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Chao Feng

Theoretical and Experimental Studies on Novel High-Gain Seeded Free-Electron Laser Schemes

Doctoral Thesis accepted by
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Supervisor's Foreword

High-gain free-electron lasers (FELs), serving as high-intensity, ultra-short coherent light sources, are being actively developed around the world in the past decades. Applications for FELs in the EUV and X-ray regimes are practically unlimited: they can be used within a wide range of femtochemistry, for ultra-high resolution imaging, the investigation of the dynamics in atomic and biological systems and for many more experiments in leading edge sciences.

Study of the operation scheme is one of the core issues of modern FEL physics research and is always an important topic for the design of high-gain FEL facilities. Till date, self-amplified spontaneous emission (SASE) and high-gain harmonic generation (HG) are the two leading candidates for approaching EUV to x-ray region. Most of the existing high-gain FEL facilities are based on the SASE principle, which can provide extremely high-intensity, ultra-short light pulses with good spatial coherence but poor temporal coherence and relatively large shot-to-shot fluctuations. HG holds the ability for significantly improving the FEL temporal coherence and stability, which has been experimentally demonstrated. However, the high harmonic up-conversion efficiency limited the wavelength cover range of a single stage HG. To overcome these problems and meet the new requirements of FEL users, novel high-gain FEL schemes have been proposed in recent years.

This Ph.D. thesis of Dr. Chao Feng mainly focuses on the study of novel high-gain FEL schemes with external seed lasers. The technique of manipulating the phase space of electron beam, which is widely used in novel seeded FEL schemes, has been systematically studied. Several novel FEL schemes have been proposed for the generation of intense coherent FEL pulse with short wavelength, sub-femtosecond pulse length or multiple carrier frequency properties, which meet the requirements of FEL users. Experiments have been carried out for the recently proposed FEL schemes such as echo-enabled harmonic generation and cascaded high-gain harmonic generation. New photon/electron beam diagnostic methods have been developed for these experiments based on the Shanghai deep ultraviolet FEL facility.

Researches on high-gain FELs have been just started in China. However, we already have three high-gain seeded FEL facilities under construction or operation. Investigations on novel seeded FEL schemes will help us to further understand the theoretical basis and functioning of the existing FEL schemes and provide us more options for the operation of these FEL facilities. We also hope that the new methods and techniques drawn from this study will be beneficial to other presently existing or planned high-gain FEL facilities.

Shanghai
September 2015

Prof. Zhentang Zhao

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Contents

1	Introduction	1
	References	6
2	Basic Theory of FEL	9
2.1	Energy Exchange Equation	9
2.2	Phase Evolution Equation	11
2.3	Resonance Condition and Pendulum Equation	12
2.4	Equations for Harmonic Generation Seeded FEL Schemes	13
2.4.1	HGHG-FEL	14
2.4.2	EEHG-FEL	16
	References	17
3	Theoretical Studies on Novel High-Gain Seeded FEL Schemes	19
3.1	The Electron Beam Phase Space Manipulation Technique	19
3.2	Pre-density Modulation of the Electron Beam for Enhancing Seeded FELs	27
3.3	The Echo-Enabled Staged Harmonic Generation	31
3.3.1	Analytical Calculations	32
3.3.2	Hard X-Ray FEL Based on the EESHG Scheme	34
3.4	Phase-Merging Enhanced Harmonic Generation	35
3.4.1	Principles of PEHG	36
3.4.2	Three-Dimensional Manipulation for Realizing the Phase Merging Effect	42
3.4.3	Generation of Soft X-Ray Radiation Based on a Single Stage PEHG	44
3.5	Generating Stable Attosecond X-Ray Pulse Trains with a Mode-Locked Seeded FEL	46
3.5.1	Mode-Locking of a Seeded FEL	47
3.5.2	Generation of Intense APTs	50
3.6	Chirped Pulse Amplification of a Seeded FEL	54
3.6.1	Chirped Pulse Amplification in a Seeded FEL	55
3.6.2	Start-to-End Simulations Based on the SDUV-FEL	57

- 3.7 Slippage Effect on Energy Modulation in Seeded FELs 61
 - 3.7.1 Energy Modulation with Slippage Effect. 63
 - 3.7.2 HGHG and EEHG with Short Seed Laser Pulses. 67
 - 3.7.3 3D Simulations for SXFEL. 70
 - 3.7.4 Slippage-Boosted by a Sub-harmonic Modulator 72
- References 74
- 4 Experimental Studies on Novel High-Gain Seeded FEL Schemes . . . 77**
 - 4.1 Introduction of the SDUV-FEL 77
 - 4.2 Measurement of the Slice Energy Spread of Electron Beam via CHG 80
 - 4.2.1 CHG Based Energy Spread Measurement Method 81
 - 4.2.2 Experimental Results at the SDUV-FEL. 84
 - 4.3 Experimental Studies of the EEHG 90
 - 4.3.1 Energy Chirp Effects on HGHG and EEHG 90
 - 4.3.2 Design Studies for the EEHG Experiment at the SDUV-FEL 92
 - 4.3.3 Experimental Results of EEHG Lasing at the SDUV-FEL 93
 - 4.4 Experimental Studies of the Cascaded HGHG 96
 - 4.4.1 Design Studies for the Cascaded HGHG Experiment at the SDUV-FEL 96
 - 4.4.2 Experimental Results of the Cascaded HGHG Experiment at the SDUV-FEL. 103
 - References 105
- 5 Conclusions and Prospects 107**