Seventh European summer school on experimental nuclear astrophysics

Contribution ID: 1

Elastic scattering of ¹⁷O ions from ⁵⁸Ni and ²⁰⁸Pb at near-barrier energy

Elastic scattering experiments provide a first information on the overall reactivity of an exotic projectile. We have recently undertaken a research program aimed at measuring the ¹⁷O elastic scattering process from different targets, being ¹⁷O ($S_n = 4.143$ MeV) the mirror nucleus of the weakly-bound and radioactive ¹⁷F ($S_p = 0.600$ MeV).

The experiment was performed at the Laboratori Nazionali di Legnaro with an ¹⁷O beam impinging on a ⁵⁸Ni (150 μ g/cm²) target at 2.5-MeV steps from 42.5 to 55 MeV and on a ²⁰⁸Pb (200 μ g/cm²) target at 5 energies in the interval 78-87 MeV.

We used three modules of the EXPADES detector array. Two 300- μ m thick Double Sided silicon Strip Detectors (DSSSDs) were placed symmetrically to the beam axis to cover the angular range $\theta_{lab} = [36^{\circ}-74^{\circ}]$. A DSSSD telescope (40+300 μ m) was placed at backward angles to cover the range $\theta_{lab} = [95^{\circ}-125^{\circ}]$. The results were analyzed within the framework of the optical model to extract the reaction cross sections.

Quite unexpectedly, the reaction cross sections, after being scaled for the different projectile atomic number, result to be larger for the stable well-bound ¹⁷O rather than for the weakly-bound radioactive ¹⁷F. Therefore, we can conclude that for the pair ¹⁷O-¹⁷F nuclear structure effects play a more crucial role than the projectile binding energy in the reaction dynamics at Coulomb barrier energies.

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