

Physics of SOL Broadening by Turbulence and Structures

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Collaborators

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Outline

- The Problem
- SOL Broadening by Turbulence Spreading (N.B. New results since '22)
- Simulation Results re: Spreading
- Experimental Results re: Spreading (DIII-D)
3+4 sneak preview: spreading flux tracks fluctuation skewness!
- G.R.E. and Blob-Void Production
- What is a Blob/Void ? → Some Physics !

Background

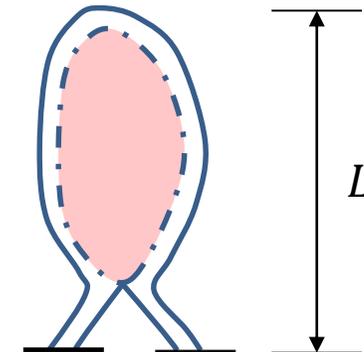
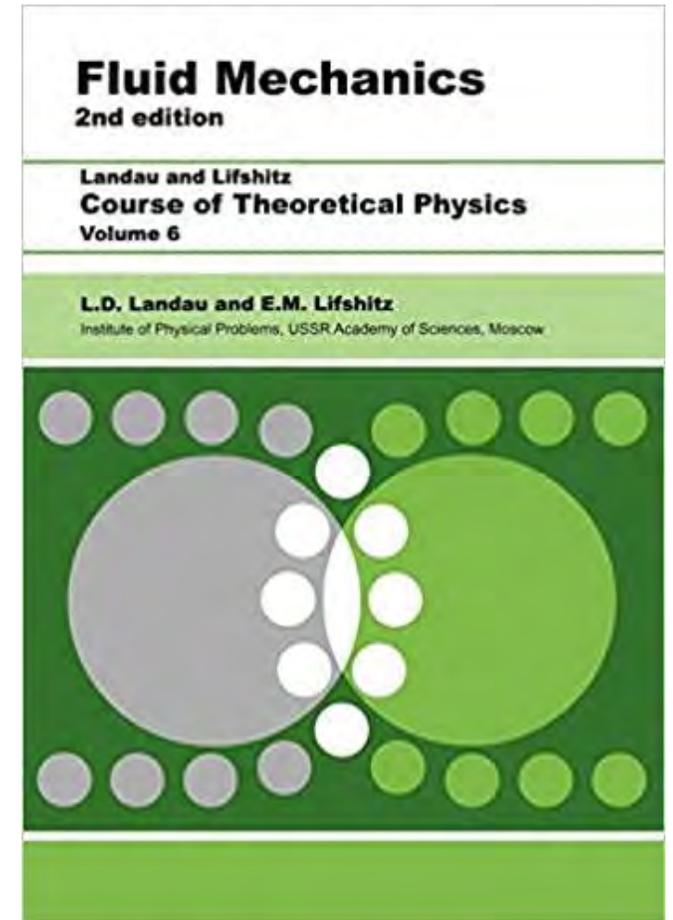
- Conventional Wisdom of SOL:

(cf: Stangeby...)

- Turbulent Boundary Layer, ala' Blasius, with D due turbulence
- $\delta \sim (D\tau)^{1/2}, \tau \approx L_c/V_{th}$
- $D \leftrightarrow$ local production by SOL instability process
→ familiar approach, D ala' QL

- Features:

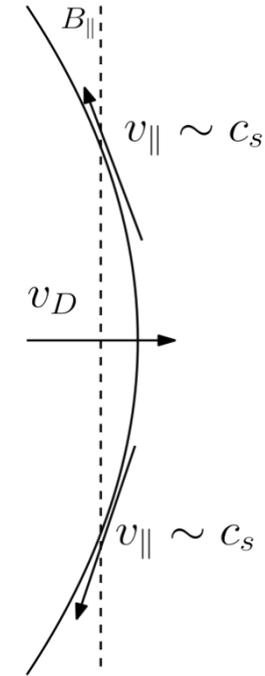
- Open magnetic lines → dwell time τ limited by transit, conduction, ala' Blasius
- Intermittency → “Blobs” etc. Observed. **Physics?**



Background, cont'd

- But... Heuristic Drift (HD) Model (Goldston +)

- $V \sim V_{\text{curv}}$, $\tau \sim L_c/V_{\text{th}i}$, $\lambda \sim \epsilon \rho_{\theta i}$ → SOL width
- Pathetically small
- Pessimistic B_θ scaling, yet high I_p for confinement
- Fits lots of data.... (Brunner '18, Silvagni '20)



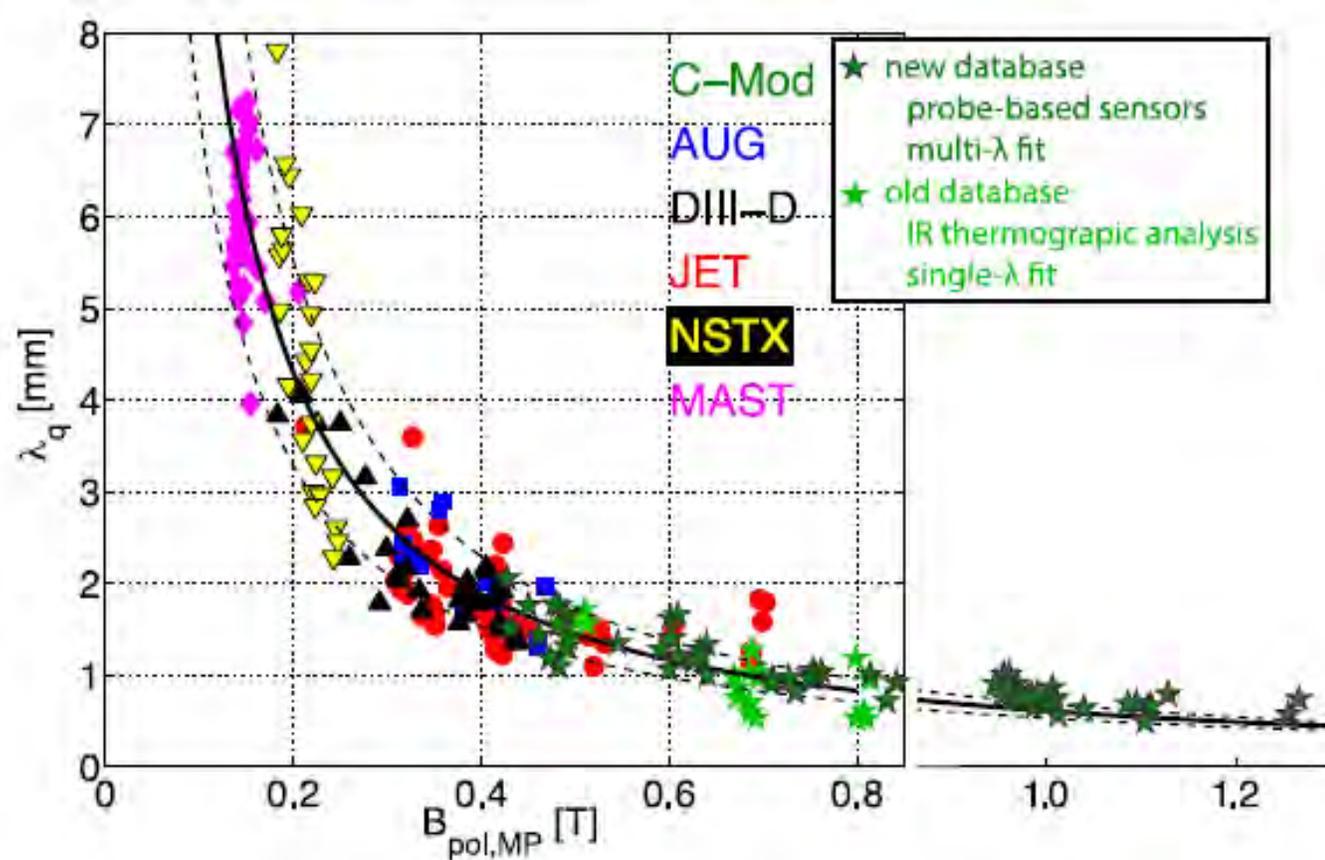
- Why does neoclassical work? → ExB shear suppresses SOL modes i.e.

$$\gamma_{\text{interchange}} \sim \frac{c_s}{(R_c \lambda)^{\frac{1}{2}}} - \frac{3T_{\text{edge}}}{|e|\lambda^2}$$

shearing \leftrightarrow strong λ^{-2} scaling

$$\text{from: } \frac{c_s}{(R_c \lambda)^{\frac{1}{2}}} - \langle V_E \rangle'$$

Background: HD Works in H-mode



“Brunner Plot”

HD is Bad News...

Background, cont'd

- THE Existential Problem... (Kikuchi, Sonoma TTF):

Desire $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Confinement} \rightarrow \text{H-mode} \leftrightarrow \text{ExB shear} \\ \text{Power Handling} \rightarrow \text{broader heat load, etc} \end{array} \right. \rightarrow \text{Both to be good !}$

How reconcile? – Pay for power mgmt with confinement ?!

- Spurred:

- Exploration of turbulent boundary states with improved confinement: Grassy ELM, WPQHM, I-mode, Neg. D ... re-visit ITB + L-mode edge?

+ SOL width now key part of the story

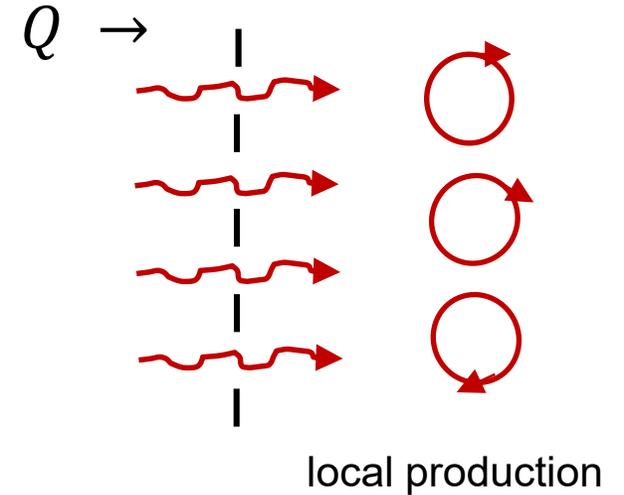
- Simulations, Visualizations (XGC, BOUT...) ~ “Go” to ITER and all be well

- But... What’s the Physics ?? How is the SOL broadened?

Some Theory

SOL BL Problem

- SOL Excitation
 - Local production (SOL instabilities) – Q driven
 - Turbulence energy influx from pedestal
- Key Questions:
 - Local drive vs spreading ratio $\rightarrow Ra$
 - Is the SOL usually dominated by turbulence spreading?
 - How far can entrainment penetrate a stable SOL \rightarrow SOL broadening?
 - Effects ExB shear, role structures ?



Physics Issues – Part II

- How calculate SOL width for turbulent pedestal but a locally stable SOL?

- spreading penetration depth
- must recover HD in WTT limit

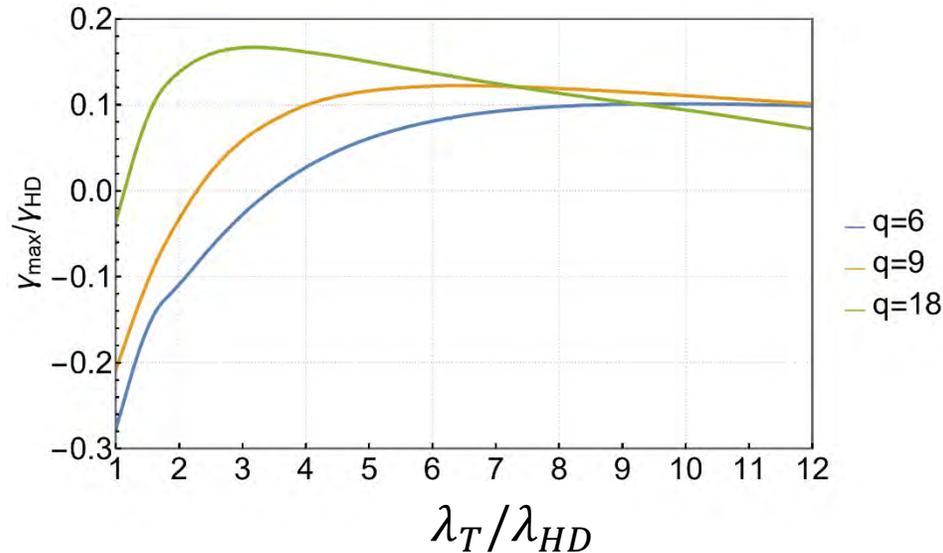
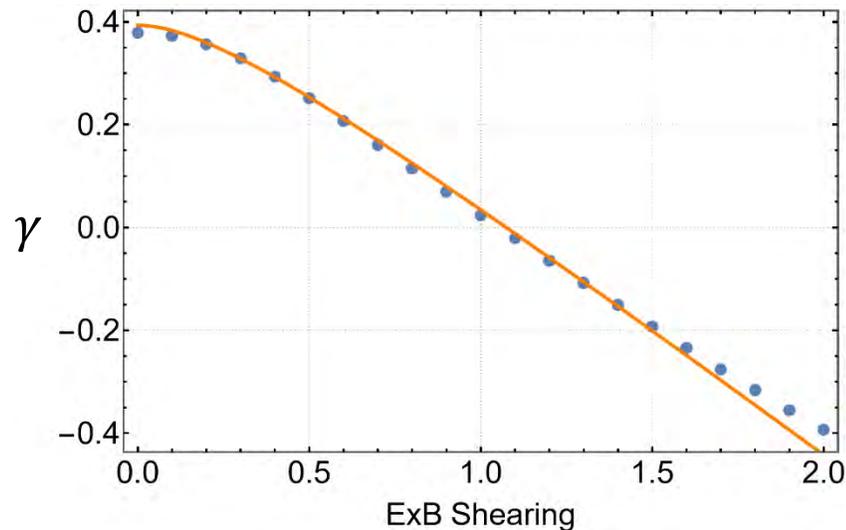
➔ • Scaling and cross-over of λ_q relative HD model

➔ • What is effect/impact of barrier on spreading mechanism?

- Can SOL broadening and good confinement be reconciled ?

Model 1 – Stable SOL – Linear Theory

- Standard drift-interchange with sheath boundary conditions + ExB shear (after Myra + Krash.)



Maximal Linear Growth Rate of Interchange Mode in the SOL v.s. normalized layer width λ_D/λ_{HD} at different SOL safety factor q (with $\beta = 0.001$)

Linear Growth Rate of a specific mode (fixed k_y) v.s. $E \times B$ shear at $q = 5, \beta = 0.001, k_y \cdot \lambda_{HD} = 1.58$.

- Relevant H-mode ExB shear strongly stabilizing $\gamma_{HD} = c_s/(\lambda_{HD}R)^{1/2}$
- Need λ/λ_{HD} well above unity for SOL instability. $V'_E \approx \frac{3T_e}{|e|\lambda^2} \rightarrow$ layer width sets shear

Model 2 – Two Multiple Adjacent Regions

- “Box Model” – after Z.B. Guo, P.D.

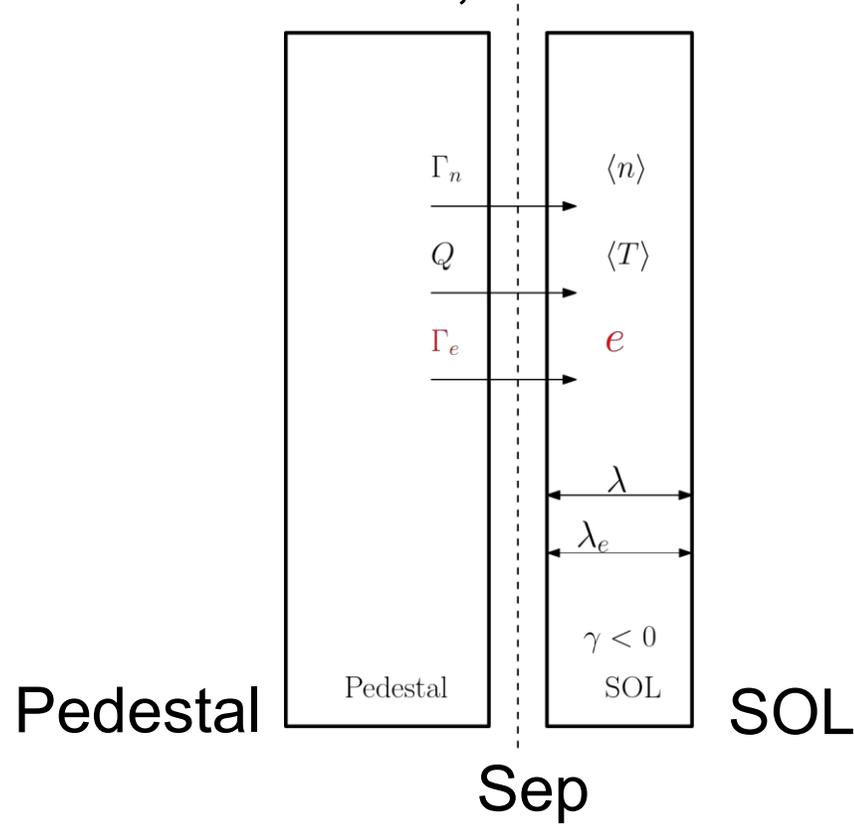


Illustration of Two Box Model: SOL driven by particle flux, heat flux and intensity flux (Γ_e) from the pedestal. The horizontal axis is the radial direction, and vertical axis is the poloidal direction.

- Key Point:
 - Spreading flux from pedestal can enter stable SOL
 - Depth of penetration → extent of SOL broadening
 - Problem in one of entrainment/penetration

Width of Stable SOL

- Fluid particle: $\frac{dr}{dt} = V_{Dr} + \tilde{V}$
 - V_{Dr} : drift
 - \tilde{V} : fluctuating velocity

{ Dwell time τ_{\parallel}
constrains excursion

- Dwell time: τ_{\parallel}

- $\delta^2 = \langle (\int (V_D + \tilde{V}) dt) (\int (V_D + \tilde{V}) dt) \rangle$

$\langle (\text{step})^2 \rangle = V_D^2 \tau_{\parallel}^2 + \langle \tilde{V}^2 \rangle \tau_c \tau_{\parallel}$

$= \lambda_{HD}^2 + \varepsilon \tau_{\parallel}^2$

τ_c : correlation time
modest turbulence $\leftrightarrow \tau_c \geq \tau_{\parallel}$

ε : turbulence energy density

{ See also
Fokker-Planck analysis
i.e. drift + diffusion

- So $\lambda = [\lambda_{HD}^2 + \varepsilon \tau_{\parallel}^2]^{1/2} \rightarrow$ SOL width [Effects add in quadrature]

- How compute ε ? \rightarrow turbulence energy in SOL. Need relate to pedestal

- N.B. Can write: $\lambda = [\lambda_{HD}^2 + \lambda_e^2]^{1/2}$ λ_e is turbulent width

Calculating the SOL Turbulence Energy 1

- Need compute Γ_e effect on SOL levels
- $K - \epsilon$ type model, mean field approach (c.f. Gurcan, P.D. '05 et seq)
 - Can treat various NL processes via σ, κ
 - Exploit conservative form model

- $\partial_t \epsilon = \gamma \epsilon - \sigma \epsilon^{1+\kappa} - \partial_x \Gamma_e \quad \rightarrow \text{Spreading, turbulence energy flux}$

* $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Growth } \gamma < 0 \\ \text{here contains shear + sheath} \end{array} \right.$ \rightarrow NL transfer $\gamma_{NL} \sim \sigma \epsilon^\kappa$

- \rightarrow • N.B.: No Fickian model of Γ_e employed, yet
- Readily extended to 2D, improved production model, etc.

Calculating the SOL Turbulence Energy 2

- Integrate ε equation \int_0^λ ; “constant e” approximation
- Take quantities = layer average
- $\Gamma_{e,0} + \lambda_e \gamma \varepsilon = \lambda_e \sigma \varepsilon^{1+\kappa}$

Separatrix fluctuation energy flux

Single parameter characterizing spreading

So for $\gamma < 0$,

$$\Gamma_{e,0} = \lambda_e |\gamma| \varepsilon + \sigma \lambda_e \varepsilon^{1+\kappa}$$

λ_e = layer width for ε

$\Gamma_{e,0}$ vs linear + nonlinear damping

- Ultimately leads to recursive calculation of Γ_e

Calculating the SOL Turbulence Energy 3

[Mean Field Theory]

- Full system:

$$\Gamma_{e,0} = \lambda_e |\gamma| \varepsilon + \sigma \lambda_e \varepsilon^{1+\kappa}$$

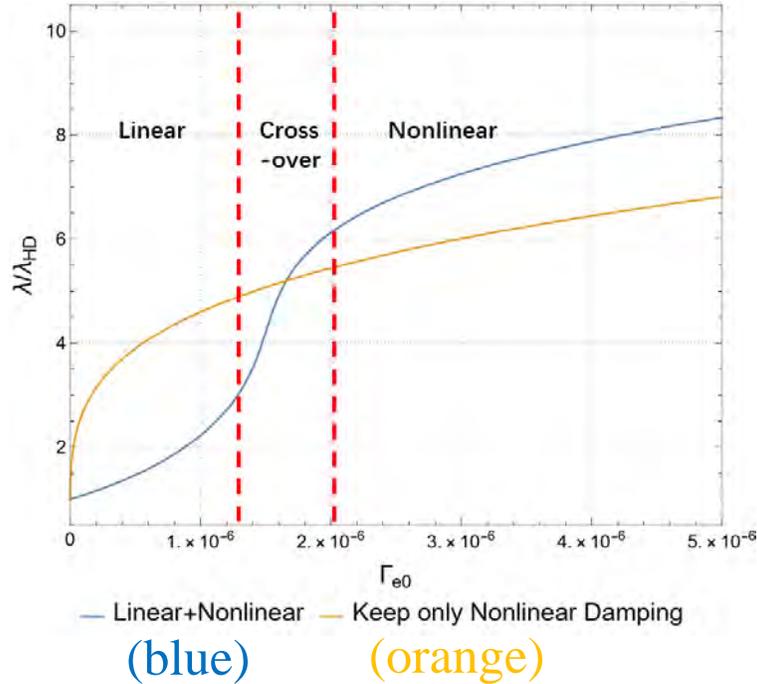
$$\lambda_e = [\lambda_{HD}^2 + \varepsilon \tau_{\parallel}^2]^{1/2}$$

Simple model of
turbulent SOL
broadening

- $\Gamma_{0,e}$ is single control parameter characterizing spreading
- $\tilde{\Gamma}_{0,e}$? Expect $\tilde{\Gamma}_e \sim \Gamma_0$

SOL width Broadening vs $\Gamma_{e,0}$

- SOL width broadens due spreading



λ/λ_{HD} plotted against the intensity flux Γ_{e0} from the pedestal at $q = 4, \beta = 0.001, \kappa = 0.5, \sigma = 0.6$

Variation indicates need for detailed scaling analysis

- Clear decomposition into
 - Weak broadening regime \rightarrow shear dominated
 - Cross-over regime
 - Strong broadening regime
- \rightarrow NL damping vs spreading } relevant

- Cross-over for: $\langle \tilde{V}^2 \rangle \sim V_D^2 \rightarrow$ cross-over $\Gamma_{0,e}$
- Cross-over for $\tilde{V} \sim O(\epsilon)V_*$

SOL Width: Some Analysis

Have $\Gamma_{e,0} = |\gamma| e \lambda_e + \lambda_e \sigma e^{1+\kappa}$

a) Damping dominated

$$\Gamma_e \approx |\gamma| \lambda_e e \quad \lambda_q^2 = \lambda_e^2 + \lambda_{HD}^2$$

$$\lambda_q = \left[\lambda_{HD}^2 + \left(\frac{\Gamma_e \tau_{\parallel}^2}{|\gamma|} \right)^{2/3} \right]^{1/2}$$

- Spreading enters only via Γ_e at sep.
- Shearing via $|\gamma|$
- τ scalings $\rightarrow \tau_{\parallel}$ vs $\tau_{\parallel}^{2/3} \rightarrow$ current scaling of λ_e weaker

SOL Width: Some Analysis, Cont'd

b) NL dominated

$$\Gamma_e \approx \lambda_e \sigma e^{1+\kappa} \quad \lambda_q^2 = \lambda_e^2 + \lambda_{HD}^2$$

$$\lambda_q = \left[\lambda_{HD}^2 + \left(\frac{\Gamma_e}{\sigma} \right)^{2/(3+4\kappa)} \tau_{\parallel}^{[4(1+\kappa)/(3+2\kappa)]} \right]^{1/2}$$

– weaker Γ_e scaling, $\lambda_q \sim (\Gamma_e/\sigma)^{1/5}$; STT

– $\tau_{\parallel}^{3/4}$ vs τ_{\parallel} \rightarrow weaker current scaling

The Question

- What is Γ_e ? How characterize ? \leftrightarrow Flux-Gradient Relation?
- Conventional Wisdom:

$$\Gamma_e \approx -D(e) \frac{\partial e}{\partial x} \rightarrow \frac{D_0 e^{\alpha+1}}{f(V_E')} / w_{ped} \text{ as in CDG '22}$$

But: “ The conventional wisdom is little more than convention”

— J.K. Galbraith

- See computation, experiment...

Some Simulation Results

(cf. Nami Li, X.-Q. Xu, P.D.; submitted)

→ BOUT++ → pedestal + SOL

→ 6 field model (“Braginskii for 21st century”)

→ Focus on weak peeling mode turbulence in pedestal

→ MHD turbulence state → small/grassy ELM, also WPQHM

3D Counterpart of Brunner (λ_q vs B_θ)

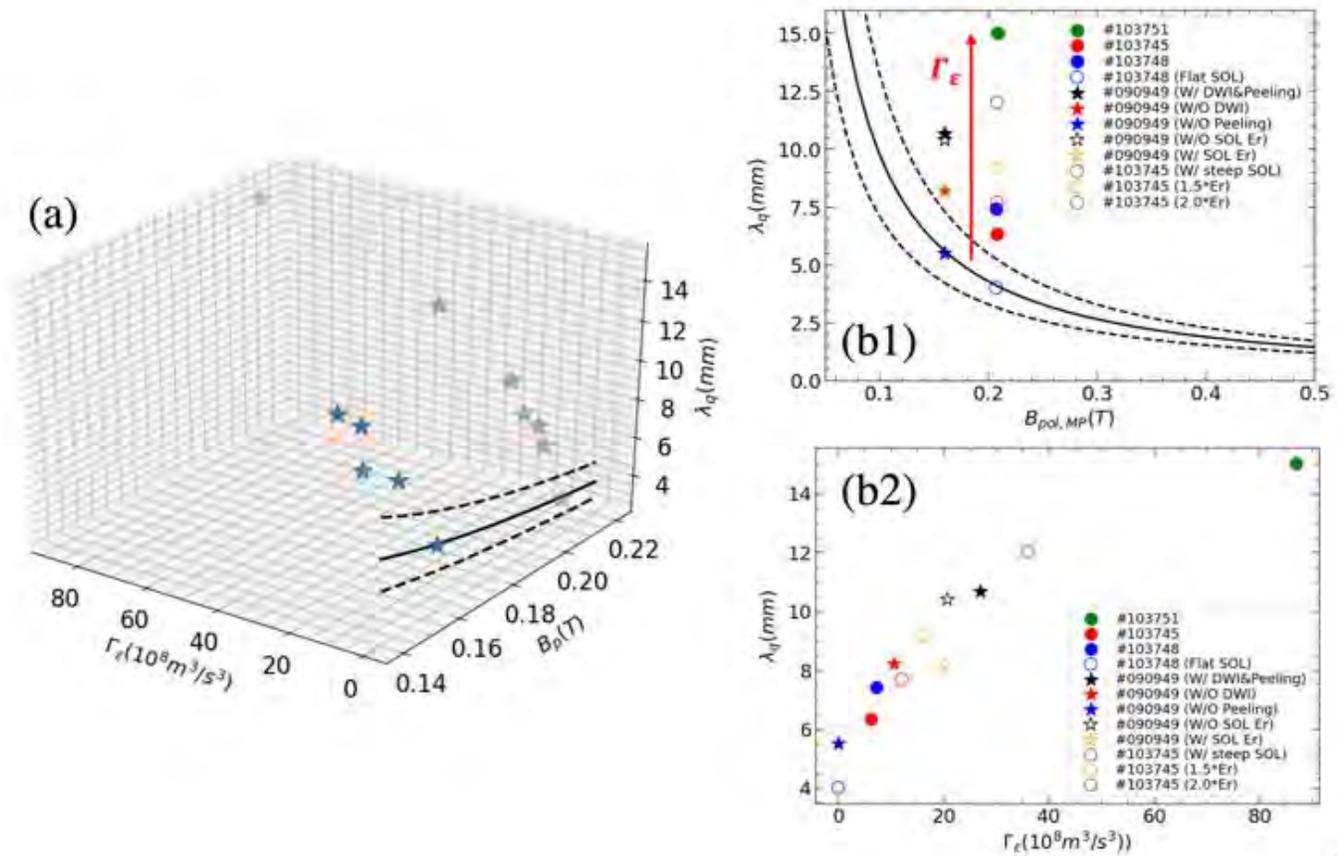


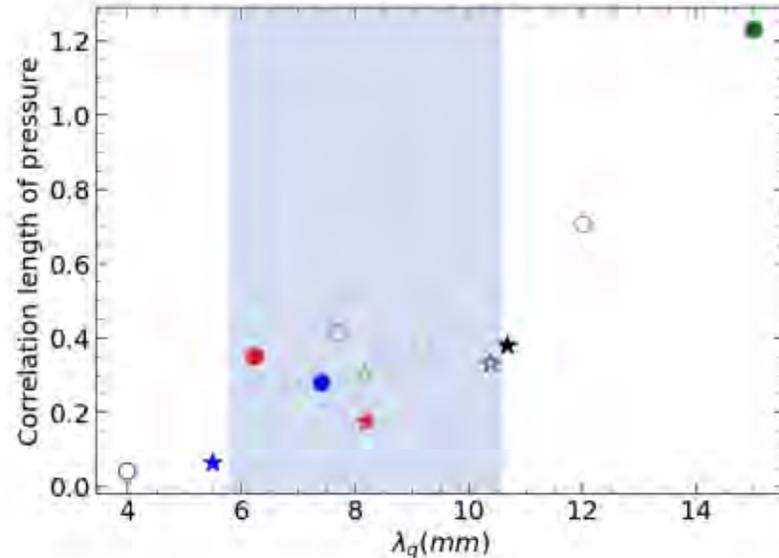
Fig. 3. (a) 3D plot of heat flux width λ_q vs poloidal magnetic field B_p and fluctuation energy density flux Γ_ϵ ; (b) 2D plot of heat flux width λ_q vs poloidal magnetic field B_p (b1) and fluctuation energy density flux Γ_ϵ (b2).

3D Brunner Plot – Comments

- λ_q rises with Γ_e
- Low Γ_e , λ_q tracks hyperbola
- Large Γ_e , λ_q rises above Brunner/Goldston hyperbola
- λ_q grows with Γ_e

Spreading as Mixing Process ?

- Conjecture that λ_q should increase with pedestal mixing length $\rightarrow \Gamma_e$



- Note division into
 - drift dominated
 - cross-over (blue)
 - turbulent

Fig 4. Radial correlation length of pressure near the separatrix vs. heat flux width λ_q .

Relate Spreading to Pedestal Conditions

N.B.

- Γ_e rises with pedestal $\nabla P_0 \leftrightarrow$
increased drive
- Collisionality dependence Γ_e :
 - high \rightarrow no bootstrap current \rightarrow
ballooning \rightarrow smaller l_{mix}
 - low \rightarrow strong bootstrap \rightarrow peeling
 \rightarrow larger l_{mix}

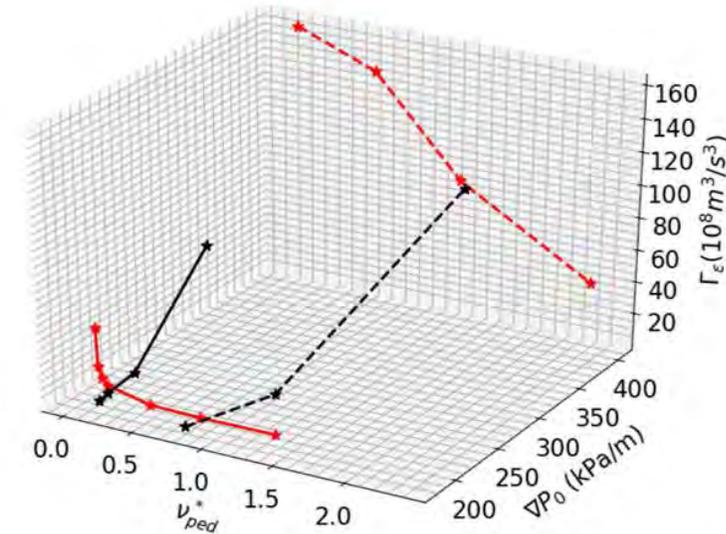


Fig. 7. 3D plot of fluctuation energy density flux Γ_e vs pedestal peak pressure gradient ∇P_0 and v_{ped}^* ; black curves are ∇P_0 scan with low collisionality $v_{ped}^* = 0.108$ (solid curve) and high collisionality $v_{ped}^* = 1$ (dashed curve); red curves are v_{ped}^* scan with small $\nabla P_0 \sim 200 \text{ kPa/m}$ (solid curve) and large $\nabla P_0 \sim 400 \text{ kPa/m}$ (dashed curve).

Fundamental Physics of Γ_e

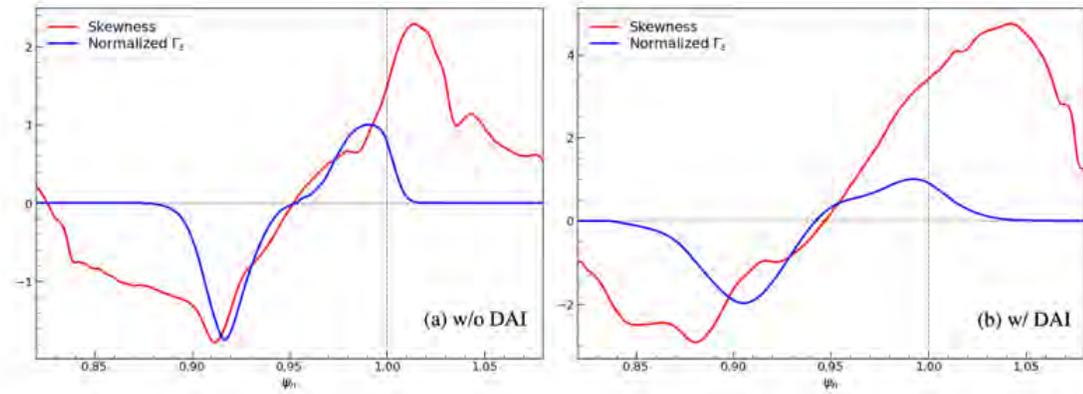


Fig. 6 Radial profiles of normalized fluctuation energy density flux Γ_e (blue) and skewness (red) for without (a) and with (b) drift-Alfvén instability. Here fluctuation energy density flux is normalized to the max value for each case.

- Γ_e spreading tracks \tilde{P} skewness
 - Outward for $s > 0 \rightarrow$ “blobs”
 - Inward for $s < 0 \rightarrow$ “voids”
- Zero-crossings $\Gamma_{e,s}$ in excellent agreement

Fundamental Physics of Γ_e , cont'd

- Spreading appears likely linked to “coherent structures”
- Likely intermittent (skewness, kurtosis related)
- Related study (Z. Li); $Ku \sim 0.4$, so \rightarrow if Fokker-Planck analysis

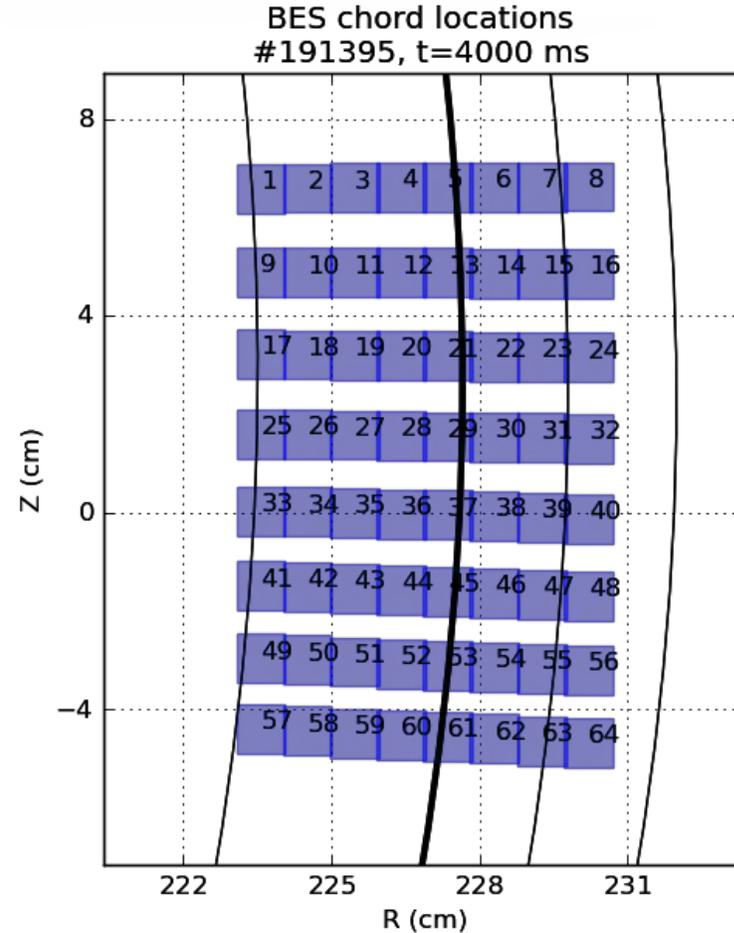
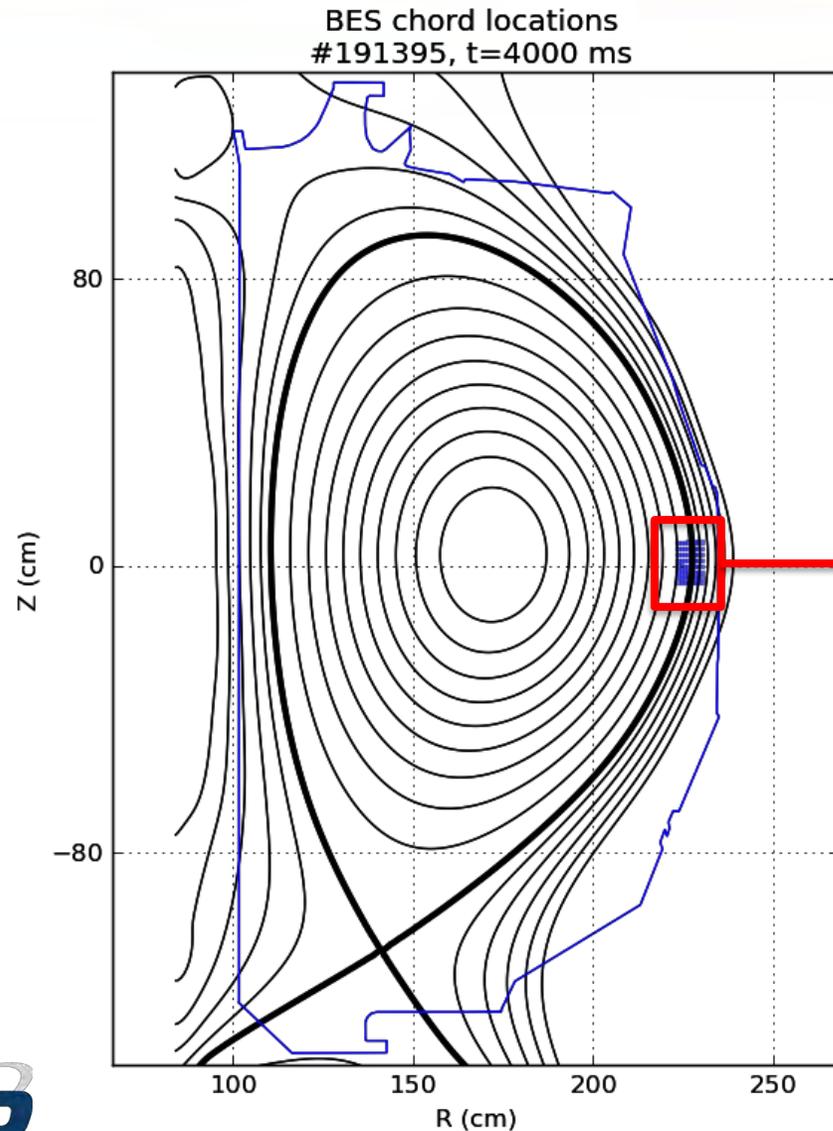
$$\frac{\partial e}{\partial t} = -\frac{\partial}{\partial x} (Ve) + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x^2} (De) \quad \text{Convective !?}$$

Relate V to pedestal gradient relaxation event (GRE) ?!

Why would one think of this?

Some Experimental Data

BES allows measuring $\delta n/n$ at the plasma edge



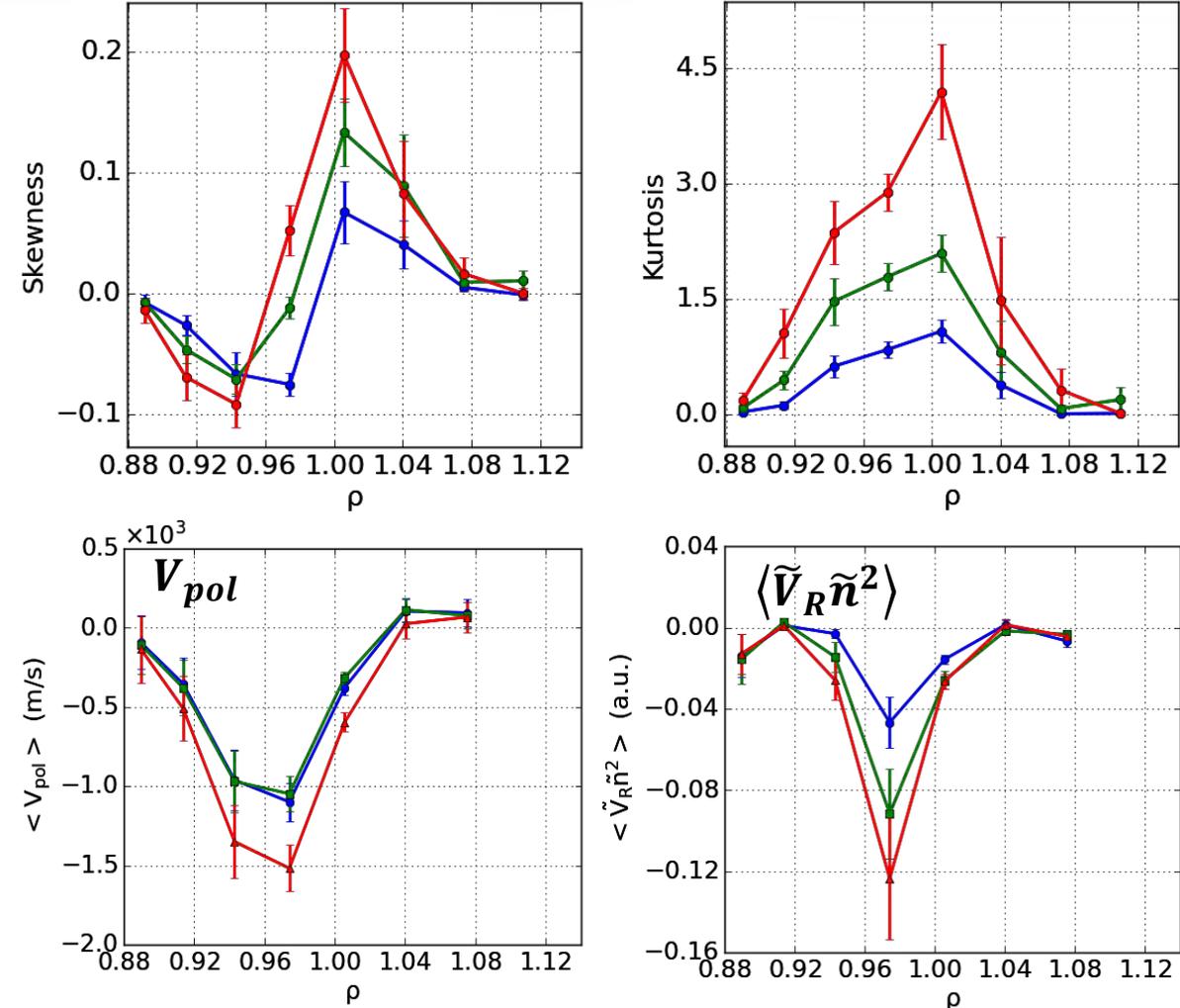
$\rho = 0.87-1.1$
 $\sim 10 \times 8 \text{ cm}$

Turbulence intensity flux $\langle \tilde{V}_R \tilde{n}^2 \rangle$ is negative inside and positive outside the separatrix

- Negative skewness of \tilde{n} inside the separatrix and positive skewness outside indicate the prevalence of negative density fluctuations (voids) inside the separatrix and positive (blobs) outside.
- The formation zone of blob-void pairs (zero skewness) is located at $\rho \sim 0.96$ - 0.98 .
- Turbulence intensity flux $\langle \tilde{V}_R \tilde{n}^2 \rangle$, measured using 2D BES, shows an inward turbulence spreading inside the separatrix while outside, the turbulence spreading is outward towards the SOL.

#192095, NBI power ramp, $f=20$ - 120 kHz

$P_{\text{NBI}} = 1.2$ - 1.7 - 2.5 MW, $\bar{n}_e = 3.1$ - 3.1 - $3.4 \times 10^{19} \text{ m}^{-3}$



What is going on ?

→ Gradient Relaxation Events and SOL Broadening

or

“Interesting Things come in pairs”

→ More Theory

General Question:

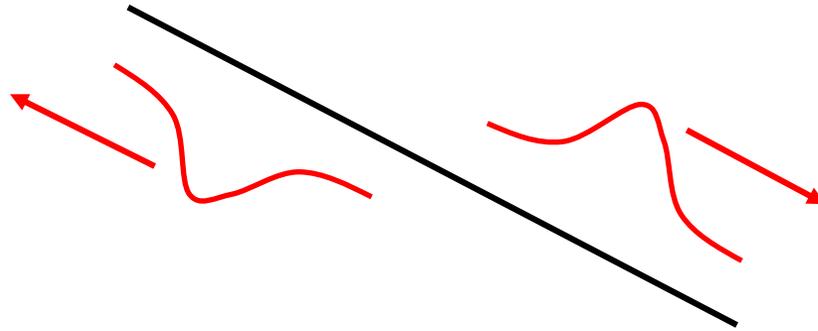
“Is there a connection between turbulence spreading and blob-void pairs of structures?”

Introduction, cont'd

- Foundation: Physics of turbulence spreading, avalanches, etc.
 - Avalanches
 - Spreading
- } observed
- M. Choi, 2018 (KSTAR) ECEI
 - Khabanov, 2023 (DIII-D) BES velocimetry i.e. $\langle \tilde{V}_r \tilde{n}^2 \rangle$

Introduction, cont'd

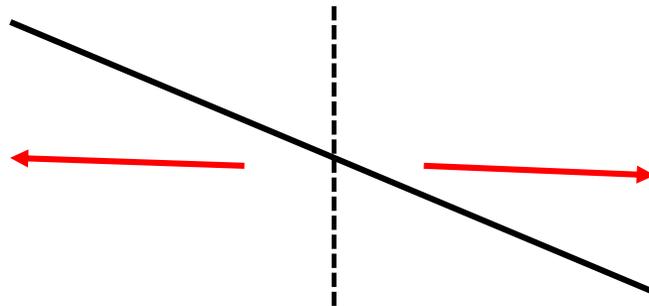
- Avalanches \rightarrow opposite propagation of bumps and voids



P.D. + Hahm '95 et seq.

N.B.: bump and void propagation observed
 \rightarrow Choi, 2018

- Hint of opposite $\langle \tilde{v}_r \tilde{n}^2 \rangle$ spreading pulses near sep.



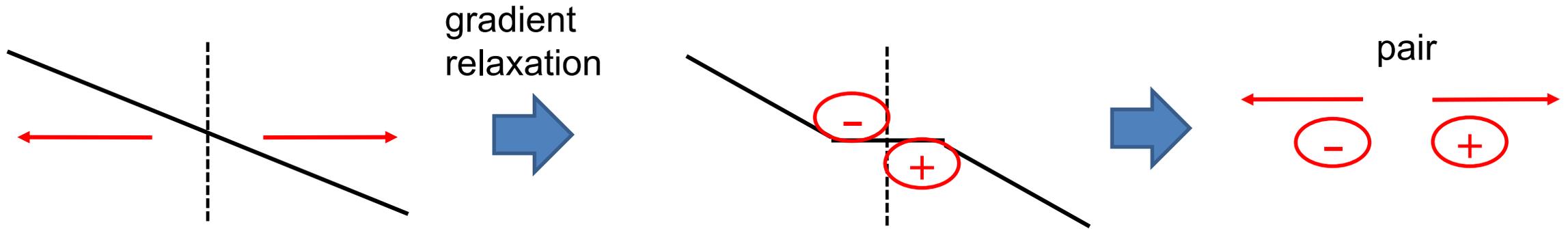
Khabanov

See also: Ting Long

- Recent results consistent with long history...

Introduction, cont'd

- Why the  ?
- Edge gradient relaxation event (GRE)

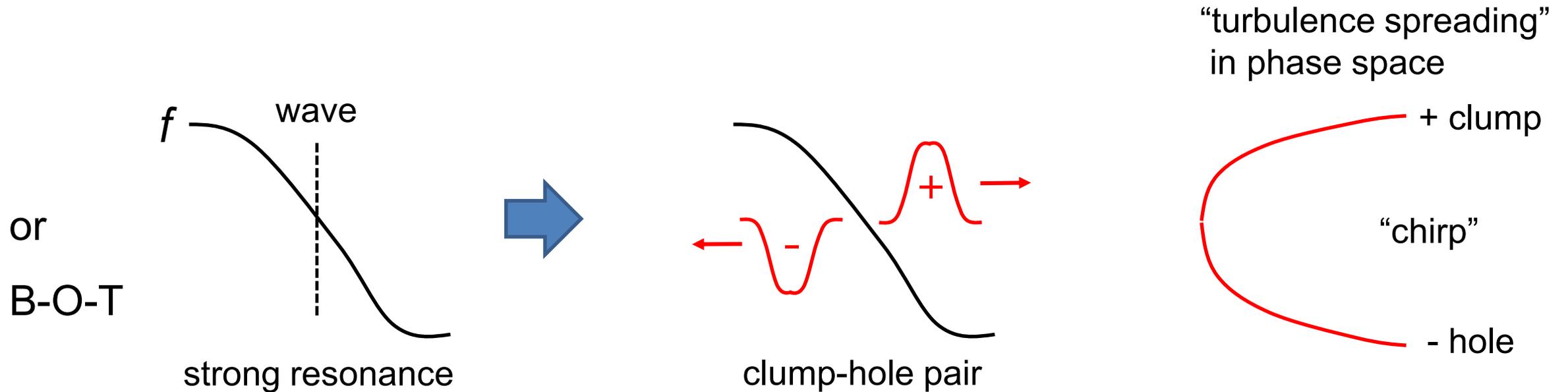


-  → inward propagating “void” or “hole”
-  → outward propagating “clump” or “blob”
- GRE sets initial impulse to blob, void

↔ Conservative advection

Related: B+B Model (1996→)

- 1D Vlasov mock up of EP resonant instability

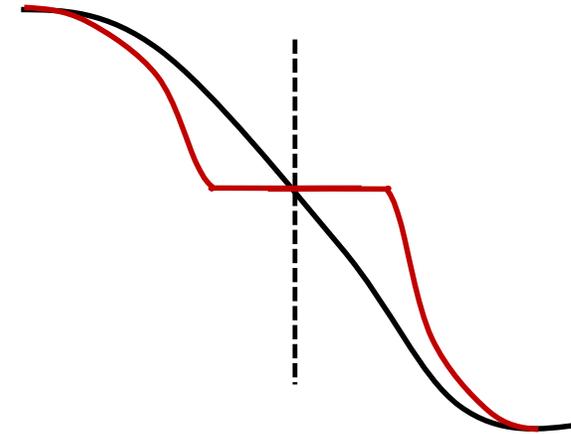


- N.B. BB speak and draw “clump-hole pair” but calculate via 3 wave coupling
 - considerable restriction on domain applicability
- Common element: relaxation → structure pair production and propagation

Related: B+B Model, cont'd (Ackn: V. Duarte)

- Recent variation on B + B: Lilley & Nyquist, 2014
 - Key: Plateau in $\langle f \rangle \rightarrow$ negative energy wave

Plateau \leftrightarrow akin to beam \rightarrow NEW



- Negative energy waves easily destabilized by residual dissipation
- Clump hole pair generated \rightarrow erodes plateau
- Suggest strong mixing (GRE) can initiate blob-void pair. Negative energy waves generic!

Related: B+B Model, cont'd

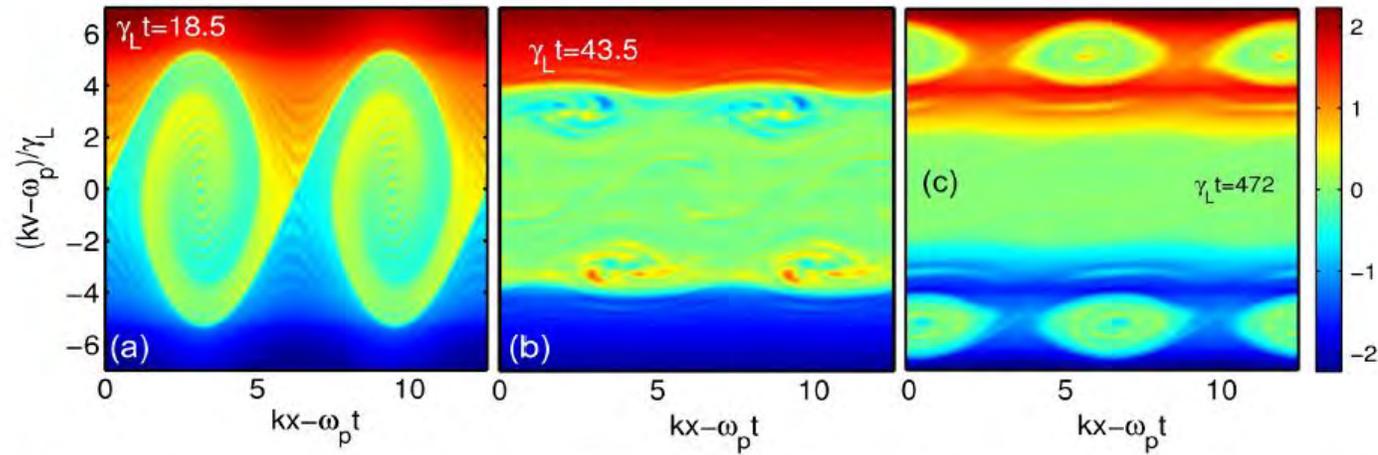


FIG. 2 (color online). Snapshots of the resonant fast particle distribution function for $\gamma_d/\gamma_L = 0.1$ that display (a) the initial phase mixing followed by (b) the almost spatially uniform plateau with sideband trapping regions forming close to the edge, and finally (c) a detaching hole-clump pair. Obtained using BOT [10,20].

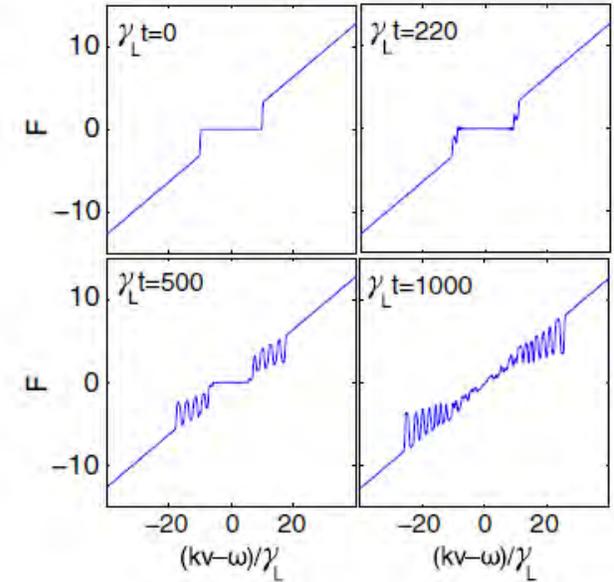


FIG. 5 (color online). Spatially averaged distribution function evolved using the BOT code [10,20] for $\gamma_d/\gamma_L = 2$, $k\Delta v/\gamma_L = 10$ and initial normalized amplitude $\omega_B^2/\gamma_L^2 = 10^{-6}$. The unstable plateau generates holes and clumps that eventually completely erode the plateau state.

But...

- If speaking of blobs, voids, structures etc...



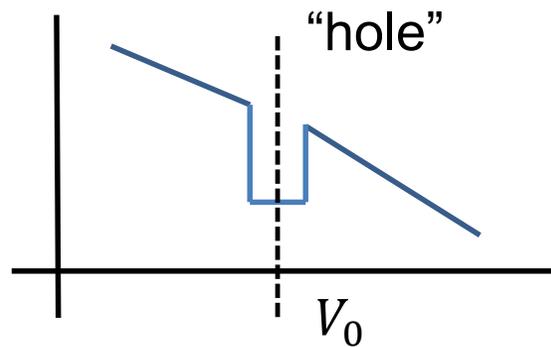
- “What makes a blob a blob ?”

↔ Physics of self-coherence?

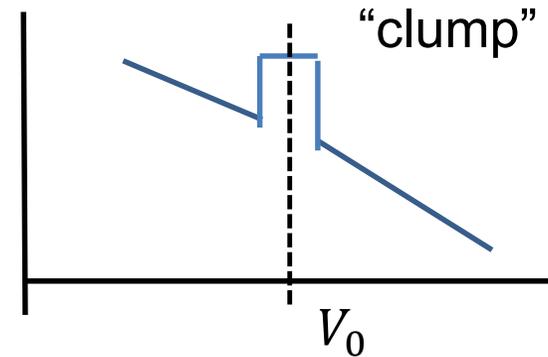
- N.B. I have never received a satisfactory answer to this question...

Blob-Void Pair: Basic Structure

- What makes a coherent structure “coherent” ?
- Clue: Vlasov Plasma



Or



\tilde{f} }
 ΔV }

$$\langle f \rangle = f_0 + \tilde{f} \leftrightarrow \text{structure distorts equilibrium}$$

- then:
$$-(\omega - kv)\tilde{f} = -\frac{q}{m}k\hat{\phi}\frac{\partial}{\partial v}[f_0 + \tilde{f}]$$

$$\nabla^2\phi = -4\pi n_0 q \int f dv$$

- and standard analysis, ala’ ‘waterbag model’ collisionless gravitation cf: Berk + ‘60s, Dupree ‘82

Blob-Void, cont'd

- Relevant example: Pressure Blob in Shear Flow

$$-i(\omega - kV_0)\hat{P} = -\hat{V}_r \frac{\partial}{\partial r} [\langle P_0 \rangle + \delta P] \quad \delta P \text{ in shear flow}$$

$$-i(\omega - kV_0)\nabla_{\perp}^2 \hat{\phi} = -\kappa \nabla_y \hat{P}$$

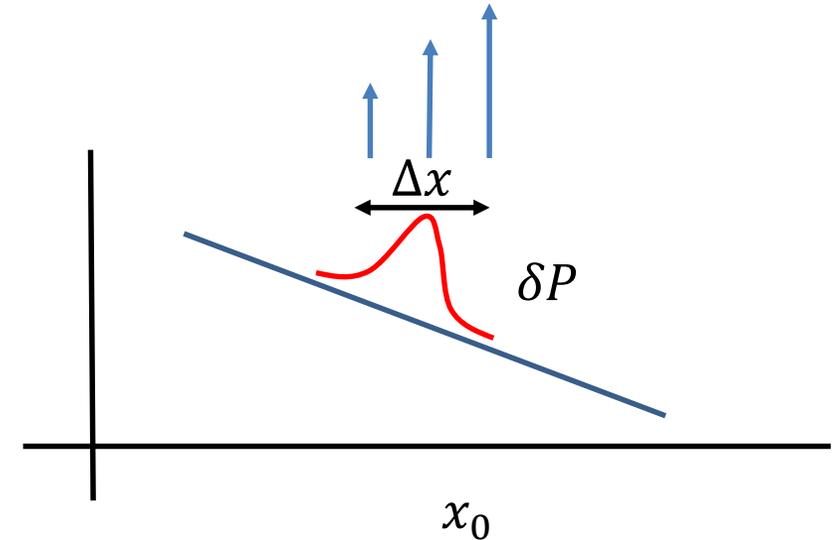
$$\nabla_{\perp}^2 \hat{\phi} - \frac{\kappa \nabla_y \tilde{V}_r \partial_r P_0}{(\omega - kV_0)^2} = \frac{\kappa \nabla_y \tilde{V}_r \partial_r \delta P}{(\omega - kV_0)^2}$$

$$\hat{\phi} = \int dx' G(x, x') \frac{\kappa k^2 \hat{\phi} \delta P(x')}{(\omega - kV_0(x'))^2} \quad \text{N.B. After Taylor-Goldstein Eqn.}$$

→ screened structure. Base state need not be unstable!

→ with box model, considerable simplification possible

$$\partial_r \delta P = \Delta P [\delta(x - x_0 + \Delta x) - \delta(x - x_0 - \Delta x)]$$



Blob-Void, cont'd

$$\rightarrow \phi(x) = G(x, x_0) \kappa k^2 \phi(x_0) \Delta P \left[\frac{1}{(\omega - kV_0(x_0 - \Delta x))^2} - \frac{1}{(\omega - kV_0(x_0 + \Delta x))^2} \right]$$

- So for $x \sim x_0$:

$$(\omega - kV_0)^2 = k^2 \overset{1}{V_0'^2} (\Delta x)^2 - \left[2G\kappa k^2 (\Delta P) (V_{ph} - V_0) k^2 V_0' \Delta x \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

- Competition:

- Shear across structure \leftrightarrow dispersion ①
 - $\Delta P \rightarrow$ strength – blob size
 - $G \rightarrow$ screening by system
- } ② $\Delta x \equiv$ radial extent

- Does blob hold itself? together vs shear ? \rightarrow key question !

\rightarrow competition of 1, 2

Blob-Void, cont'd

- The critical balance:

$$G \kappa \Delta P (V_{ph} - V_0) \text{ vs } V_0'^2 (\Delta x) V_0'$$

$$\frac{\Delta P}{\Delta x} \rightarrow \frac{\text{Blob size}}{\text{Blob extent}} \\ \neq \partial \langle P \rangle / \partial r$$

$$\rightarrow \frac{G \kappa \Delta P / \Delta x}{V_0'^2} \text{ vs } \left[(V_{ph} - V_0)^{-1} V_0' \Delta x \right] \sim O(1)$$

$$\leftrightarrow \text{Richardson \# (screened) for blob} \sim 1$$

$$Ri = \omega_B^2 / V'^2 \rightarrow \text{buoy energy vs shear}$$

- Consistent with qualitative expectations of marginality. Note screening enters !
- Blob vs Void \rightarrow sign G ! (screening) \rightarrow structure ExB shear layer, resonance

\leftrightarrow location relative to shear layer ($V_{ph} = \omega/k$ vs $V_0(x)$) matters

N.B.: Begs question of SOL blob data vs $Ri \rightarrow$ unanswered

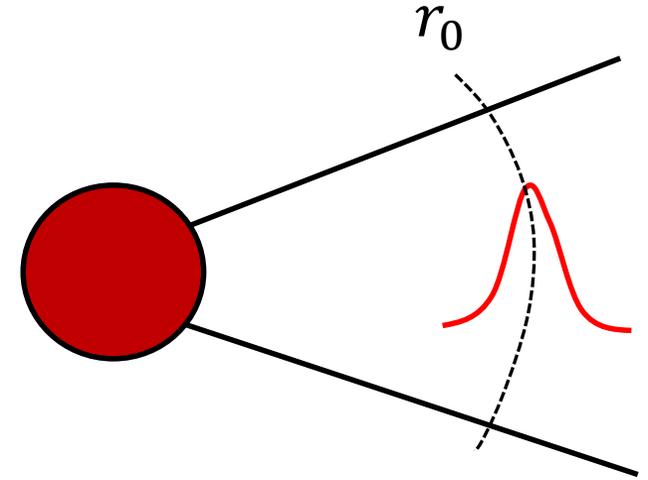
N.B.: Boedo 2003, et. seq noted pronounced effect of shearing on blob population

B) Blob-Void, cont'd

- Message: Can formulate physically meaningful coherency or 'self-binding' criterion for blobs, voids in base state
- ~ Richardson # criterion interesting
 - amplitude ΔP and extent Δx combine vs shear \rightarrow minimal structural characterization. Screening enters.
 - how does it fare vs data?, simulation? Serious answer possible
- Need better understanding of role of resonance between V_{ph} and $V_0(x)$

From “Blobs” to “Bump”

- Samantha Chen +, TTF ‘23
 - density bump in disk
 - modifies PV profile \rightarrow stability etc. to Rossby wave
 - Rossby wave \rightarrow momentum transport \rightarrow accretion
- When would localized $\delta\beta(r)$ self-bind for Rossby wave system?
- i.e. $\omega = -k_x\beta/k^2$ now $\beta \rightarrow \beta + \delta\beta(x)$ \leftarrow localized defect. Persistence?
- so $(\omega - kV_0(x)) k_{\perp}^2 \phi = -k_x(\beta + \delta\beta(x_0))\phi$



From “Blobs” to “Bump”, cont’d

- Similar analysis →

$$(\omega - kV_0)^2 = (k_x V_0' \Delta x)^2 + G k_x^2 V_0' \Delta \beta \Delta x$$

(shearing) (self-field of bump)

- Critical competition:

V_0' vs $G \Delta \beta / \Delta x$ set bump size, scale

- Relevance to staircases ? i.e. staircase as array of bumps ?

Thoughts for Experiment and Analysis

- Pulse propagation studies in SOL environments, i.e. Tubes?
- Track blob-void:
 - Pair size distribution. Plot vs GRE strength
 - Separation speed and growth. Plot vs. GRE strength
 - momentum relation ?
- Test Ri scaling of ejected blob distribution via electrode bias-driven shear layer (JTEXT)

Discussion

- Turbulent pedestals have many advantages
i.e. Grassy ELM, WPQHM, I-mode, Neg. Triang, L-mode+ITB
- Confinement Trade-offs?
- Best road forward for burning plasma?

Thanks for Attention !

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