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Recent Experiments on Li Pellet Injection into Heliotron E

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Abstract

The Li pellets of a large size were injected into ECR heated plasmas and NBI heated plasmas of Heliotron E. The discharge behavior, pellet ablation and wall conditioning were studied. The electron pressure is doubled after injection into NBI plasma and unchanged in case of ECR heating. This may be caused by the energy exchange between electrons, thermal ions with fast ions from the neutral beam. The observed discrepancy between the experimental and modeled ablation rates may be explained by both the plasma cooling by pellet ablatant and ablation stimulated with the fast ions during NBI heated regime and fast electrons during ECR heated regime. In the preliminary experiments on wall conditioning by Li pellet injection, no improvement of plasma performance after Li pellet injection was observed in both divertor configuration and limiter configuration with the limiter radii $r_L = 24-25$ cm.

Key Words lithium pellet injection, Heliotron E, lithium pellet ablation, impurity particle behavior, wall conditioning

1. Introduction.

Experiments with pellet injection in general and impurity pellet injection in particular are very important since there are a useful tool for plasma diagnostics. In case of Li pellet injection it is possible to observe behavior of the Li clouds and to calculate the ablation rate of the pellet. Such calculations were performed in the experiments on TFTR for Ohmically heated discharges and supershots [1]. An improvement of the plasma performance after injection of a fairly large (\varnothing 2×2 mm size) cylindrical Li pellet has been observed on TFTR as well [2]. In case of the helical magnetic configuration experiments with injection of Li pellets were carried out in order to: (1) study a response of the main plasma parameters during the injection and a possible change in global plasma confinement due to injection, (2) study the ablation properties of Li pellet injected into ECR and NBI heated currentless plasma, (3) study effect of plasma conditioning by lithium coating on the wall

2. Experimental setup.

The schematic diagram of Li pellet injection experiments on Heliotron E is shown in Fig. 1. The new Li pellet injector described in Ref. [3] was used. The pellet injection axis laid in the equatorial plane of the machine and had the angle equal to 8 degrees relative to the major radius direction. The optical system with a set of half-transparent mirrors (HM) was used to measure a pellet ablation process.

The emission of Li pellet clouds was observed from outward direction using optical fiber (1) and two photomultiplyers equipped with two light filters (LF) with following parameters: the wave lengths λ and the widths $\Delta\lambda$ were $\lambda_I = 670.9$ nm, $\Delta\lambda = 1.1$ nm and $\lambda_{II} = 548.5$ nm, $\Delta\lambda = 1.5$ nm respectively. This allowed us to measure the pellet cloud emission lines of neutrals (LiI, $\lambda = 670.6$ nm) and first ions (LiII, $\lambda = 548.5$ nm) of lithium. Optical fiber (1) had a wide view angle which was restricted by elements of the construction. As a result we could measure

the different dimensions of clouds along the pellet trace ~5 cm at the outward direction boundary of the vacuum vessel, ~7-8 cm in the vicinity of the vacuum vessel axis and about of 10 cm at the inward direction boundary of the vacuum vessel. Three optical channels equipped by optical fibers (2-4) with a set of both lenses and light filters (LF) had a narrow view angle in the radial direction (~2-3 cm view dimension in the vicinity of the vacuum vessel axis) and were installed in order to connect the time of pellet flight with its space positions

Pellet clouds were measured from inward direction using optical fiber (5), light filter and either the CCD camera or the high speed camera with quickly moving film (up to $4\cdot10^4$ frames/sec) The level of emission through both filters for *LiI*, *LiII* lines drastically decreased in the high speed camera (due to a small exposure time - 25-50 µs) so that we saw a few frames with pellet clouds which corresponded to maximum of the pellet ablation rate. The obtained experience of the intensities level should help us to improve further measurements using both cameras.

3. Experimental results and discussion.

The cylindrical pellets with size of $\oslash 1 \text{ mm} \times 1 \text{ mm}$ and with velocities in a range of 400–500 m/s were injected into the Heliotron E plasmas. The injection was performed into three types of discharges: ECR heated plasma (by a 106 GHz, 350 kW gyrotron), NBI heated plasma (by 23 kV, 3.5 MW neutral beams), and NBI+ECR simultaneously heated plasma. The magnetic field strength was 1.9 T. The vacuum chamber wall was boronized by ECR discharge with $B_{10}H_{14}$ and He [4]. The plasma response and pellet ablation were observed to be similar in the NBI and NBI+ECR regimes and quite differ out from those observed in the ECR heated plasma. It seems that this difference occurs due to significantly different values of ECR (350 kW) and NBI (3.5 MW) powers. Therefore, we omit (NBI+ECR) data and present here the data obtained for two type of regimes - NBI and ECR heated plasma.

3.1 Plasma response on Li pellet injection.

Behavior of the main plasma parameters in the typical discharges for two types of regimes are shown in Fig. 2a,b Each plot includes a signal \overline{n}_el of the FIR interferometer (a linear integral of the electron density along the central chord in the poloidal cross section); an ECE signal corresponding to the central electron temperature; a wide view bolometer signal: the powers of ECR and NBI heatings; transverse plasma energy < W_> measured by plasma diamagnetism and Boron emission (BIV). The moments of pellet injection are shown by vertical arrows in Fig. 2a,b. The dashed curves represent an evolution of the parameters without pellet injection. We see that Li pellet deposition (electron density rise $\Delta(\bar{n}_e l)$ = $2.2 \cdot 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ in shot #70597) in the NBI regime is about of two times higher than in the ECR regime $(\Delta(\overline{n}_e I) = 1.0 \cdot 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-2} \text{ n shot } #70667)$. It seems that a behavior of electron temperature measured by ECE diagnostics after pellet injection shown in Fig. 2a,b might be not correct because the ECE signal from the central region could be damped due to the cut-off conditions that appears when the density exceeds values about of 10¹⁴ cm⁻³ This suspicion was confirmed by measurements of electron density and temperature by means of the Thomson Scattering (TS) technique (see below). We see no significant rise of the total radiation after pellet injection. It is seen a rise of $\langle W_{\perp} \rangle$ signal immediately after pellet injection in the NBI regime The rise of $< W_{\perp} >$ signal in the ECR regime can not be detected but we see that the Li pellet injection leads to increase the plasma energy content during the following evolution when the NBI power switches on. (See Fig. 2b.).

Estimations based on the electron density rise $\Delta(\bar{n}_{e}l)$ (similar those made for TFTR data [1]) show that at the Heliotron E plasma conditions a Li pellet with $\varnothing l$ mm × 1 mm size (total number of atoms in the pellet is $3.6 \cdot 10^{19}$) deposits in the plasma about of 30% of its mass in case of the ECR heated plasma and about of 60% in case of NBI regime. For example, the last value for the NBI regime we estimated by means of both calculated values $\Delta(\bar{n}_{e}l) = 2.05 \cdot 10^{15}$ cm⁻² (using the emission signal I_{LiI}) and $\Delta(\bar{n}_{e}l) = 2.35 \cdot 10^{15}$ cm⁻² (using the emission

signal I_{LIII}) in shot #70597 what corresponds to the experimental value $\Delta(n_e l) = 2.2 \cdot 10^{15} \text{ cm}^{-2}$ measured in this shot

These estimations of Li pellet deposition are confirmed by measurements of density profiles using the TS technique. Changes of electron density, temperature and pressure profiles due to Li injection measured by the TS in two types of regimes are shown in Fig. 3a,b. These plots include the data obtained in several discharges and represent general response of the parameters in similar plasma conditions. The profiles were measured before the injection (open squares in Fig. 3) and 4–6 ms after (crosses). The range of measurement times after pellet injection appeared because the time of TS's laser pulse was fixed while the time of pellet ablation could vary due to slightly different velocities of pellet which had to fly the long distance of about 5.5 m between the exit of the injector barrel and plasma. It is seen that after the injection the electron pressure increases about two times in the NBI regime (the central electron temperature changes from 0.75 keV to 0.5 keV and the central density from 5-10¹³ cm⁻³ to 15-10¹³ cm⁻³). A similar comparison in case of ECR discharges (the central electron temperature changes from 1.5 keV to 0.5 keV and the central density from 3-10¹³ cm⁻³ to 9-10¹³ cm⁻³) shows that the plasma response is almost adiabatic, with conservation of the electron pressure

The temporal evolution of the central, averaged values of ion temperature $\langle T_i \rangle$ measured using the neutral particle analyzer (NPA) and the transverse plasma energy $\langle W_i \rangle$ deduced from the diamagnetic measurements (DIA) are shown in Fig. 4 for the NBI regime. We evaluated the ratio of the transversal plasma energy $\langle W_i \rangle$ before pellet injection $\langle W_{ij} \rangle$ (for $t_1 = 327$ ms) to one $\langle W_{ij} \rangle$ after injection (for $t_2 = 333$ ms). These time moments are marked by dashed vertical lines in Fig. 4. Because this experimental value $\langle W_{ij} \rangle / \langle W_{ij} \rangle = 8.2/5.6 \sim 1.5$ less than the ratio $P_{e2}/P_{ei} \approx 2$ measured by TS technique (see Fig. 3a), we tried to make a self-consistent explanation of all (TS, NPA and DIA) measurements using the simple following speculations. Let us assume that the normalized T_e $T_e(0)$ and T_e $T_i(0)$ profiles are the same just before and 4-6 ms after pellet injection. Then, we can estimate the ratio of the

transversal plasma energy $\langle W_{\perp} \rangle$ before pellet injection $\langle W_{\perp 1} \rangle$ to one $\langle W_{\perp 2} \rangle$ after injection using the changes of the core values of electron and ion temperatures

$$\frac{\langle W_{\perp 2} \rangle}{\langle W_{\perp I} \rangle} = \frac{\int_{0}^{a} \left[n_{e2}(r) T_{e2}(r) - n_{i2}(r) T_{e2}(r) \frac{T_{i2}(0)}{T_{e2}(0)} \right] r dr}{\int_{0}^{a} \left[n_{eI}(r) T_{eI}(r) - n_{iI}(r) T_{iI}(r) \frac{T_{iI}(0)}{T_{eI}(0)} \right] r dr}$$

From Fig. 3a, 4a we can take the following values of $T_{el}(0) = 0.7 \text{ keV}$, $T_{e2}(0) = 0.4 \text{ keV}$, $T_{il}(0) = 0.55 \text{ keV}$, $T_{i2}(0) = 0.4 \text{ keV}$. Here, $n_{el}(r) = n_{il}(r)$, $n_{i2}(r) = n_{el}(r) + (n_{e2}(r) - n_{el}(r))/Z_{Li}$, where $Z_{Li} = 3$ is nuclear charge of lithium and $\alpha = 30$ cm is a radius of the last closed magnetic surface. The calculated value of the ratio $\langle W_{Ll} \rangle / \langle W_{Ll} \rangle = 9/5.3 \sim 1.7$ is no far from the experimental value $\langle W_{Ll} \rangle / \langle W_{Ll} \rangle \sim 1.5$ obtained from Fig. 4b if we take into account accuracy of this estimation.

The increase of electron pressure after injection into NBI heated plasma may have the following explanation. A source of such a heating of electrons after the injection may come from the fast ions of the neutral beam. First of all, the absolute power deposition of NBI is increased due to the increased both density and charge state Z. Then, the critical beam energy of the fast ions is lowered by a factor of 0.57 (for $Z_{Li}=3$ and $A_{Li}=7$) which results in a more favorable heating of the electrons. For a further detailed analysis we should take into account the interactions: (a) electrons – fast ions H^+ , (b) thermal ions Li^{+++} and D^+ – fast ions H^+ .

3.2 Ablation studies.

The typical signals of the intensities I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} and the chord-averaged electron density measured in two types of regime are shown in Fig. 5,6. First of all, we see that start of I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} signals (see Fig. 4a and Fig. 5a) are delayed (~1 ms) relative to the time of the density rise that is impossible. The reason of that is connected with a difference of sampling frequencies of

time basis of the independent data acquisition systems, which were used for measurements of intensities and electron density

The process of pellet-plasma interaction can be divided in three stages (I,II,III) which are separated by vertical dashed lines in Fig 5,6 During the first stage the pellet goes through the hot region of the plasma Then pellet enters in the cold region behind the inner last closed magnetic surface (LCMS) (stage II) situated at the major radius of about 190 cm. The third stage (III) begins after pellet impacts with the inner wall surface situated at 180 cm. Knowing the pellet velocity values we adjusted the radial dependence of the I_{Lil} , I_{Lill} signals in each type of regimes relative to the electron temperature profiles $T_{i,0}(r)$ which were fitted to those measured using TS technique before pellet injection (see Fig 3). The result of such procedure is shown in Fig. 5b and Fig. 6b. The values of major radii for the magnetic axis $R_c = 218$ cm, the inner LCMS R_{LCMS}^{in} = 188 cm and for the outer LCMS R_{LCMS}^{out} = 248 cm were taken from calculations of the plasma equilibrium for the studied magnetic configuration of the Heliotron E plasma [5] We assumed that the ablation starts in the vicinity of the region with electron temperature values of about 50 eV. Thus, the ablation starts at radii $R_{st}^{NBI} \approx 245$ cm (in Fig. 5b) and $R_{st}^{ECR} \approx 241$ cm (in Fig. 6b). It is seen from Fig. 5,6 that signal I_{LiII} finished in the end of the first stage while signal I_{Lil} grows in the end of the first stage, during the second stage and decays in third stage Maybe it is because the pellet cloud temperature decreased when pellet passed through the magnetic axis and faced to the ambient plasma with lowered electron temperature values.

It is not clear what emission profile $(I_{LiI}(r) \text{ or } I_{LiII}(r))$ could represent better a behavior of the Li pellet ablation rate. Therefore, the ablation rate profiles $N_{LiI,LiII}(r)$ deduced using both signals were calculated and they are shown in Fig. 7a and Fig. 8a for two types of regime. The values of the total deposition of electrons due to pellet injection $N_e \approx 6.10^{19}$ (for the NBI regime) and $N_e \approx 3.10^{19}$ (for the ECR regime) were used to normalize the $I_{LiI}(r)$, $I_{LiII}(r)$ signals. These N_e values were calculated using the approximation of the electron density profiles $n_{el}(r)$ and $n_{e0}(r)$ fitted to ones measured by means of the TS technique before and after

Li pellet injection (see Fig. 3). For $I_{LII}(t)$ signals lasted 4-5 ms we can make it because the electron density increases during a time interval about of 1 ms (see Fig. 4a and Fig. 5a).

The obtained $N_{LiI,LiII}(r)$ profiles are compared with those simulated using the neutral shielding model by Kuteev *et al.* for impurity Li pellet [6,7] in Fig. 7a,8a. We can see a moderate difference in $N_{LiI,LiII}(r)$ profiles and an apparent discrepancy between experimental ablation rate profiles and the modeled $N_{mod}(r)$ profile. Discrepancy in the plasma core and in the inner part of the plasma column can be understood because the model by Kuteev *et al.* does not take into account plasma cooling by the ablatant that was evaporated earlier as well.

We have improved the ablation model taking into account the self-limiting phenomenon as described below. We used the expression for the ablation rate values given by Kuteev *et al.* for calculations of the ablation rate profile in the outward part of plasma column. For each step of calculations on minor radius $r_{i+1} = r_i + \Delta r$ we estimated the disturbed values of electron density $n_{el}(r_{i+1}) = n_{e0}(r_{i+1}) + \Delta n_e(r_{i+1})$ and temperature $T_{el}(r_{i+1}) = T_{e0}(r_{i+1}) - \Delta T_e(r_{i+1})$. The perturbation of the electron density $\Delta n_e(r_{i+1})$ was calculated using the ablation rate $N(r_{i+1})$

$$\Delta n_e(r_{i+1}) = \frac{\dot{N}(r_{i+1})Z_{Li}}{2\pi R_c 2\pi V_p r_i k_{elong}}$$

and electron temperature was allowed to decrease adiabatically $(n_{el}(r_{t-1}) T_{el}(r_{t-1}) = n_{e0}(r_{t-1}) T_{el}(r_{t-1}) = n_{e0}(r_{t-1})$ with the cold electrons added. Here, $k_{elong} \approx 2$ is elongation factor of the plasma column. Then, we used the expression for the ablation rate values given by Kuteev *et al* for calculations of the ablation rate profile in the inward part of plasma column using the disturbed profiles $T_{el}(r)$, $n_{el}(r)$. The results of the simulations by means of this self-limiting model are shown by dashed-dotted lines in Fig 7a, 8a. We see that the self-limiting model more adequately predicts the ablation rate decreases as the pellet passes the central region of the plasma column in case of ECR regime. For the NBI regime, the enhancement of the measured ablation rate values are larger.

The enhanced ablation rate values in the edge plasma region might be connected with ablating by fast ions during the strong NBI pulse (nearby the inner and outer regions in Fig. 7a)

or with fast electron population during the ECR pulse (nearby the outer region in Fig 8a) which were not taken into account by the used pellet ablation model. Let us to note that in experiments on hydrogen pellet injection into Heliotron E plasmas [8], the similar enhanced evaporation of pellet due to both fast ions and electrons was observed as well

The profiles of the ratio $N_{LiI}(r)$ $N_{LiII}(r)$ shown in Fig. 7b and Fig. 8b may demonstrate evolution of pellet cloud parameters during the pellet motion and ablation in both types of regimes. A possible reason for decrease of this ratio in regions with R 208 cm in Fig. 7b (NBI regime) and with R 218 cm in Fig. 8b (ECR regime) may be due to the low values of the pellet cloud temperature while pellet goes through the magnetic axis as mentioned above. In any case, the numeric simulation of pellet cloud parameters such as cloud density, temperature and I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} emissions are required to make more conclusive statements.

3 3 Experiments on wall conditioning to improve plasma performance.

Relatively large size of Li pellet allowed us to consider the problem of the plasma-wall interaction related to the lithium coating on the wall. We studied the NBI regime in which the largest Li pellet deposition was measured (see Fig. 2a). To check the possible improvement of the plasma purity, Oxygen V line was observed. In Fig. 9 signals of OV in two sequential discharges are compared. It is seen from this picture that the OV emission at the timing t=305 ms in shot #70705 is almost two times less than that of the before-injection case in shot #70704. However, drawing shot by shot sequence of electron density, impurity content OV, ion temperature $\langle T_i \rangle$ and plasma energy $\langle W_i \rangle$ in Fig. 10, we do not see any evidence of improvement of plasma performance (enhancement of a stored plasma energy, ion temperature, energy confinement time, plasma purity etc.) as was observed in the Li pellet experiments on TFTR [2]. Behavior of these signals was the same as in the case no Li pellet injection into the divertor configuration of Heliotron E. We made experiments with inserted limiter configuration expecting more intensive interaction of the Li ablatant with the limiter which had 400x40 mm rectangular cross-section. Shot by shot behavior of some plasma parameters in the limiter

configuration is shown in Fig. 11 We see either drop or jump on the signal evolutions when the limiter radius value was decreased from $r_L = 25$ cm to $r_L = 24$ cm but no improvement of plasma performance was observed as well. We hope that the further Li pellet experiments on Heliotron E with $r_L \approx 15$ -18 cm can make clear weather improvement of plasma parameters is possible in Heliotron E after injection of large Li pellets or it corresponds to peculiarity of the TFTR experiments (for instance, due to the influence of bump-limiter configuration on TFTR [2])

4. Conclusions.

The Li pellets of a large size were injected into ECR heated plasmas and NBI heated plasmas of Heliotron E. The discharge behavior, pellet ablation and wall conditioning were studied. The electron pressure is doubled after injection into NBI plasma and unchanged in case of ECR heating. This may be caused by the energy exchange between electrons, thermal ions with fast ions from the neutral beam. The observed discrepancy between the experimental and modeled ablation rates may be explained by both the plasma cooling by pellet ablatant and ablation stimulated with the fast ions during NBI heated regime and fast electrons during ECR heated regime. In the preliminary experiments on wall conditioning by Li pellet injection, no improvement of plasma performance after Li pellet injection was observed in both divertor configuration and limiter configuration with the limiter radii $r_L = 24-25$ cm.

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Figure captions.

- Fig. 1. Schematic diagram of experiments on Li pellet injection into Heliotron E.
- Fig. 2. Temporal dependencies of the FIR signal of line density at r=2 cm, ECE second harmonic signal of the temperature, signal of the wide view bolometer, input powers of ECR and NBI heating, transverse plasma energy $\langle W_{\perp} \rangle$ measured by plasma diamagnetism and Boron (BIV) radiation:
- a) NBI regime Li pellet was injected at t=328 ms in shot #70597 (solid curves) and no injection was in shot #70600 (dotted curves);
- b) ECR regime Li pellet was injected at t=288 ms in shot #70667 (solid curves) and no injection was in shot #70600 (dotted curves);
- Fig. 3. Profiles of the electron temperature, density and electron pressure just before (squares) and 4-6 ms after (crosses) the Li injection into NBI (a) and ECR (b) heated plasmas Solid and dashed curves show represent approximations of the data before and after injection respectively. Equations for approximate profiles of electron temperature $T_{e0}(r)$, $T_{eI}(r)$ (in [keV]) and density $n_{e0}(r)$, $n_{eI}(r)$ (in [10¹³ cm⁻³]) are shown.
- Fig. 4 Temporal evolution of the central, averaged values of ion temperature < T > measured using the neutral particle analyzer (NPA) and the transversal plasma energy $< W_{\perp} >$ deduced from the diamagnetic measurements in the NBI regime
- Fig. 5.a) Time dependencies of the typical signals of intensities I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} and the line-averaged electron density measured in shot #70597 (NBI regime), b) The radial dependence of the I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} signals shown in Fig. 5a and the electron temperature profiles $T_{e0}(r)$ which is fitted to one measured using TS technique before pellet injection (see Fig. 2a);

- Fig. 6 a) Time dependencies of the typical signals of intensities I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} and the lineaveraged electron density measured in shot #70667 (ECR regime), b) The radial dependence of the I_{LiI} , I_{LiII} signals shown in Fig. 6a and the electron temperature profiles $T_{co}(r)$ which is fitted to one measured using TS technique before pellet injection (see Fig. 2b),
 - Fig 7 Li pellet ablation in NBI heated plasma (Shot #70597, pellet velocity is 480 m/s)
- a) ablation rate profiles solid curve measured using the LiII intensity; dotted curve measured using LiI intensity; dashed curve calculated using the ablation model by Kuteev *et al* [5,6], dashed-dotted curve calculated using the self-limiting ablation model
 - b) ratio of the ablation rate profiles measured using the Lil and Lill intensities,
 - Fig 8 Li pellet ablation in ECR heated plasma (Shot #70667, pellet velocity is 470 m/s)
- a) ablation rate profiles solid curve measured using the LiII intensity, dotted curve measured using LiI intensity; dashed curve calculated using the ablation model by Kuteev et al. [5,6], dashed-dotted curve calculated using the self-limiting ablation model.
 - b) ratio of the ablation rate profiles measured using the LiI and LiII intensities;
- Fig 9 Temporal dependencies of the OV line intensity for two shots #70704 (with Li pellet injection) and #70705 (no pellet injection)
- Fig 10. The line-averaged electron density, transverse plasma energy, total plasma radiation, the intensity of OV and BIV lines measured at 322 ms in a series of NBI heated discharges with the divertor configuration (crosses indicate those discharges in which Li pellet was injected at 327-329 ms)
- Fig 11. The transverse plasma energy, total plasma radiation, the intensity of CIII (in the vicinity of limiter), OV and BIV lines measured at 332 ms in a series of NBI heated discharges with the limiter configuration (crosses indicate those discharges in which Li pellet was injected at 347-349 ms)

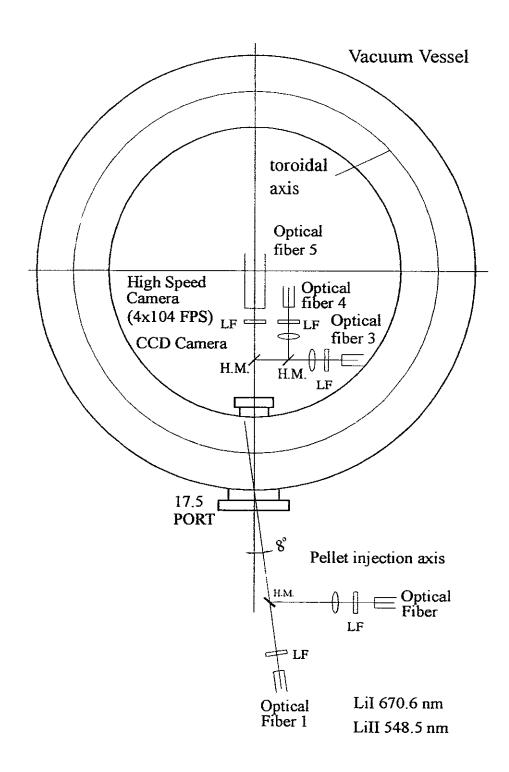


Fig. 1

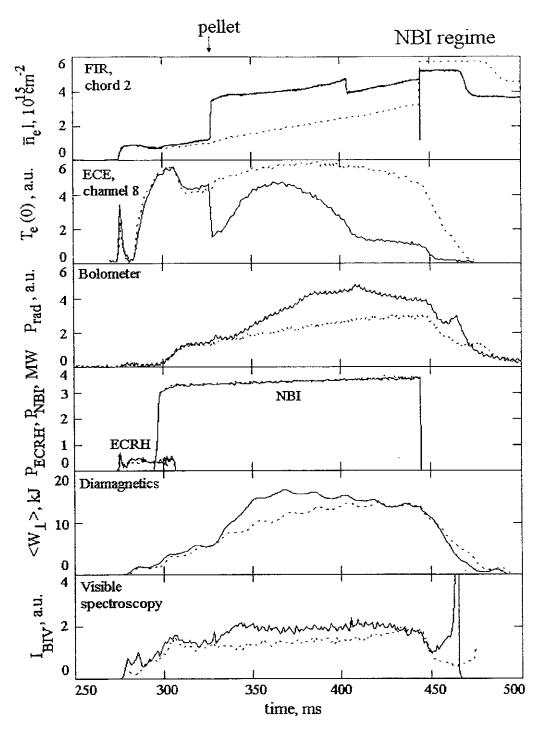


Fig. 2a

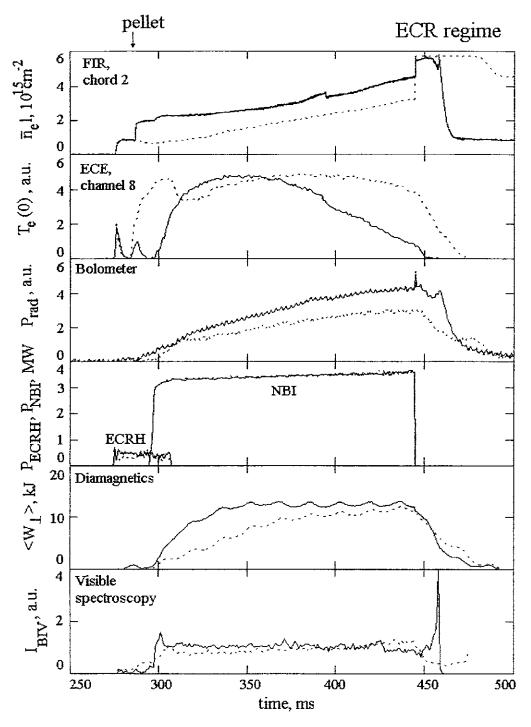


Fig. 2b

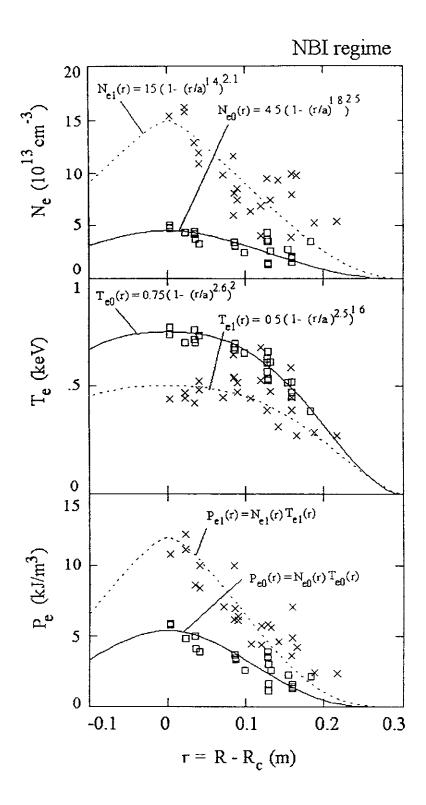


Fig. 3a

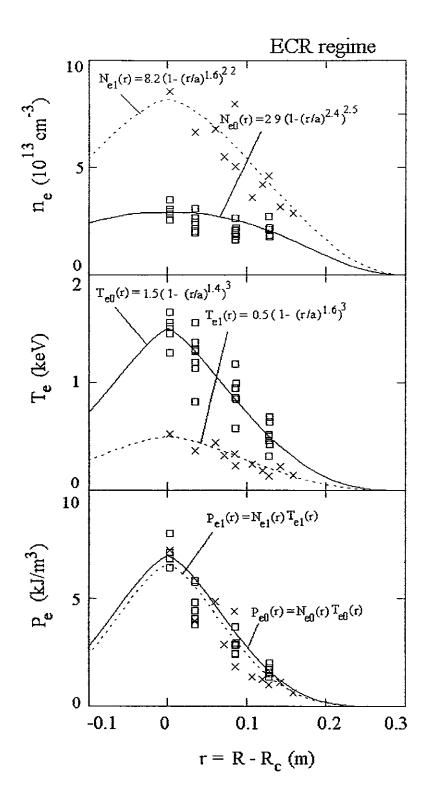


Fig. 3b

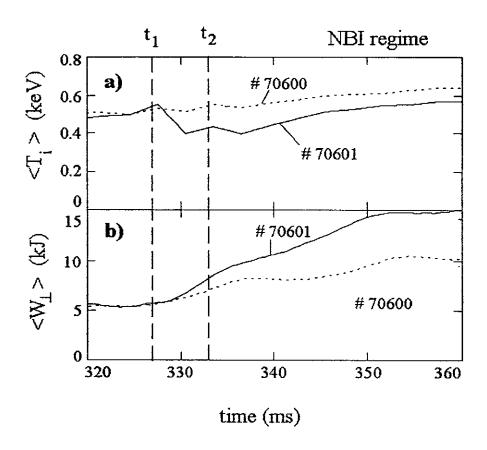


Fig. 4

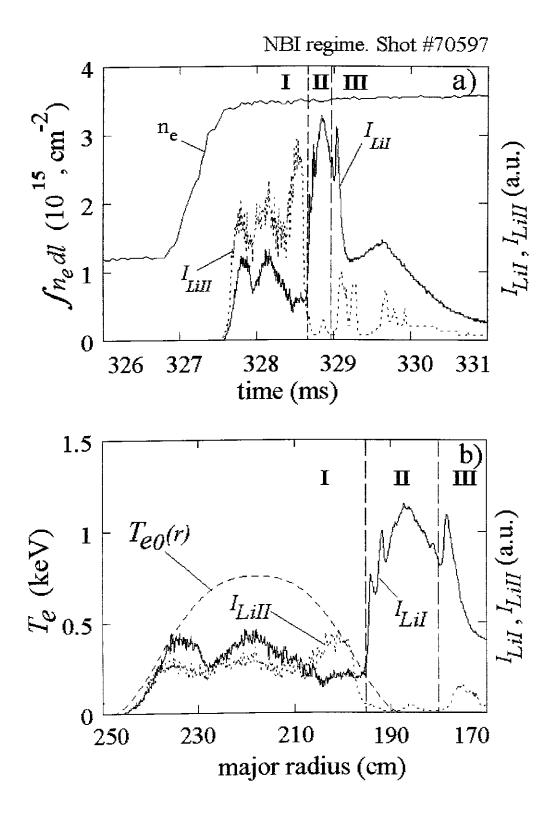


Fig. 5

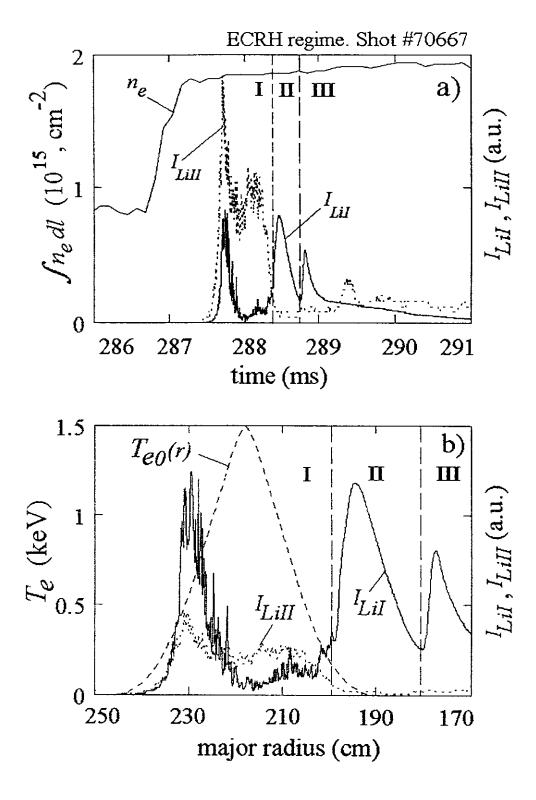


Fig. 6

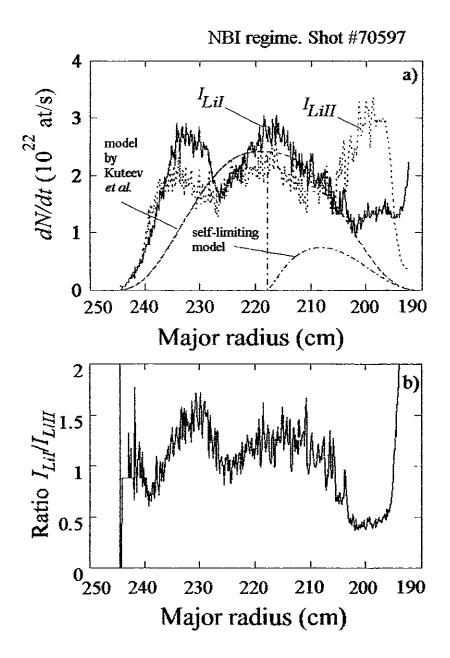


Fig. 7

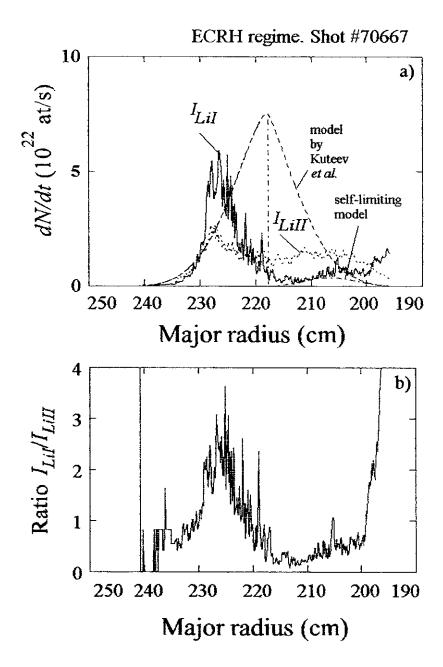


Fig. 8

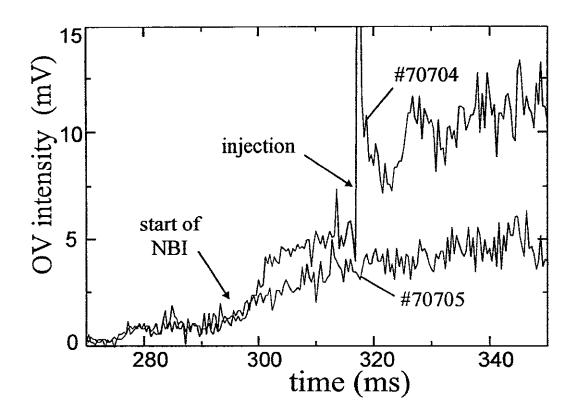


Fig. 9

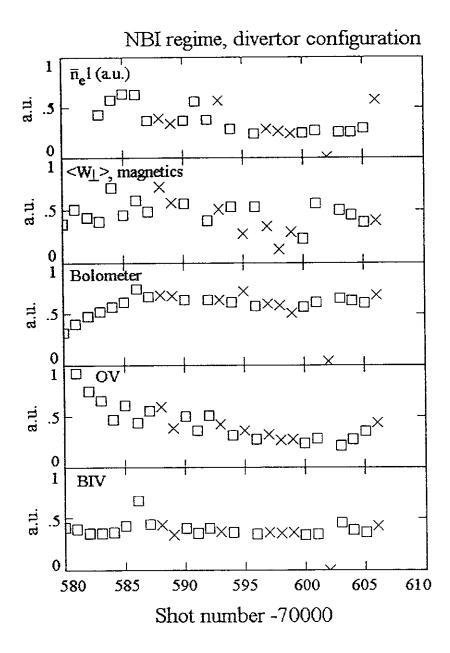


Fig. 10

NBI regime, limiter configuration CIII, Limiter .5 0 1 <WL>, magnetics 0 Bolometer 1 .5 0 1 .5 0 1 BIV .5 0 150 145 155 165 160 170 175

Fig. 11

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