A Study of the Fragmentation of Quarks in e^-p Collisions at HERA using the H1 Detector

David Kant

Department of Physics,
Queen Mary and Westfield College,
University of London

A thesis submitted in accordance with the regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of London

November 1995

Abstract

Deep inelastic scattering (DIS) events, selected from 1993 data taken by the H1 experiment at HERA, are studied in the Breit frame of reference. A review of the current theory relevant to this thesis is presented along with a description of the H1 detector.

The fragmentation function of the struck quark is compared with those of e^+e^- data. It is shown that certain aspects of the quarks emerging from within the proton in ep interactions are essentially the same as those of quarks pair-created from the vacuum in e^+e^- annihilation. The measured area (average charged multiplicity), peak position and width of the fragmentation function show that the kinematic evolution variable equivalent to the e^+e^- squared centre of mass energy is, in the Breit frame, the invariant square of the four-momentum transfer. Comment is made on the extent to which there is evidence for coherence effects in parton showers.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

// Acknowledgements

It would be a monumental task to recount all of the people without whom this work might not have been possible. Therefore, I apologize in advance to those who are not mentioned but hope to thank them in the near future.

I would like to extend my thanks to my supervisor, Graham Thompson, for providing guidance and advice as well as taking the time to answer all my questions - including the silly ones - over the past three years. I also thank him for prof leading dis theseis. I would also like to thank the staff at QMW particularly; Murrough Landon and Paul Kyberd for sorting out all of my computing problems, Derek Newman-Coburn for his King Georges', Wladimir Von Schlippe for invaluable discussions concerning the Breit frame, and Paul Harrison and the other *deadly lampshade* crew for bringing a new meaning to the word noise!

For teaching me everything about nothing and, nothing about everything else I thank the following people, past and present, from room 401. Andy for playing techno music really loud and not crashing his bike - with me on the back - on the M40, en route to yet another deadly lampshade gig; Thanos ('... does the battered cod have any cheese with it?' and 'Can I have six chicken burgers please?') for his *unusual* behaviour; Spon for making me throw up in Billard Hause near the North hall (I had to cycle home as well!); James for his unusual 'hands on' approach to laboratory demonstrating; Mohsin for his inability to think rationally after half a bottle of whisky (I had the other half) leading to an 'incident' involving a shopping trolley in an empty car park at 6.00 am New year's morning; Asif for his inability to think rationally while ordering food at a restaurant; Simon for spilling coffee on me (twice in one day!); Adil for knowing loads of gorgeous chicks and Asif again for his inability to consume the collosal volume of food ordered in the restaurant. I would also like to thank Eram, Rob, Martin, Keith and Daniel. Good luck guys....you're gonna need it!

Life in Hamburg was really good fun partly because my supervisor was 500 miles away but mostly because of the hours of entertainment shared with the following people. I thank the Birmingham boys Paul Newman, Paul Sutton, Lee West and Stuart Robertson; Gerry Lopez, Alan Wilson, Phil Kaziewicz, Valerie Jamieson, Gareth Noyes, Phil Biddulph and Andy Mehta.

I would also like to thank David Cussans, Steven Burke, Dave Sankey and John Morris for their invaluable help with the fragmentation analysis. John Dainton and Michael Kuhlen for their advice and encouragement.

I acknowledge the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC), formerly known as the Science and Engineering Research Council (SERC), for their financial support.

For my Father

Preface

A proper quantum mechanical treatment of multi-parton emission in perturbative QCD involves the notion of colour coherence. The inability of long wavelength gluons to resolve individual colour charges of partons within the parton cascade reduces the available phase space for soft gluon emission to an angular ordered region due to interference effects. This prescription is modelled in the modified leading logarithm approximation (MLLA) and gives rise to a characteristic 'hump-backed' plateau in the parton momentum spectra. With the hypothesis of local parton-hadron duality (LPHD) this also applies for observable hadrons and has been observed in e^+e^- interactions.

In ep deep inelastic scattering (DIS) the parton shower resulting from the fragmentation of the struck parton is time-like as in e^+e^- interactions. However, in ep interactions the proton fragmentation region is more complicated, since it contains the space-like evolution parton cascade as well as time-like radiation showers *and* the remnant from the initial beam proton. In order to compare to the MLLA predictions and to the e^+e^- data, the ep events at HERA are studied in the Breit frame. This frame is defined by two requirements. The exchanged virtual photon and the incoming proton momenta are antiparallel to one another and, the virtual photon is *purely* space-like i.e, no energy component in its four-vector. In this frame, by definition particles with a negative longitudinal component of momentum constitute the "current hemisphere" and the rest is denoted as the proton fragmentation region.

The purpose of this thesis is to compare the properties of the fragmentation process initiated by the struck quark in DIS in the current hemisphere of the Breit frame to those of quarks that are pair created in e^+e^- interactions, and to the predictions of the MLLA. This thesis will not concern itself with any investigation of the proton fragmentation region. The work presented in this thesis has been published and may be found in reference [74] and tables of data relevant to this analysis can be found on World Wide Web at the following site; *http://durpdg.dur.ac.uk/HEPDATA*.

Chapter one gives a brief overview of the HERA collider and the H1 experiment concentrating on the principle detector components used in this analysis. Chapter two is designed to give the reader a feeling for the various type of physics processes that occur at HERA. Particular attention is given to processes that are a background to DIS and to Monte Carlo models that are able to describe the data. These models are discussed further in chapter three which also discusses some of the theoretical background relevant to this thesis.

The selection of DIS candidates that comprise the data used in this thesis is discussed in chapter four. To calculate the boost to the Breit frame of reference, the kinematic variables x and Q^2 must be determined as accurately as possible. Thus a comparison of the different methods of kinematic reconstruction are reviewed and the resolution of the variables from each of the methods is compared in different regions of the (x, Q^2) plane. Due to the $1/Q^4$ dependence of the neutral current DIS cross section, the data are subdivided into ten analysis bins in order to study the energy evolution of the fragmentation function.

The analysis presented in chapter four shows that the variables x and Q^2 are best determined from the electron only method. The boost to the Breit frame is thus calculated from the kinematics determined solely from this method and is done via the hadronic centre-of-mass system (CMS) as described in chapter five. In order to avoid large acceptance corrections to the data a selection based on the calorimetric energy flow observed in one hemisphere of the Breit frame is discussed. A description of the method used to make acceptance corrections to the data is given in chapter six.

The properties of the fragmentation function for charged particles in the current hemisphere of the Breit frame with increasing energy are presented in chapter seven. These results are compared to those of similar analyses in e^+e^- interactions. The data are also compared to a number of different QCD models which utilise different ansätze for the description of coherence effects and hadronisation. A full account of all possible sources of systematic error is also given.