Heisenberg’s universal $\ln^2 s$ increase of total cross sections

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The $\ln^2 s$ behaviour of total cross sections, first obtained by Heisenberg 50 years ago, receives now increased interest both on phenomenological and theoretical levels. In this paper we present a modification of the Heisenberg’s model in connection with the presence of glueballs and we show that it leads to a realistic description of all existing hadron total cross-sections data.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In a remarkable paper of 1952, Heisenberg investigated production of mesons as a problem of shock waves [1]. One of his results was that the total cross section increases like the square of the logarithm of the centre-of-mass energy. It is noteworthy that this result coincides with very recent calculations based on AdS/CFT dual string-gravity theory [2] or on the Colour Glass Condensate Approach [3] and, of course, saturates the Froissart-Martin bound [4]. In contradistinction to the latter case however the coefficient of the $\ln^2$ term is an estimate at finite energies and not an asymptotic bound as the one obtained by Lukaszuk and Martin [5].

We show in this note that by modifications of the original model of Heisenberg motivated by the enormous progress of knowledge in the 50 years that passed thence, the model yields some general and even some quantitative results which describe the data very well.

Our article is organized as follows: In section II we shortly discuss the original model of Heisenberg, in section III we modify it and compare it with the data and in section IV we discuss the results, their merits and their shortcomings and we present our conclusions.

II. THE HEISENBERG MODEL FOR THE TOTAL CROSS-SECTION

The considerations of Heisenberg concerning the total cross section are essentially geometrical ones, but the crucial ingredient is that the energy density and not the hadronic density is the essential quantity to be taken into account. The major part of Heisenberg’s paper is related to dynamical questions of meson production and is for our present investigation only of interest as dynamical background.

Proton-proton collisions are considered in the centre-of-mass system and the energy $\sqrt{s}$ is supposed to be high enough that Lorentz contraction allows to view the nucleons as discs (see Fig. 1).

Interaction takes place only in the overlap region (shaded area in figure 1) and the crucial assumption is made that a reaction can only occur if the energy density is high enough in order to create at least a meson pair.

Let $\gamma \sqrt{s}/V$ be the energy per unit volume disposable for meson production, where $\gamma$ is some positive constant smaller than 1. Accordingly to the assumption stated above, a reaction can only take place if $\gamma \sqrt{s}$ is sufficient to create two mesons. If we denote the energy of the two mesons by $k_0$ we thus have the condition:

$$\gamma \cdot \sqrt{s} \geq k_0. \quad (1)$$

Heisenberg took $k_0$ as the average energy of two produced mesons. In his shock wave approach with a non-renormalizable meson interaction, $k_0$ was only increasing very slowly (logarithmically) with energy. Next Heisenberg assumed that, at least for large impact factors $b$ (see figure 1), $\gamma$ is proportional to the overlap of the meson clouds,
that is
\[ \gamma = \alpha \cdot e^{-m \cdot b} \]  
where \( \alpha \) is some constant smaller than 1 and \( m \) is the mass of the mesons forming the cloud. From
\[ \gamma \geq \gamma_{\text{min}} = \frac{k_0}{\sqrt{s}}, \]  
we deduce the maximal impact parameter for which interaction takes place
\[ b_{\text{max}} = \frac{-1}{m} \ln \left( \frac{k_0}{\sqrt{s} \alpha} \right) \]  
and therefore
\[ \sigma = 2\pi \int_0^{b_{\text{max}}} b \, db = \frac{\pi}{m^2} \ln^2 \left( \frac{\sqrt{s} \alpha}{k_0} \right) \]  
which, apart from the factor \( \alpha \), is the result obtained by Heisenberg [1]. We see that implicitly the assumption has been made that if a meson production is energetically possible, it will happen (black disk). Of course, Heisenberg was taking the pion mass for the meson mass. For the energy of the produced mesons he deduced, in his dynamical considerations, assuming interactions of maximal strength, that the energy \( k_0 \) increases only slowly with energy, at any rate not by a power of \( s \). Therefore the asymptotically leading term in the cross section is \( (\pi/4m_\pi^2) \ln^2 s \), the coefficient \( \pi/4m_\pi^2 \) being 1/4 of the Lukaszuk-Martin bound [5]. The argument can be extended easily to hadron-hadron scattering in general, and therefore we have the result that the coefficient of the \( \ln^2 s \) term is universal for all hadron reactions.

The assumption that the interaction is of maximal strength, that is highly divergent in the UV region, is essential in Heisenberg’s argument. Only in that way enough energy is dissipated from the shock-wave front into lower energies to ensure copious particle production and to obtain a powerlike decrease of \( \gamma_{\text{min}} \) in Eq. (3). Also in our present understanding multiparticle production is essential for the increase of cross sections with energy. This has been studied in great detail in perturbative QCD by Lipatov and coworkers [6, 7]. The increase in phase space with \( \log s \) for each additional particle leads to a power series in \( \alpha_s \log s \) and demands in the high energy limit for resummation. This has been done by solving the famous BFKL equation. In leading order this leads to a singularity in the complex \( J \)-plane at \( J = 1 + 4 \log^2 \frac{\alpha_s N_c}{\pi} \approx 1.5 \) and hence to a tremendous increase with energy. Though next to leading order corrections are huge \([6, 7] \) partial resummations seem to lead to a stable result \([10]\) at \( J \approx 1.3 \). But this can be only applied if at least one hard scale is present, that is, in practice, only to \( \gamma^* \) hadron or better to \( \gamma^* \gamma^* \) scattering with high photon virtualities. In this case the Froissart bound cannot be derived. Nevertheless it seems plausible that also for scattering of small objects the asymptotic theorems hold. In a recent paper [8] it was shown that gluon saturation effects together with confinement lead indeed to a moderation of the BFKL-type behaviour to a \( \log^2 s \) behaviour at high energies. Quite generally speaking it is very plausible that a strong increase of the cross section eventually violating unitarity bounds is eventually damped to satisfy the Froissart bound (see for instance [11]). The connection between the Heisenberg model and the considerations of [3] has been discussed in [12]. Here it is suggested to get a more quantitative connection in a U(1) gauge theory with massive gauge bosons and fermions. This would in some way be a return to the model of Cheng and Wu [13].
FIG. 2: Multiparticle production leading to an increasing cross section according to [15], the gray ellipses represent hadrons (two pions e.g.) or may indicate instanton induced reactions.

FIG. 3: Interaction region (shaded) of two hadrons in the modified Heisenberg model of high energy scattering.

For hadron-hadron scattering the perturbative treatment of BFKL is not possible, but there has been a promising development [14, 15] to explain the increase of the hard cross section by multiple particle production in a way analogous to BFKL. But, in contrast to the perturbative treatment in QCD, the produced “particles” (rungs in the BFKL ladder) are not gluons but colourless objects, pions for instance (see Fig. 2). In this way a singularity in the complex $J$-plane at $J \approx 1.1$ has been obtained [15]. It is interesting to note that in the more recent publications [16, 17, 18] emphasis is given to instanton induced interactions as source of many-particle production. All these attempts have in common that the rise of energy in hadron-hadron cross sections is a genuine non-perturbative effect which brings them closer to Heisenberg’s original idea.

III. MODIFICATIONS OF THE MODEL

There are two obvious necessary modifications of the Heisenberg model:

1) If we want to apply it to all kind of hadrons, we have to take care of the different hadron sizes, since in the above treatment all sizes are equal to $1/m$.

2) We have to take into account that direct pion exchange, though being the exchange with the lightest particle, is not relevant at high energies. This is due to the fact that exchanged gluons have spin 1 and pions spin 0. Therefore already in Born approximation gluon exchange dominates at high energies. In Regge theory this is manifested by the fact that intercept of the pion is much lower than that of the Pomeron.

We therefore modify the model in two respects:

1) We make a rough approximation for the overlap (see Fig. 3):

$$\gamma = \begin{cases} 
\alpha & \text{for } b \leq R_1 + R_2 \\
\alpha e^{-m(b-R_1-R_2)} & \text{for } b \geq R_1 + R_2 
\end{cases} \quad (6)$$
2) For the mass we rather insert a mass $M$ in the range of the glueball mass instead of the pion mass $m$, since we believe that the high-energy behavior is dominated by gluon exchange.

We then obtain for $b_{\text{max}}$

$$b_{\text{max}} = R_1 + R_2 + \frac{1}{M} \log \frac{\sqrt{s} \alpha}{k_0},$$

assuming $\sqrt{s}$ large enough that $\ln \frac{\sqrt{s} \alpha}{k_0} > 0$.

For the total cross section we thus obtain:

$$\sigma = e \frac{\pi}{M^2} \ln^2 \frac{\sqrt{s} \alpha}{k_0} + 2\pi(R_1 + R_2) \ln \frac{\sqrt{s} \alpha}{k_0} \frac{1}{M}$$

$$+ \pi(R_1 + R_2)^2$$

$$= \frac{\pi}{4M^2} \ln^2 s + \frac{\pi}{M} \ln s \left\{(R_1 + R_2) + \frac{1}{M} \ln \frac{\alpha}{k_0}\right\}$$

$$+ \pi(R_1 + R_2)^2 + \frac{\pi}{M^2} \ln^2 \frac{\alpha}{k_0}$$

$$+ 2\pi(R_1 + R_2) \ln \frac{\alpha}{k_0}$$

where, as usual, implicit scale factors of 1 GeV$^2$ and 1 GeV, respectively, are obviously assumed in writing $\sigma$ as a quadratic form in $\ln s$. We see that the leading $\ln^2 s$ term is still universal, but now dominated rather by a glueball than by the pion mass. Since $R_1$ and $R_2$ are supposed to be of the size of the electromagnetic radii, the second term in Eq. (8) will dominate over the $\frac{\pi}{M^2}$ term except at high energies, $s \gg k_0^2/\alpha^2$.

In order to perform a rough numerical estimate, we may insert for the glueball mass a value between 1.4 and 1.7 GeV, yielding

$$\frac{\pi}{4M^2} = 0.11 - 0.16 \text{ mb}.$$ (9)

For $R_1$ and $R_2$ we may insert the electromagnetic radii. In contrast to Heisenberg, we insert for $k_0$ the minimal energy of two produced particles. Since production seems to occur in clusters with mass around 1.3 GeV [19], we can put $k_0 = 2.6$ GeV. The value of $\alpha$ (0 $\leq \alpha \leq 1$) might be process dependent. For very small objects (“onia”) it might be very small.

In the past, application of the Heisenberg model to the global analyses of the forward hadronic data were performed in [20], but the universality of the leading term was not discussed there. This universality was treated by Gershtein and Logunov [21], who made the assumption, as in the present paper, that the growth of the hadron-hadron total cross-sections is related to resonance production of glueballs.

A very good fit for all forward data has been recently obtained by assuming a universal $\ln^2 s$ dependence and a constant contribution dependent on the process [22, 23]. Apart from Reggeon-exchanges, which are of no concern here, the cross section was fitted [22] to

$$\sigma^{HH} = B \ln^2 \left(\frac{s}{s_0}\right) + Z^{HH},$$

(10)

with $B \simeq 0.32$ mb, $Z^{pp} \simeq 36$ mb, $Z^{\pi p} \simeq 21$ mb, $Z^{K p} \simeq 18$ mb and $s_0 \simeq 34$ GeV$^2$.

Such a value of $B$ would correspond to a mass $M$ of 1 GeV, a bit small for a glueball, but not unreasonable given the crude approximations. $Z^{HH}$ are in the right order of magnitude of $R_2$.

The scale $s_0$ is related to the quantities $\alpha$ and $k_0$ in (2) and (3). Using for $k_0$ the cluster mass [22] we obtain for the scattering of normal hadrons a value $\alpha \approx 0.28$, that is about a fourth of the energy goes into particle production.

The term $Z^{HH}$ in (10) has been derived here from the purely geometrical model (8). An energy independent term has been also obtained in a nonperturbative model for high energy scattering. It is based on a functional-integral approach to high energy scattering [24], where the functional integrals are evaluated in a specific model for nonperturbative QCD [25], based on the gauge invariant gluon-gluon correlator [24, 27]. The hadron dependent values of $Z$ for pp, $\pi p$, and $K p$ scattering in this model [28] are 35 mb, 23 mb and 19 mb respectively.
IV. CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that a geometrical model, where the energy density available for particle production is the relevant quantity, leads to the quite general result that the leading term in energy is of ln² s type and universal for all hadronic processes. Such a type of energy behavior has been obtained as the best choice testing many models and even the parameters found in the fit to all forward data [23] are in qualitative agreement with a reasonable choice of the parameters of the present model.

A consequence of the universal ln² s term is that at asymptotic energies all hadron cross sections become equal. At finite but high energies the pion and kaon proton cross sections are therefore expected to rise somewhat faster than the nucleon-nucleon cross sections. This seems indeed to be indicated by the data.

A crucial modification of the original model of Heisenberg consisted in replacing the pion mass determining the fall off of the energy density available for high-energy reactions by a mass close to the expected glueball mass. This is necessitated by the fact that direct pion exchange does not contribute to high-energy scattering. This may explain why the Lukaszuk-Martin bound could not be essentially lowered. If one insists on rigor, one has to use the lightest particles to take into account the nearest singularities, but it is quite certain that these nearest singularities are irrelevant for high-energy scattering.

We are fully aware that the model proposed here is very sketchy but we think interesting enough to investigate further the energy dependence of high energy reactions suggested by that paper. It leaves however many questions open, some of them are quite obvious:

1) How to generalize to differential cross sections?
2) How to incorporate this s-channel picture into Regge approach?
3) How to include possible effects, as an asymptotically leading $C = −1$ exchange (Odderon) [29]?
4) How to unify this approach with a treatment of DIS and especially how to explain the sharp rise in $1/x$ for small $x$ and large $Q^2$?

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