

Extended transition operator for $\beta\beta$ decay via Rayleigh– Schrödinger perturbation theory – *Solution to the uncertainty problem*

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In collaboration with Dr. O. Civitarese (Univ. La Plata)

J. T. and O. Civitarese, PRC **112**, 024304 (2025);
112, L051302 (2025);
arXiv:2509.16605

Abbreviations

NME: nuclear matrix element

g_A : axial-vector current coupling

g_V : vector current coupling

$0\nu\beta\beta$: neutrinoless double- β

$2\nu\beta\beta$: two-neutrino double- β

QRPA: quasiparticle random-phase
approximation

RS: Rayleigh-Schrödinger

VC: vertex correction

2BC: two-body current

RS2BC and χ 2BC of chiral effective field
theory

Talk plan

1. Definition of the uncertainty problem

2. My early stage

3. Our method to solve the problem

Collaboration with Dr. Civitarese (Univ. La Plata)

i) NME with perturbed transition operator

ii) Estimation of effective g_A for $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME

4. Application of our method to $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME

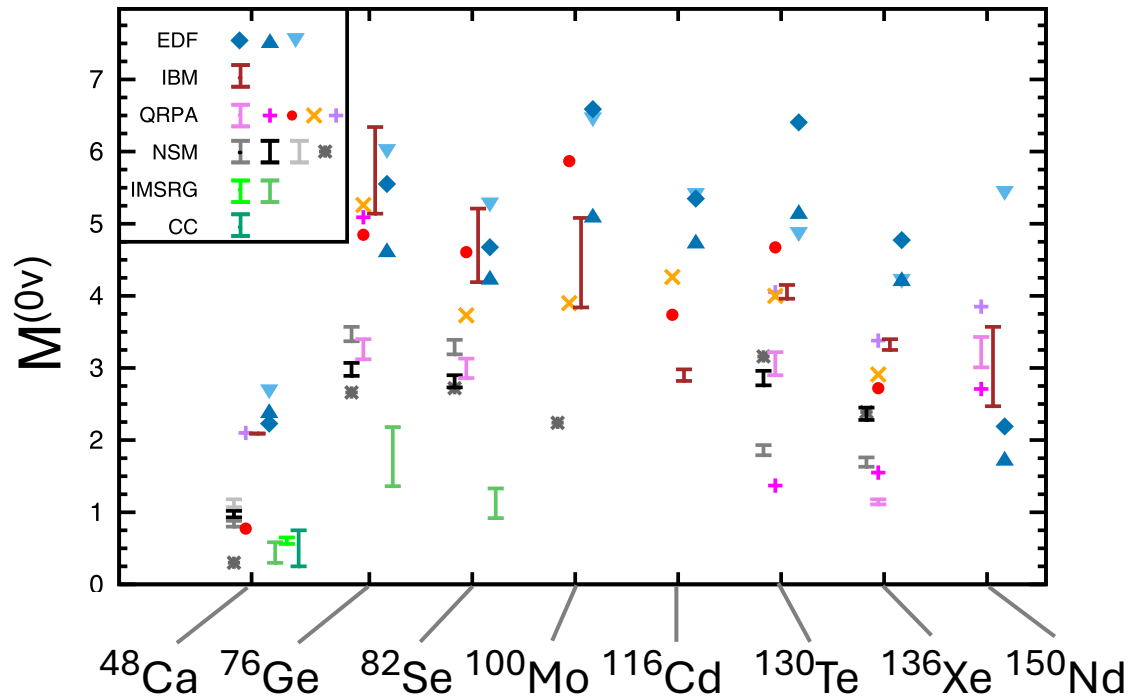
i) $^{136}\text{Xe} - ^{136}\text{Ba}$

ii) $^{76}\text{Ge} - ^{76}\text{Se}$

5. Summary

Compilation of calculated $M^{(0\nu)}$

M. Agostini et al., Rev. Mod. Phys., **95**, 025002 (2023)



The uncertainty of the distribution has not changed since a few decades ago.
The number of calculations increased.

I improved how to apply the QRPA to the $\beta\beta$ NME in

- the overlap of two sets of the intermediate states,

One $\leftarrow$ from the initial state

The other $\leftarrow$ from the final state

} Feature of the QRPA approach

mathematically rigorous, J. T. PRC **87**, 024316 (2013).

- a new method to determine the strength of the isoscalar pairing interaction. It is far from the breaking point of the QRPA. J. T. PRC **102**, 044303 (2020).

I checked

- GT strength function. Compared with exp. data.
- binding energy. Skyrme SkM* intn. is excellent.
- β decay spectrum and strength of ^{138}Xe ; acceptable.
- Ikeda sum rule $\rightarrow$ single-particle space large enough.
- Comparison of spectrum of ^{136}Cs obtained from ^{136}Xe g.s. and that from ^{136}Ba

and others. J. T. and Y. Iwata, PRC **100**, 034325 (2019).

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QRPA + SkM* is a good approximation for ^{136}Xe and ^{136}Ba .

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Experimental half-life of ^{136}Xe for $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay

$$2.18 \times 10^{21} \text{ yr}$$

A.S. Barabash, Proc. MEDEX'19 (AIP pub., Melville, NY, 2019) p.020002

My cal. (SkM*) value with $g_A = 1.267$ (bare value) is

$$0.03 \times 10^{21} \text{ yr}$$

Effective g_A to reproduce the exp. half-life is

$$0.422$$

J. T. and O. Civitarese, PRC **112**, 024304 (2025);
112, L051302 (2025)

My assumption:

If the calculation uses no approximation, the exp. half-life can be reproduced with the bare g_A .

Cf. the electric transitions do not need an effective charge if the single-particle space is large enough.

J. T. et al., PRC **78**, 044311 (2008)

The QRPA is a good approximation for nuclear wave function of ^{136}Xe . My interaction strength is not close to the breaking point of the QRPA. My overlap calculation has no problem. The single-particle space is large enough.

But my calculation does not reproduce the exp. half-life without an effective g_A much smaller than the bare value.

What is missing?

The only possibility is that the transition operator is affected by the nucleon-nucleon interaction.

The decay takes time, during which interaction takes place between the nucleons.

Studies on the perturbed transition operator for β decay

A. Arima et al., in Adv. in Nucl. Phys. (1987) vol. 18, p. 1

I. S. Towner, Phys. Rep. **155**, 263 (1987)

P. Gysbers et al., Nat. Phys. **15**, 428 (2019) and others

NME with perturbed transition operator

Basic idea

We apply the Rayleigh-Schrödinger perturbation theory

Because the leading-order (usual) NME is derived by that perturbation formula.

J. T. and O. Civitarese, PRC **112**, 024304 (2025)

How?

$$1. \quad |J\rangle = |I^{(0)}\rangle + |I^{(1)}\rangle + |I^{(2)}\rangle$$

: perturbed initial state of the system up to the 2nd-order due to an interaction $\mathcal{V}$ defined later.

$$|\tilde{\mathcal{F}}\rangle = |\tilde{F}^{(0)}\rangle + |\tilde{F}^{(1)}\rangle + |\tilde{F}^{(2)}\rangle$$

: perturbed final state, prepared analogously.

Introduce the weak interaction H_W

Take the 2nd-order term of $\langle \tilde{\mathcal{F}} | H_W | J \rangle$;

$$\langle \tilde{F}^{(0)} | H_W | I^{(2)} \rangle + \langle \tilde{F}^{(1)} | H_W | I^{(1)} \rangle + \langle \tilde{F}^{(2)} | H_W | I^{(0)} \rangle$$

2. Set $\mathcal{V} = H_W + :V:$, $:V:$ being the residual NN interaction. Take the terms with two H_W and one $:V:$.

Why do we do this?

If the NME is extended in terms of the nuclear structure, the 2nd-order perturbation is necessary. The intermediate states of $\beta\beta$ decay are virtual states. So are the intermediate states of RS perturbation.

3. Remove the double-counting terms.

H_W of the transition operator and that of the perturbation interaction are not distinguished physically.

4. We derive the correction terms due to the perturbation of the transition operator.

We pick up the terms referring to the diagrams. See next slide.

5. For $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME, the electron matrix element is moved to the phase space factor.

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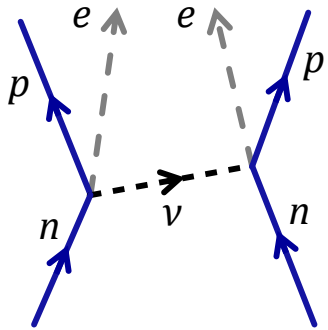
$$\langle \tilde{F}^{(0)} | H_W | I^{(2)} \rangle + \langle \tilde{F}^{(1)} | H_W | I^{(1)} \rangle + \langle \tilde{F}^{(2)} | H_W | I^{(0)} \rangle$$

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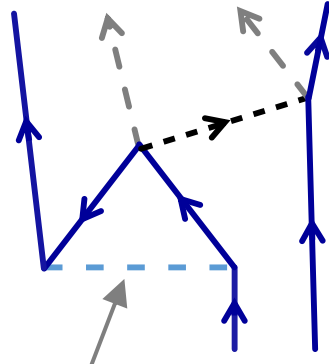
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Diagrams for $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME



a

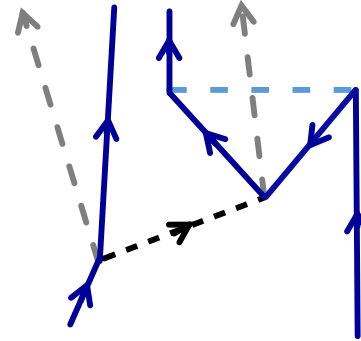
Leading
-order



$:V:$

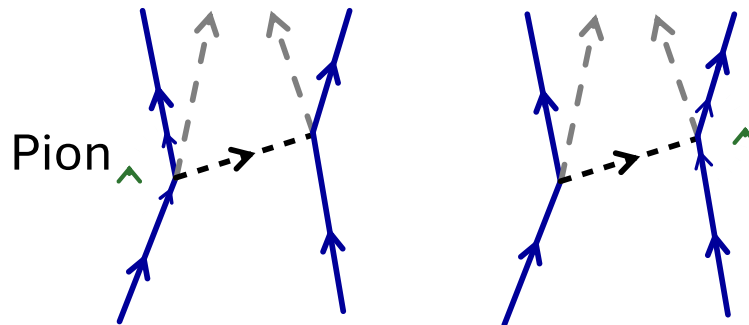
b

Vertex correction



c

RS two-body
current



Pion

Perturbed NMEs

$^{136}\text{Xe} \rightarrow ^{136}\text{Ba}$, QRPA, Skyrme SkM* + Coulomb + pairing intn.

	$0\nu\beta\beta$ NME		$2\nu\beta\beta$ NME	
	GT	Fermi	GT	Fermi
Leading	3.095	−0.467	0.102	−0.002
VC	1.332	−0.984	0.055	−0.033
RS2BC	−2.731	1.758	−0.192	0.030
Perturbed (sum)	1.696	0.307	−0.035	−0.005

- The summed correction term (VC+RS2BC) of the NME is comparable and anti-coherent to the leading term except for the $2\nu\beta\beta$ Fermi NME, for which the summed correction is negligible.

Calculated half-life of ^{136}Xe for $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay

GT and F NME	g_A	Half-life (10^{21} y)
Leading	Bare g_A , 1.267	0.03
Perturbed	Bare g_A , 1.267	0.26
Experimental		2.18

The experimental value from A.S. Barabash, MEDEX'19 Proc. (AIP pub.)

Effective g_A to reproduce exp. $2\nu\beta\beta$ half-life

Used NME components	$g_A^{\text{eff}}(\text{exp})$	
	SkM*	SGII
Leading order	0.422	0.563
Perturbed	0.806	0.833

We obtained perturbed GT and Fermi NME components for $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ decays.

Our next step

To obtain effective g_A to reproduce the perturbed half-life with the bare g_A for both $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ decays.

Are the two effective g_A close or different?



Milestone to solve the uncertainty problem of $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME

Estimation of effective g_A for $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME

$$\frac{1}{T_{1/2}^{2\nu}} = G_{2\nu} |g_A^2 M_{2\nu}|^2$$

Effective g_A used with the leading $M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)}$ and $M_{2\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}$ to reproduce the experimental $T_{1/2}^{2\nu(\text{exp})}$ is defined by

$$T_{1/2}^{2\nu}(M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)}, M_{2\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}, g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; exp})) = T_{1/2}^{2\nu(\text{exp})}.$$

leading

This is the usual effective g_A .

NEW

Effective g_A used with the leading $M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)}$ and $M_{2\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}$ to reproduce the half-life obtained from the perturbed NME components and the bare g_A

$$T_{1/2}^{2\nu}(M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)}, M_{2\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}, g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})) = T_{1/2}^{2\nu}(M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT}}, M_{2\nu}^{\text{F}}, g_A^{\text{bare}}).$$

perturbed

Analogously, for the $0\nu\beta\beta$ decay,

$$T_{1/2}^{0\nu}(M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)}, M_{0\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}, g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})) = T_{1/2}^{0\nu}(M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT}}, M_{0\nu}^{\text{F}}, g_A^{\text{bare}}).$$

$0\nu\beta\beta$ effective g_A

$$\{g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})\}^2 \approx (g_A^{\text{bare}})^2 \left(1 + \frac{M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(vc)}} + M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(2bc)}}}{M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(0)}}} \right)$$

- $M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(vc)}} + M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(2bc)}}$ includes the **neutrino potential** and the **residual interaction**.
- $M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT(0)}}$ includes the **neutrino potential**.



The effect of the **neutrino potential** on $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})$ is weakened.

$2\nu\beta\beta$ effective g_A

$$\{g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})\}^2 \approx (g_A^{\text{bare}})^2 \left(1 + \frac{M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(vc)}} + M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(2bc)}}}{M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(0)}}} \right)$$

$M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(vc)}}$, $M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(2bc)}}$, and $M_{2\nu}^{\text{GT(0)}}$ independent of the neutrino potential.

Effective g_A numerically obtained

$^{136}\text{Xe} \rightarrow ^{136}\text{Ba}$, QRPA, Skyrme (SkM* and SGII)
Coulomb and contact pairing intn.

g_A specification	g_A^{eff}	
	SkM*	SGII
$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})$	0.796	0.454
$g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})$	0.696	0.847

Most remarkable result

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt}) = 1.14 g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt}), \quad (\text{SkM}^*)$$

The effective g_A for the $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ are close.

Usual discussion on $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ and $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}$

$0\nu\beta\beta$ decay has a virtual neutrino with momentum

$$0 \leq q \leq \infty$$

➡ Conjecture that $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ and $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ are quite different.

Argument 1

Major q for $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME is ≈ 100 MeV.

The $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME density in the r space conjugate to q has an outstandingly large peak at $r = 1$ fm.

Nucleon form factors are often included in the $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME density in the q space, e.g.,

$$F(q^2) = \frac{1}{(1 - q^2/M_A^2)^2}, \quad M_A \approx 1 \text{ GeV}$$

J.D. Vergados, PRC **24**, 640 (1981)

➡ Contribution of $F(q^2)$ to $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ is small.

Argument 2

Chiral two-body current (χ 2BC) correction to the $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME

J. Menéndez et al., PRL **107**, 062501 (2011)

Another analysis of χ 2BC

J. Engel et al., PRC **89**, 064308 (2014)

They calculated the $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ NMEs with and without the χ 2BC for ^{76}Ge .

$$\Rightarrow g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt}) = 1.10 g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})$$

Argument 3

SGII does not results in similar $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ and $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}$.

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt}) = 0.53 g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})$$

Which is more reliable, SkM* or SGII?

$\Rightarrow$ That is SkM*. SGII overestimates the binding energy.

Argument

Chiral two-

J. Menéndez

Another an

J. Engel et al

They calcul

the χ^2 BC f

⇒ $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld})$

	Binding E. /nucleon (MeV)	Discrepancy from exp. value (MeV)
Exp.	8.396	
SkM*	8.415	0.019
SGII	8.603	0.207

Exp. value is from www.nndc.bnl.gov (2025)

SkM* and SGII values are from the Hartree-Fock-Bogoliubov calculation of the ground state of ^{136}Xe .

Argument

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Which is more reliable, SkM* or SGII?

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Argument 4

An analytical discussion is possible to explain why $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ and $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ are close. The effective g_A is the ratio of perturbed and leading NME components. Both the numerator and the denominator include the neutrino potential. J. T. and O. C. PRC **112**, 024304 (2025)

Idea to proceed

If the perturbed reference is replaced by the unperturbed one,

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{ld}) = g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{ld}) = g_A^{\text{bare}}$$

Referring to the half-life with 1st-order perturbation,

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{pt}) \approx g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{pt})$$

The ratio of $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ and $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}$ is close to the convergence at the 1st order. Thus, we speculate

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{pt}^{\infty}) \approx g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{exp})$$

We apply the phenomenological $2\nu\beta\beta$ g_A for the $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME.

The advantage: the exp. value **nonperturbatively** contains the many-body effects.

I will show two kinds of $\text{NME} \times g_A^2$ of several groups.

- Previous (usual) one

$$(g_A^{\text{bare}})^2 M_{0\nu}^{(0)} = (g_A^{\text{bare}})^2 M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)} - g_V^2 M_{0\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}$$

- Modified NME with $(g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}})^2$

$$g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; est}) = g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; exp}) \frac{g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})}{g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; pt})},$$

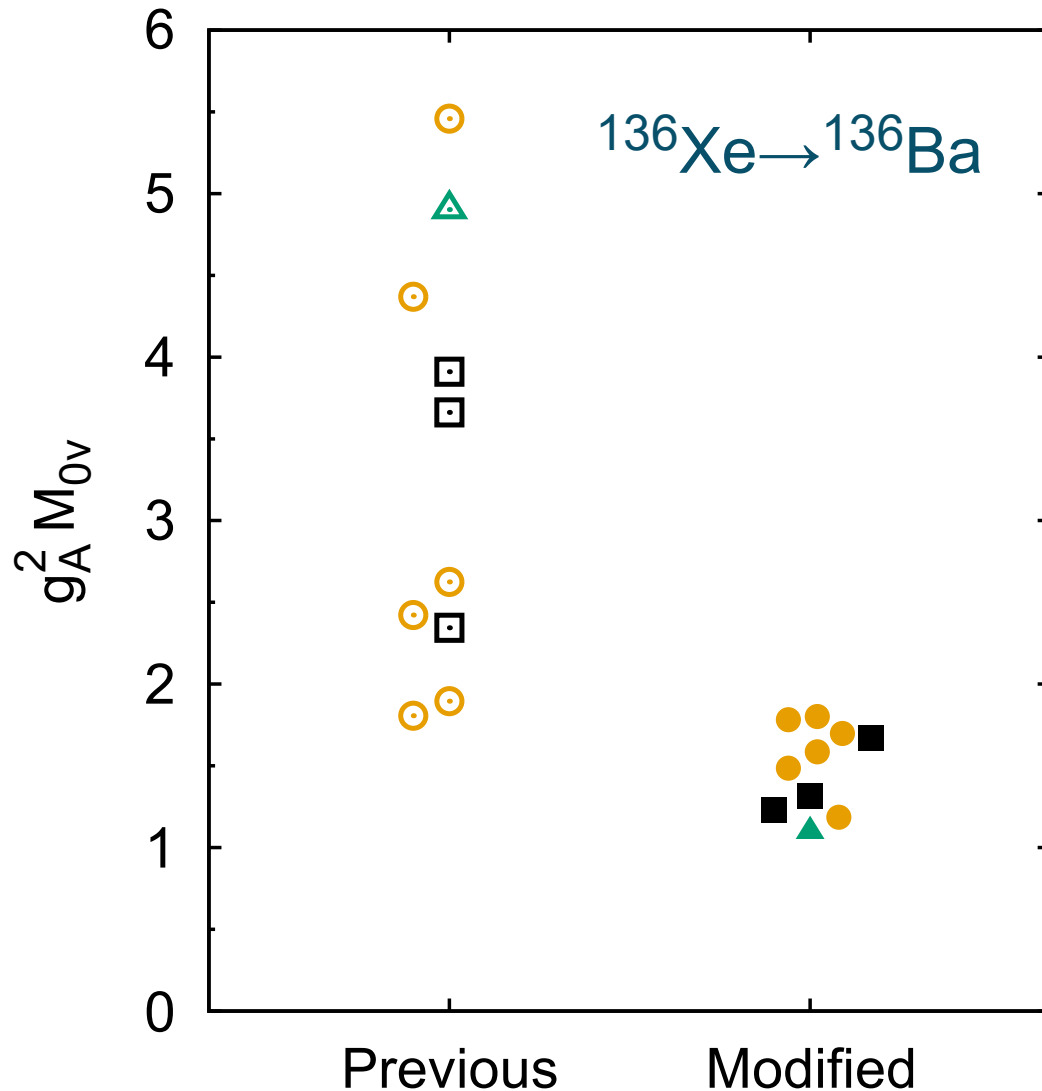
$$[g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; est})]^2 M_{0\nu}^{\text{eff}} = [g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; est})]^2 M_{0\nu}^{\text{GT}(0)} - g_V^2 M_{0\nu}^{\text{F}(0)}$$

This $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld; exp})$ can also be obtained for the results of other groups.

g_A^{bare} : 1.25–1.27, depending on the group

We use [our correction factor \(1.14\)](#) for other groups because that of other groups not available.

Application of our method to $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME of other groups



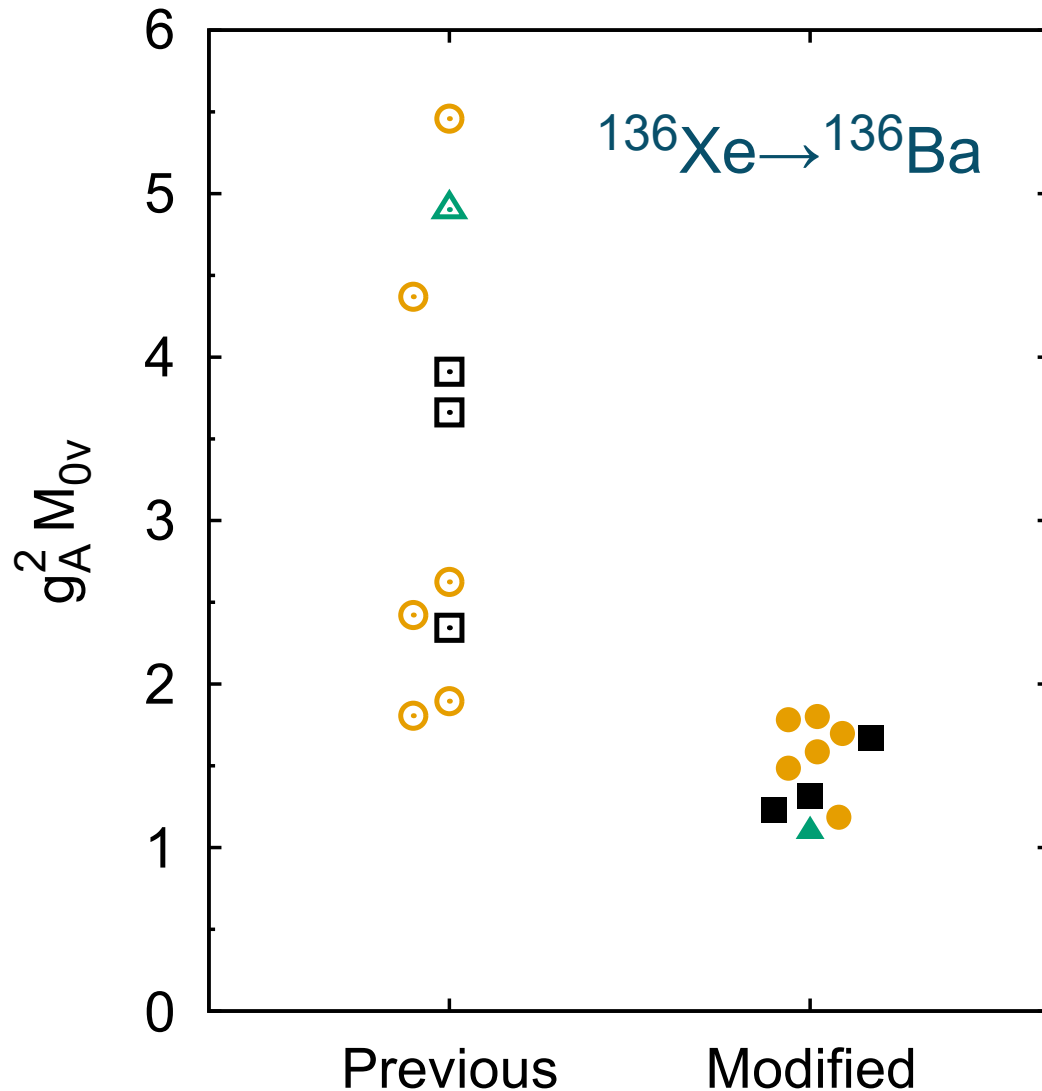
Square: Shell model
Circle: QRPA
Triangle: IBM

Condition on the samples:

Both the $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ NMEs are obtained on the same footing.

J. T. and O. Civitarese,
arXiv: 2509.16605

Application of our method to $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME of other groups



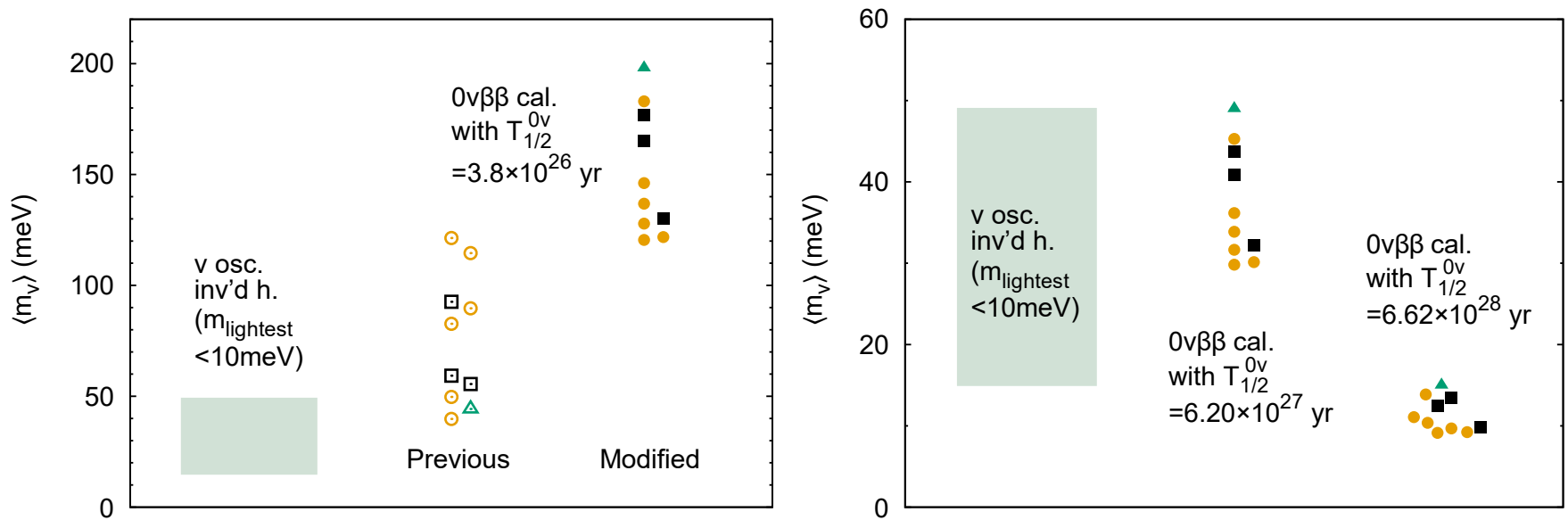
A few QRPA groups use $g_A = 1.27$ and 1.0, and adjust the isoscalar pairing intn. to the exp. $T_{1/2}(2\nu\beta\beta)$.

Cal. (1.27) $\rightarrow$ Previous,
Cal. (1.0) $\rightarrow$ Modified.

$g_A = 1.0$ is less close to the QRPA breaking point.

J. T. and O. Civitarese,
arXiv: 2509.16605

Together with neutrino oscillation



The upper and lower edges of the rectangular show the region of the effective neutrino mass $\langle m_\nu \rangle$ allowed by the neutrino oscillation data with the assumptions:

- the inverted neutrino eigen mass ordering,
- the lightest neutrino eigen mass < 10 meV

The experimental lower limit of the half-life of ^{136}Xe for the $0\nu\beta\beta$ decay is 3.8×10^{26} yr, S. Abe et al. (KamLAND-Zen) PRL **135**, 262501 (2025)

Perturbed NMEs

$^{76}\text{Ge} \rightarrow ^{76}\text{Se}$, QRPA, Skyrme SkM* + Coulomb + pairing intrn.

	0 $\nu\beta\beta$ NME		2 $\nu\beta\beta$ NME	
	GT	Fermi	GT	Fermi
Leading	2.278	−0.368	0.0759	0.00016
VC	0.565	−0.373	−0.0101	0.00403
RS2BC	−0.566	0.370	0.0187	−0.00940
Perturbed (sum)	2.277	−0.373	0.0845	−0.00519

- The summed correction term (VC+RS2BC) vanishes for the 0 $\nu\beta\beta$ decay. That of the 2 $\nu\beta\beta$ GT is one-tenth the leading term. The 2 $\nu\beta\beta$ Fermi term is < one-tenth the GT term.

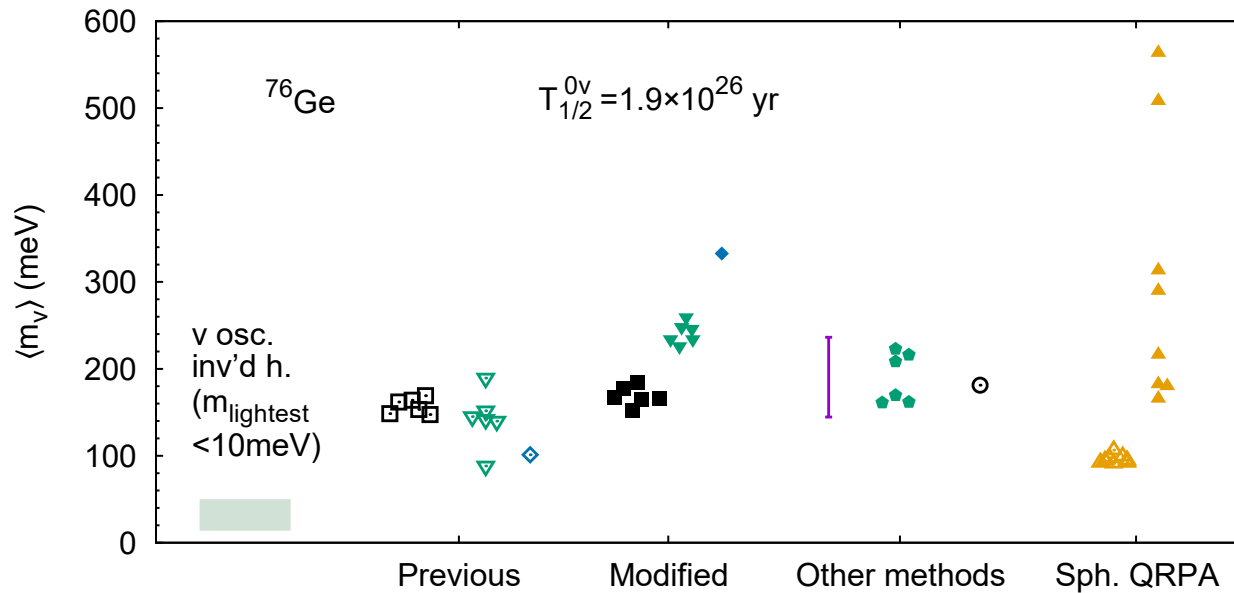
Calculated half-life of ^{76}Ge for $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay

GT and F NME	g_A	Half-life (10^{21} y)
Leading	Bare g_A , 1.267	1.40
Perturbed	Bare g_A , 1.267	1.05
Experimental		1.88

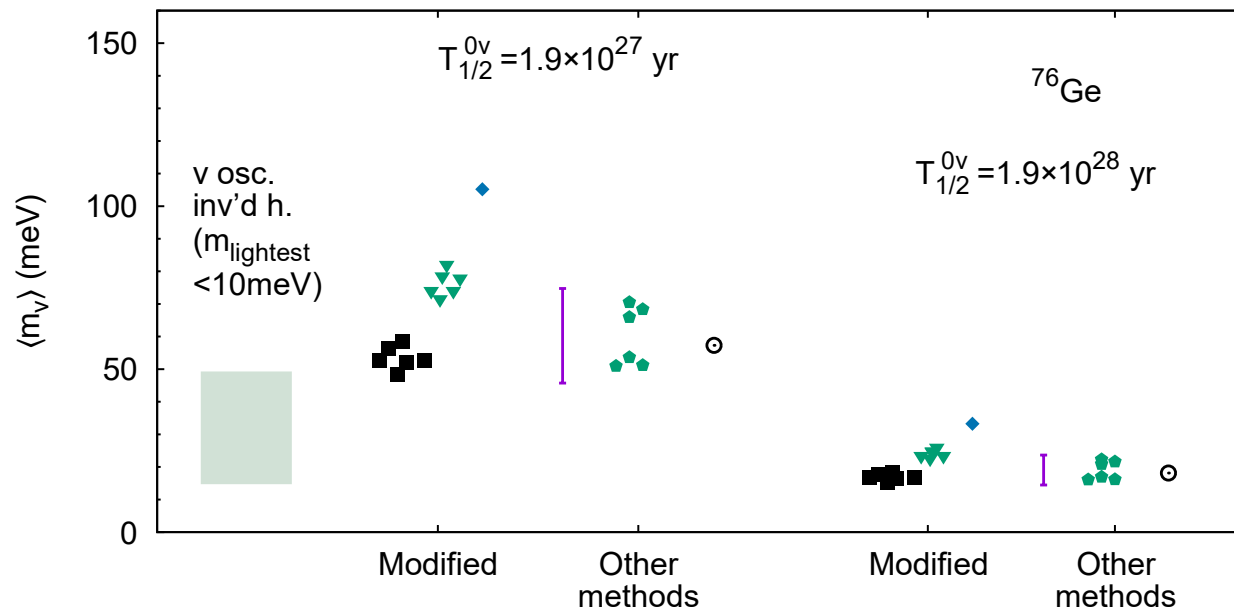
The experimental value from A.S. Barabash, MEDEX'19 Proc. (AIP pub.)

Effective g_A to reproduce exp. $2\nu\beta\beta$ half-life

Used NME components	$g_A^{\text{eff}}(\text{exp})$
	SkM*
Leading order	1.177
Perturbed	1.087



Current lower limit of exp. $T_{1/2}^{0\nu} = 1.9 \times 10^{26} \text{ yr}$
H. Acharya et al. (LEGEND), PRL **136**, 022701 (2026)



If the ordering is the inverted one, and the lightest eigen m_ν is small enough, $T_{1/2}^{0\nu}$ of $10^{27} - 10^{28} \text{ yr}$ is crucial for finding the $0\nu\beta\beta$ decay.

Deformation of ^{76}Ge and ^{76}Se

Properties established by spectroscopic studies

- The ground state of ^{76}Ge has a static quadrupole deformation

$$\beta \approx 0.2$$

T. Nikšić, P. Marević, and D. Vretenar, PRC **89**, 044325 (2014).

K. Nomura, PRC **105**, 044301 (2022).

In my HFB calculation with SkM*, $\beta = 0.18$.

A collective rotational band with strong intra-band transitions is observed (nndc.bnl.gov).

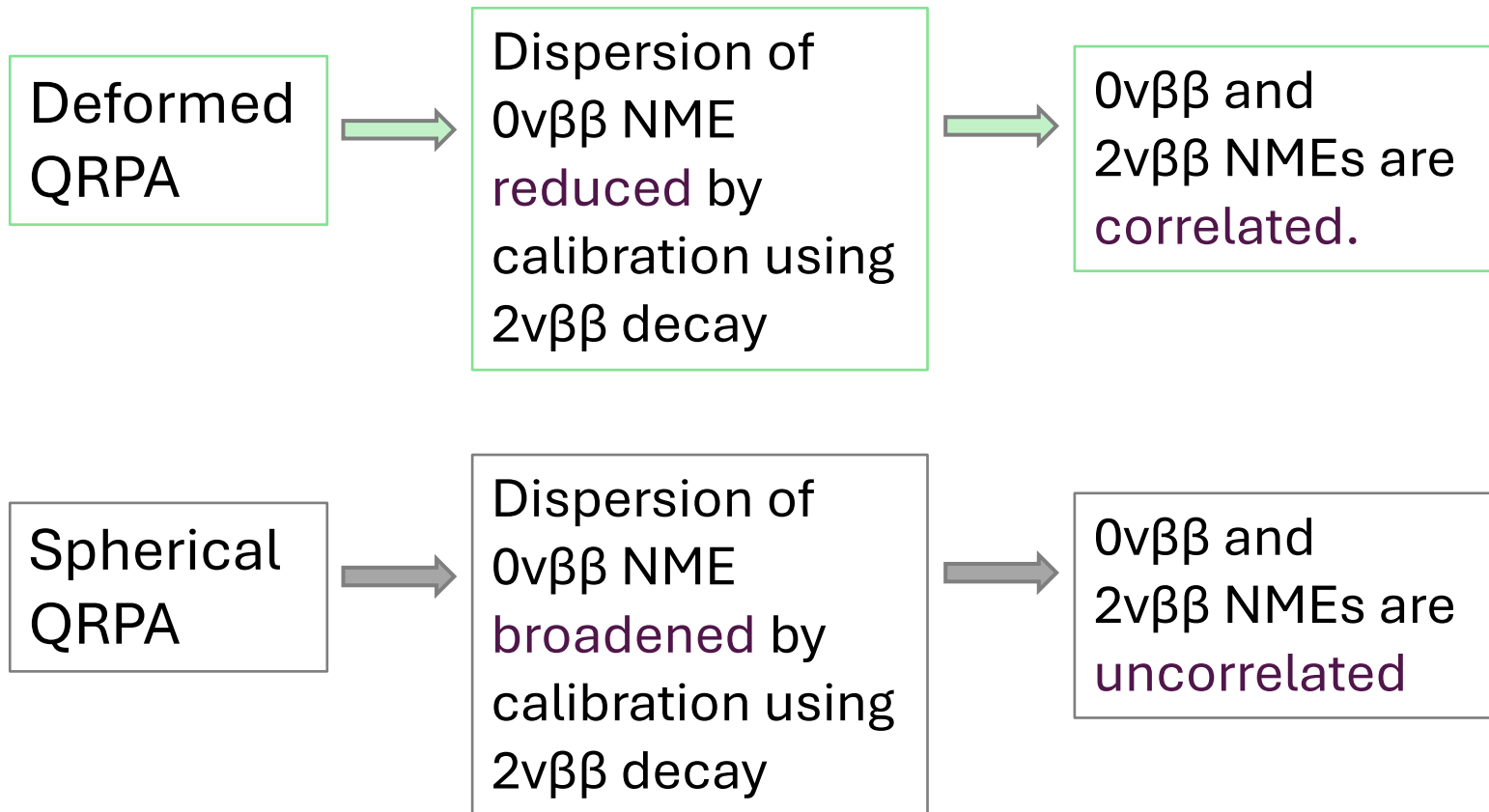
- The potential energy surface with respect to γ is substantially shallow (all relevant papers).

Properties less established

- Static deformation of the ground state of ^{76}Se

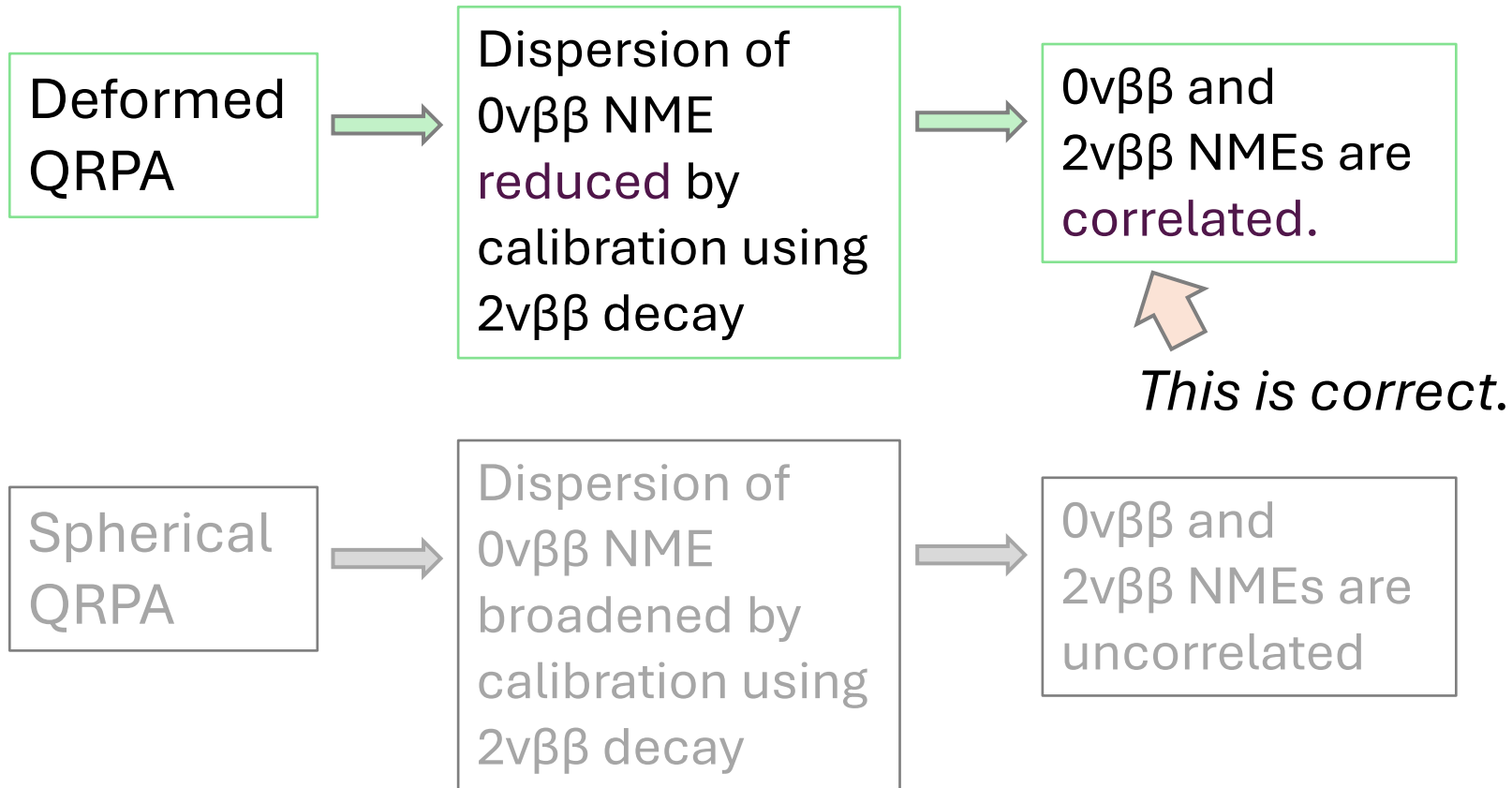
In the HFB calculation with SkM*, it is spherical.

For ^{76}Ge - ^{76}Se



^{76}Ge is deformed.

For ^{76}Ge - ^{76}Se



^{76}Ge is deformed.

Summary

- I improved the QRPA approach to the $\beta\beta$ decay.
I also investigated the validity of the QRPA to ^{136}Xe .
➔ QRPA is a good approx. for ^{136}Xe .
- A small effective g_A is necessary for $2\nu\beta\beta$ decay.
According to the assumption that the exact calculation does not need an effective g_A , something is missing in my calculation. That is not in the QRPA.
- We introduced the transition operator perturbed by the NN interaction by our own method.
- $g_{A,0\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{pt}) = 1.14 g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{pt}), (\text{SkM}^*)$
- We introduced the idea to use $g_{A,2\nu}^{\text{eff}}(\text{ld}; \text{exp})$ for $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME.

^{136}Xe - ^{136}Ba

- We applied this idea with a minor modification to the results of other groups, and the dramatic reduction of dispersion of the g_A^2 NME was obtained.
- The predicted $T_{1/2}^{0\nu}$ of ^{136}Xe (10^{27} – 10^{28} yr) is longer than many of the previous ones.

^{76}Ge - ^{76}Se

- The dispersion of the $0\nu\beta\beta$ NME is reduced significantly if the spherical QRPA calculations are excluded.
- For the inverted ordering and a small enough lightest m_ν , $T_{1/2}^{0\nu}$ of 10^{27} – 10^{28} yr is predicted.
- From the discussion based on deformation, the $0\nu\beta\beta$ and $2\nu\beta\beta$ NME are correlated.

Referred calculations

Method		Calculation
QRPA	1	Ours, SkM*
	2	M. Mustnen and J. Engel (2013), SkM*
	3	M. Mustnen and J. Engel (2013), Mod. SkM*
	4	Šimkovic et al. (2018)
	5	D.-L. Fang et al. (2018), AV18, w/o src
	6	D.-L. Fang et al. (2018), CD-Bonn, w/o src
Shell Model	1	J. Menéndez (2018), Argonne src
	2	J. Menéndez (2018), CD-Bonn src
	3	M. Horoi and B. A. Brown (2013), largest space
IBM		J. Barea et al. (2013)

src: short-range correlation.

Method		Calculation
Other operator modification method	1	J. Menéndez et al. (2011), SM+ χ^2 BC
	2	A. Belley et al. (2024), ab initio
	3	L. Coraggio et al. (2020), SM+ Θ box

For papers, see J. T. and O. Civitarese,
arXiv:2509.16605

Thank you for
your attention.