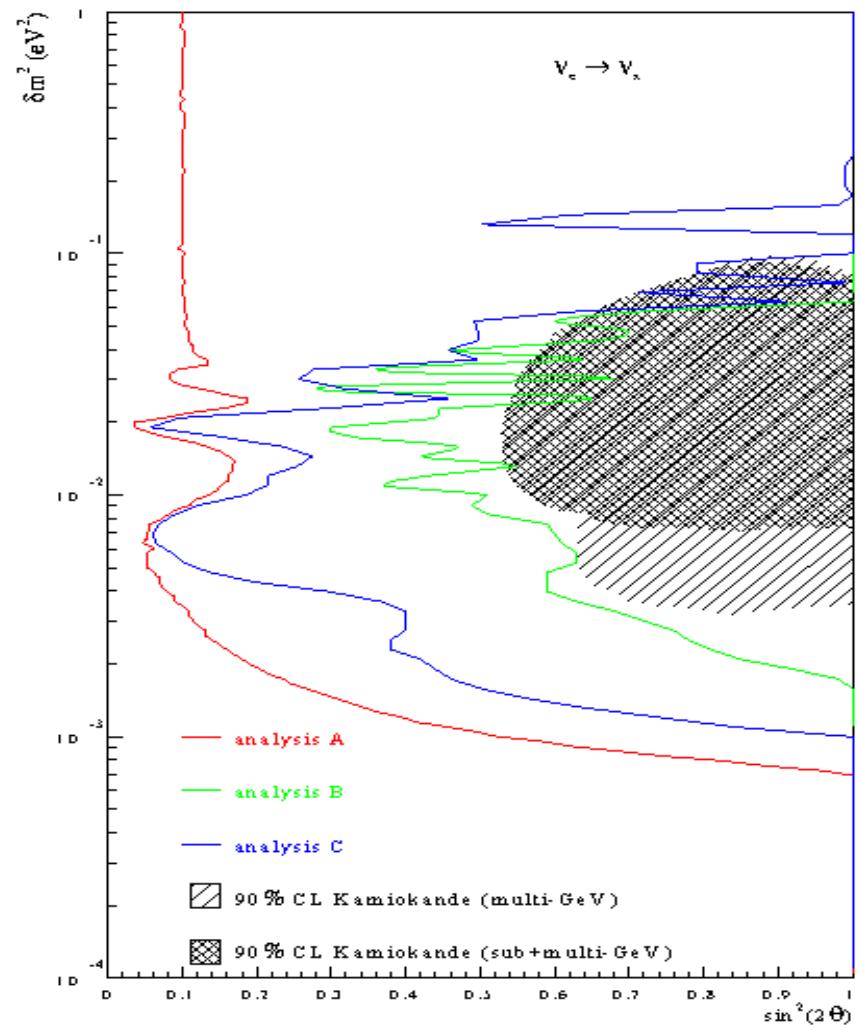
3-3- Neutrino properties

- Neutrino oscillations : observations / explanations



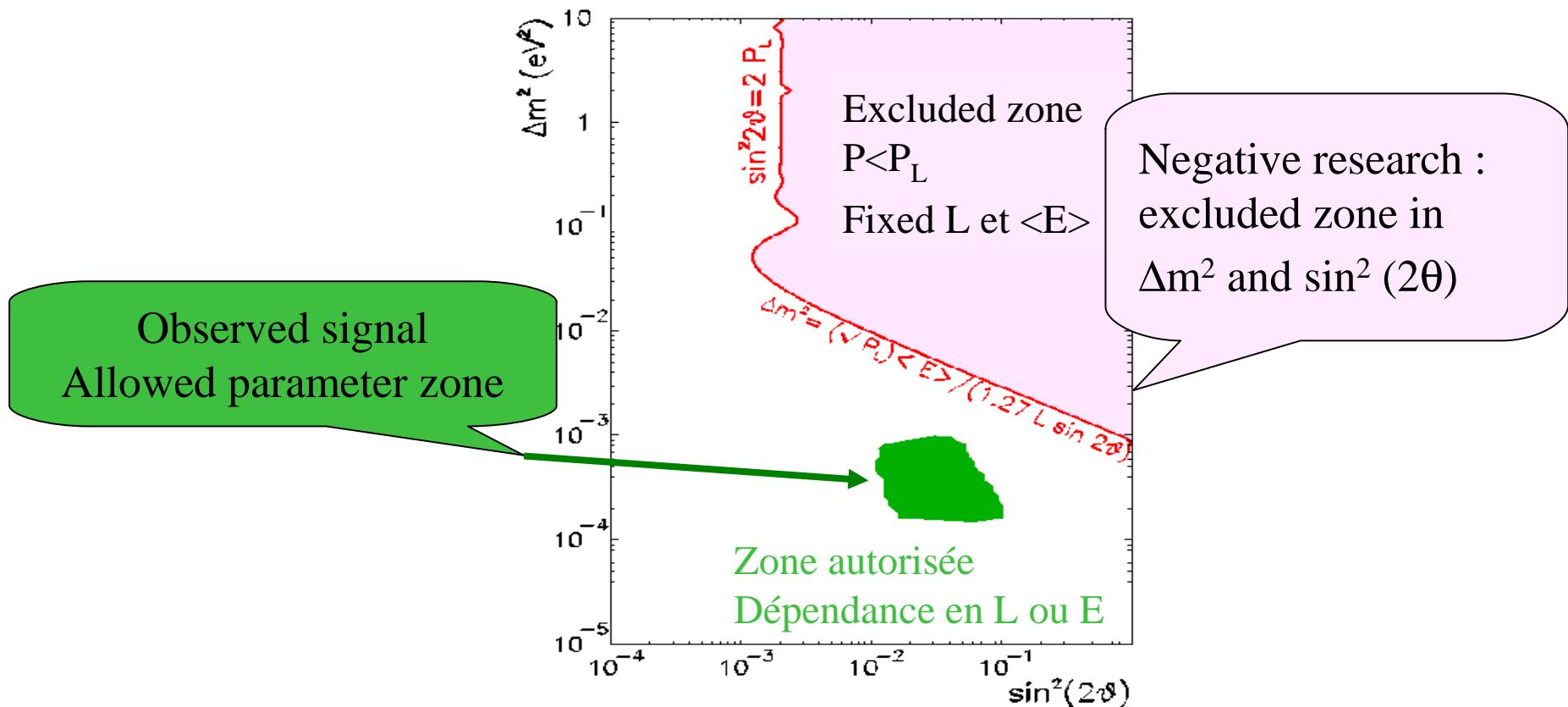
3-3- Neutrino properties

- Neutrino oscillations on nuclear reactors : KamLAND and Chooz



3-3- Neutrino properties

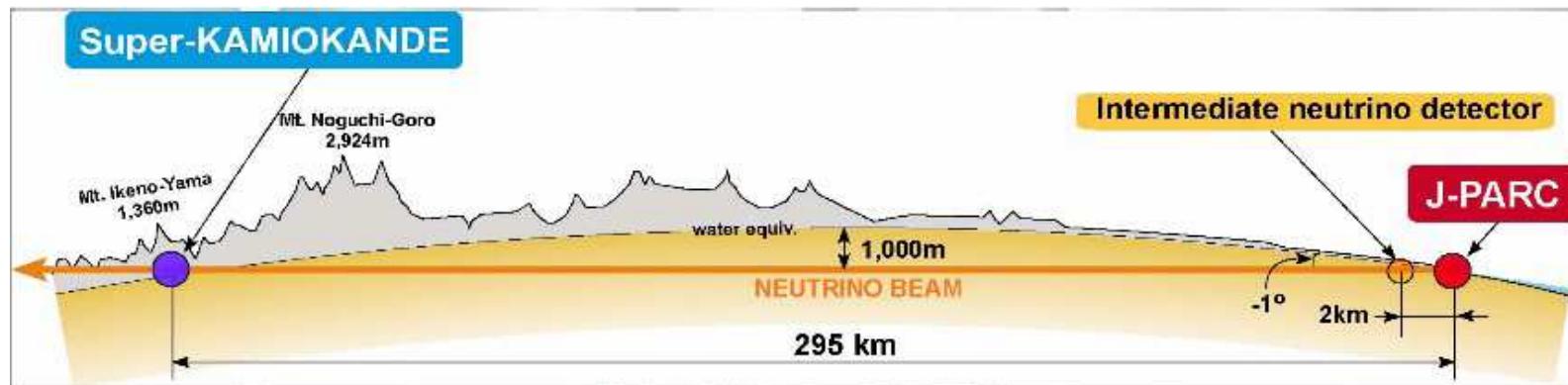
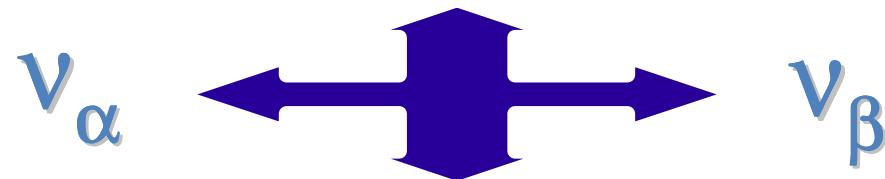
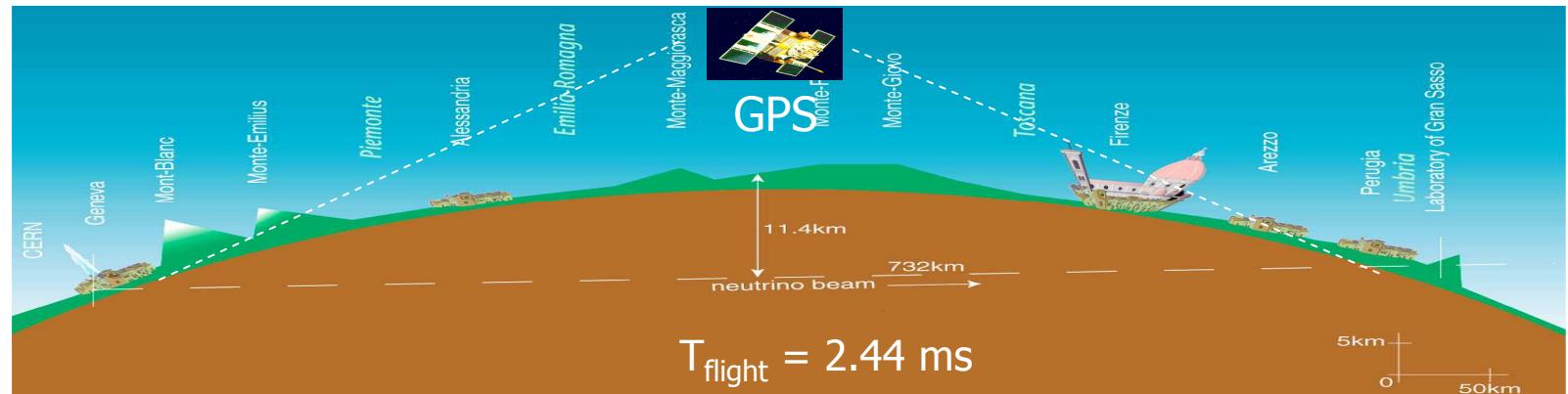
- Neutrino oscillations analysis in the parameter space



3-3- Neutrino properties

- Neutrino oscillations on accelerators :

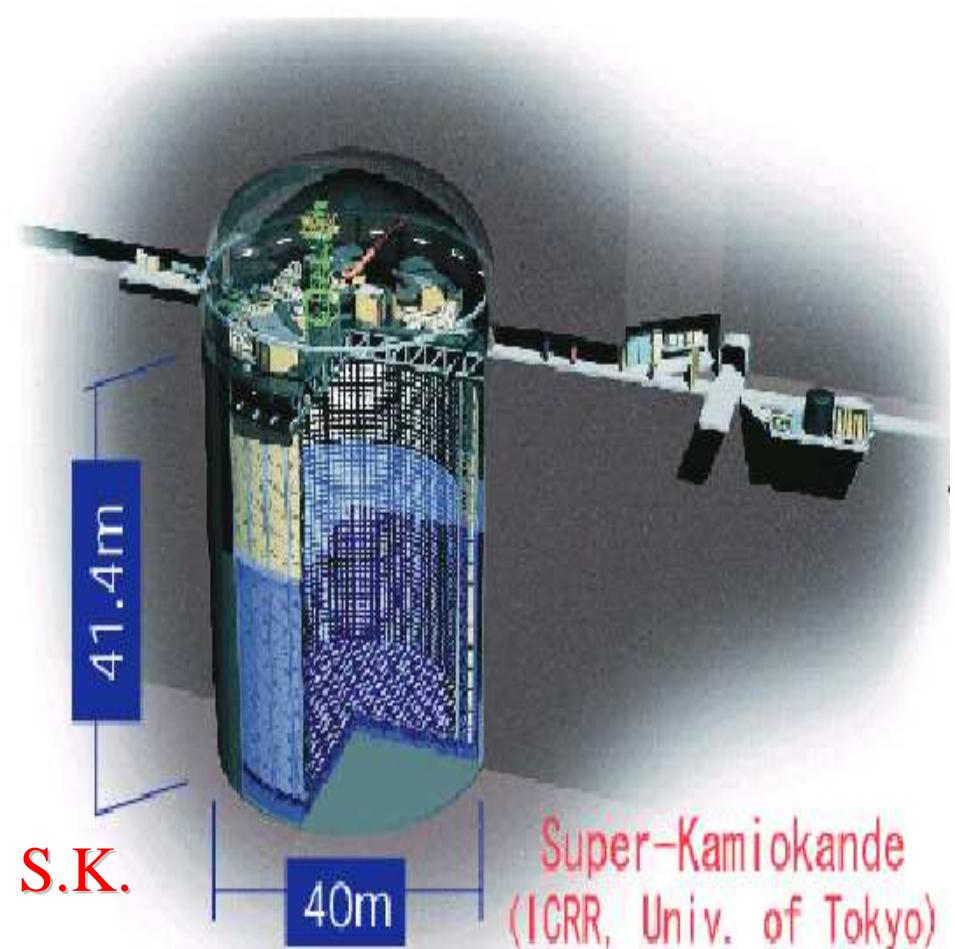
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3-3- Neutrino properties

- Neutrino oscillations on accelerators :



3-3- Neutrino properties

Conclusions on neutrinos :

- Weak interactions only
 - => difficult detection (low cross-sections)
 - => symmetry breaking (C, P, CP?)
- Potentially massive but with a low mass value (why?)
- Mixing exists in the leptonic sector as well (but the unitary matrix is almost bimaximal, why?). 1 parameter still unknown...
- Many open questions (cosmological role? Symmetry breaking mechanisms? Majorana particles? More than 3 neutrinos?...) 36