Measurement of the cosmic ray positron spectrum with the Fermi LAT using the Earth’s magnetic field

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Outline

1. Motivation
2. The Fermi Large Area Telescope
3. Charge identification with the geomagnetic field
4. Background subtraction
5. Results
Motivation: PAMELA measurement of increasing positron fraction, 10-100 GeV

Possible explanations: primary astrophysical sources, dark matter, nonstandard secondary production, ...

Nature 458, 607 (2009)

GALPROP diffuse secondary production model (Moskalenko & Strong 1998)
Fermi LAT measurement of combined cosmic ray electron + positron spectrum from 7 GeV to 1 TeV

Abdo et al., PRL 102, 181101 (2009)
Ackermann et al., PRD 82, 092004 (2010)

ICRC 2011, Beijing

Justin Vandenbroucke: Fermi LAT positron spectrum

Next: can we identify positrons to check the PAMELA rising fraction? 2 challenges:
1) Suppress p\(^+\) flux which is 3-4 order of magnitude larger than e\(^+\): same cuts as e\(^+\)e\(^-\) analysis and estimate residual background
2) Distinguish e\(^+\) from e\(^-\): geomagnetic field

see A. Moiseev talk

Abdo et al., PRL 102, 181101 (2009)
Ackermann et al., PRD 82, 092004 (2010)
The Fermi Large Area Telescope (LAT): a pair-conversion telescope with \( \sim 1 \text{ m}^2 \) effective area

- **Anti-Coincidence Detector**: charged particle veto surrounding Tracker, 89 plastic scintillator tiles + 8 ribbons, 0.9997 efficiency for tagging singly charged particles

- **Tracker**: 16 modules: tungsten conversion foils + 80 m\(^2\) of silicon strip detectors in 36 layers, 1.5 radiation lengths on-axis

- **Calorimeter**: 16 modules: 96 Cesium Iodide crystals per module, 8.6 radiation lengths on-axis, segmented for 3D energy deposition distribution

Geomagnetic field + Earth shadow = directions from which only electrons or only positrons are allowed

events arriving from West:
\( e^+ \) allowed, \( e^- \) blocked

events arriving from East:
\( e^- \) allowed, \( e^+ \) blocked

- For some directions, \( e^- \) or \( e^+ \) forbidden
- Pure \( e^+ \) region looking West and pure \( e^- \) region looking East
- Regions vary with particle energy and spacecraft position
- To determine regions, use code by Don Smart and Peggy Shea (numerically traces trajectory in geomagnetic field)
- Using International Geomagnetic Reference Field for the 2010 epoch
Time-dependent region selection

- “Deflected horizon” = boundary between allowed and shadowed trajectories
- Use instantaneous spacecraft position to determine two horizons for each energy
- Three regions: positron-only, electron-only, both-allowed
Validation of magnetic field model + tracer code

1. Geographical distribution of geomagnetic cutoffs predicted from code matches LAT data (arXiv:1108.0201)

2. Atmospheric positrons (and electrons) detected precisely from deflected direction expected from code:
Exposure maps: 2 example energy bins for all 3 regions

32-40 GeV $e^+e^-$

32-40 GeV $e^+$

32-40 GeV $e^-$

63-80 GeV $e^+e^-$

63-80 GeV $e^+$

63-80 GeV $e^-$

Exposure units: m$^2$ s
Two background subtraction methods:
(1) Monte Carlo (2) fit transverse shower size in flight data

- One example energy bin
- Fit with sum of two Gaussians
- Wide hadronic + narrow electromagnetic showers
Two background subtraction methods produce consistent results

Three cross checks:
- Two background subtraction methods consistent
- Summed flux from $e^-$ and $e^+$ regions matches flux from both-allowed region
- Flux from both-allowed region matches previously published $e^+e^-$ total flux
## Systematic uncertainties in spectra

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect</th>
<th>MC-based method</th>
<th>Fit-based method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective area</td>
<td>±5%</td>
<td>±5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onboard filter efficiency</td>
<td>±5%</td>
<td>±5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmospheric $e^\pm$ (&lt;100 GeV)</td>
<td>+0%, -3%</td>
<td>+0%, -3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmospheric $e^\pm$ (&gt;100 GeV)</td>
<td>+0%, -10%</td>
<td>+0%, -10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data-MC $p^+$ rate agreement</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background proton index</td>
<td>2-10%</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit parameterization</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference $\theta$ distribution</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>2-4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>8-19%</strong></td>
<td><strong>6-13%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Uncertainty of positron fraction is smaller ($A_{\text{eff}}$ uncertainty cancels)
Final results: electron-only, positron-only, and both-allowed spectra

Use fit-based result (lower uncertainty than MC-based) except for highest energy bin, where statistics insufficient for fitting
Final results: positron fraction

- Fraction = $\varphi(e^+)/[\varphi(e^+) + \varphi(e^-)]$
- We don’t use the both-allowed region except as a cross check
- **Positron fraction increases with energy from 20 to 200 GeV**
extra slides
Angular distribution of events above 100 GeV (with respect to deflected positron horizon, for events below deflected electron horizon)

PRELIMINARY
The Fermi Gamma-ray Space Telescope

- Launched by NASA at Cape Canaveral June 11, 2008
- Routine science began August 2008
- Two instruments
  - Large Area Telescope: 20 MeV – 300 GeV
  - Gamma-ray Burst Monitor: 8 keV – 40 MeV
- Data publicly available since August 2009
- Orbit: 565 km, 25.6° inclination, circular
- Field of view = 2.4 sr (38% of 2π)
- Observe entire sky every 2 orbits = 3 hrs
- Expect thousands of sources, with spectra for hundreds
- ~0.1° resolution at 10 GeV, ~0.5° at 1 GeV, ~4° at 100 MeV
ATIC (Advanced Thin Ionization Calorimeter): bump in combined electron + positron spectrum at 300-800 GeV

- 3 balloon flights in Antarctica, 2000-2008
- 70 events between 300 and 800 GeV

Recently updated PAMELA electron + positron analysis

PRL 106, 201101 (May 20, 2011)
Recently updated PAMELA electron + positron analysis

PRL 106, 201101 (May 20, 2011)
PAMELA proton and alpha spectra

20

Proton flux an order of magnitude larger than alpha flux

• $\sim E^{-2.7}$ power law

• Proton flux an order of magnitude larger than alpha flux
PAMELA antiproton fraction

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Fermi LAT orbits and exposure

- Nearly uniform exposure every two orbits
- Typical point on sky viewed for 30 minutes every 3 hours
- Rocking: alternate North-pointing orbit with South-pointing orbit
- This survey mode has been used exclusively except for an initial pointed-mode commissioning period and several pointed-mode observations of a few days each (Crab Nebula twice, Cyg X-3 once, and very bright blazar flare – 3C 454.3 – once)

Fermi LAT data taking

- Launched June 11, 2008 (3 years old!)
- Normal data taking since August 4, 2008
- Data are publicly available, along with analysis software, from the Fermi Science Support Center ([http://fermi.gsfc.nasa.gov/ssc](http://fermi.gsfc.nasa.gov/ssc))
- 175 billion events at trigger level as of May 10, 2011 (~2 kHz)
- 40 billion events sent from satellite to ground (after onboard filtering)
- Photons available for download, few hours after being detected
- As of May 2011, ~600 million photon events available, collected since August 4, 2008
- Detecting 6.3 gamma rays per second
Separating electrons and positrons from gammas and protons

- Anti-coincidence detector (ACD = set of scintillator tiles surrounding instrument) usually required to *not* fire, to reject charged particles and keep gamma rays.
- Here we require the ACD to fire, to select charged particles and reject the gamma ray “background”.
- Proton rejection: require broader, clumpier shower in CAL, TKR, and ACD.

![Graph showing hadrons before and after cuts at different energy levels.](image)

Increasing cut level and background rejection: required $\sim 10^3$ to $10^4$ proton rejection achieved.
Hadron-lepton separation and data – Monte Carlo comparison

after calorimeter cuts

![Graph showing distributions after calorimeter cuts]

after tracker cuts

![Graph showing distributions after tracker cuts]

after anti-coincidence cuts

![Graph showing distributions after anti-coincidence cuts]

after classification tree cuts

![Graph showing distributions after classification tree cuts]
Acceptance and residual background contamination

- Acceptance ("geometric factor") = 1-3 m²sr in 20 GeV to 1 TeV range
- Residual hadron contamination = 5 to 20%
Low-energy and high-energy data streams

- LE: “minimum bias” set, 1 of every 250 triggered events sent to ground
- HE: any event that deposits ≥ 20 GeV in calorimeter sent to ground
- Two parallel analyses for two streams, with good consistency in overlap region
Energy resolution, measured with beam test: $\sim 15\%$
e^{+}e^{-} interpretation 1: conventional diffuse model

- Black: electron + positron, blue: electron only
- Dashed: without solar modulation
e^{+}e^{-} interpretation 2: softer diffuse secondary model, plus additional source at high energy

- Tuned to the data: softer diffuse injection spectrum, plus an additional component at high energy (pulsar? dark matter?)
Search for anisotropy in cosmic ray electron + positron flux

- 1.6 M candidate electrons above 60 GeV in first year
- Entire sky searched for anisotropy with range of angular scales (10° to 90°) and energies
- Dipole upper limits: 0.5% to 10% (comparable to expectation for single nearby source: models are not constrained)

Ackermann et al, PRD 82, 092003 (2010)
Cosmic ray electron/positron separation at \~\text{TeV} with MAGIC and the Moon shadow?

- Measure electrons/positrons using imaging atmospheric Cherenkov telescopes like HESS, but use the Moon shadow to separate electrons and positrons (two shadows separated by \~1^\circ \text{ at } \~1\text{ TeV})
- Moon phase must be < \~50\% to avoid damaging PMTs
- They have made observations and are analyzing

MAGIC, arXiv:0907.1026
Geomagnetic cutoff rigidities

Below 20 GeV, we need to consider the shielding effect of the geomagnetic field.

• Determine geomagnetic cutoff energy as a function of geomagnetic orbital coordinates (higher McIlwainL → lower cutoff energy)
• in each McIlwainL interval, measure spectrum for primary component above the cutoff, then recombine different spectra in the global spectrum
• BONUS: this can be used to measure the absolute energy scale of the LAT
Spectra: $p^+$, $e^+e^-$, $e^+$, $p$-bar

From A. Strong cosmic ray database and M. Pesce-Rollins PhD thesis
Proton flux 3-4 orders of magnitude larger than positron flux

\[ \frac{\bar{p}}{e^-} \approx 10^{-1} - 10^{-2} \]

\[ \frac{e^+ + e^-}{p} \approx 10^{-2} - 10^{-3} \]

\[ \frac{e^+}{p} \approx 10^{-3} - 10^{-4} \]

From A. Strong cosmic ray database and M. Pesce-Rollins PhD thesis
Example interpretation with modified secondary production

- Diffuse Galactic gammas pair produce on stellar photon field
- Requires high starlight and gas densities
- Both could be high near primary sources (e.g. SNRs)