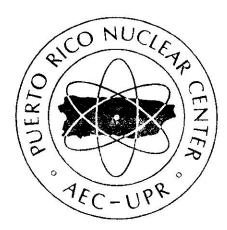
PUERTO RICO NUCLEAR CENTER

COMPUTER AIDED DECOMPOSITION OF GAMMA SPECTRA EMITTED BY CERTAIN RADIOACTIVE NUCLIDES

By

Aviva E. Gileadi and Nallagounder Kuppusamy



OPERATED BY UNIVERSITY OF PUERTO RICO UNDER CONTRACT NO. AT (40-1)-1833 FOR U S ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

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University of Puerto Rico Mayaguez Campus

COMPUTER AIDED DECOMPOSITION OF GAMMA SPECTRA EMITTED BY MIXTURES OF CERTAIN RADIOACTIVE NUCLIDES

bу

Nallagounder Kuppusamy

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ABSTRACT

A computer code PRGA, written in FORTRAN IV, has been developed in order to perform decomposition of certain gamma spectra obtained by means of Ge(Li) diode equipped multichannel data acquisition system. The code uses spectra of the individual standards and those of the mixtures as input data and calculates the mixing factors pertinent to each component, using linear least squares fit techniques.

PRGA is presently operative on both the IBM-360/40 and the PDP-DEC-10 computers at the Computer Center of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus. The code includes corrections designed to account for deadtime losses, natural and spectral background, decay and counting statistics. Using source mixtures with premeasured mixing factors, specially prepared for the purpose of comparisons, it was found that the premeasured and PRGA computed mixing factors are in satisfactory agreement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page	
ABSTRACT	i	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	ii	
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv	
LIST OF TABLES	v	
LIST OF FIGURES	vi	
CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION	1	
CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE	4	
CHAPTER III - THEORETICAL BACKGROUND	9	
CHAPTER IV - MATHEMATICAL BASIS OF THE PRGA-CODE	22	
CHAPTER V - EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES AND EQUIPMENT	32	
CHAPTER VI - PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS	40	
REFERENCES	60	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
APPENDIX	64	

LIST OF TABLES

Tab1	e No.	Page
6.1	Comparison of assigned and PRGA-computed mixing factors for ten component simulated program.	42
6.2	Comparison of premeasured and PRGA-computed mixing factors for two component source mix-tures.	43
6.3	Comparison of premeasured and PRGA-computed mixing factors for three component source mixtures.	ijij
6.4	Comparison of premeasured and PRGA-computed mixing factors for four component source mixtures.	45
6.5	Comparison of premeasured and PRGA-computed mixing factors for five component source mixtures.	46
6.6	Results quoted from reference (25) for ten component mixture.	47
6.7	Results quoted from reference (8) for three component source mixtures.	48
6.8	Results quoted from reference (6) for five component mixture.	49

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.						<u>P</u> a	age	
	trum obtai detector.		a lit	:hium-dr	rift	ed	20	
3.2 Results o data obta	Results of applying the correlation method to data obtained with a sodium iodide detector.							
	Block diagram of Ge(Li) detector and associated data acquisition system.							
5.3 Open-ende	d Coaxial	Ge(Li) I	etecto	r.			38	
	represent drifted g				ure	in	36	
5.4 Linearity energy vs	check of channel	data acq number.	uisiti	on syst	em,		39	
6.1 Gamma ray	spectrum	of radia	tion e	mitted	bу	25Mn ⁵⁴	50	
	spectrum					<u> </u>	51	
6.3 Gamma ray	spectrum	of radia	tion e	emitted	bу	27Co ⁵⁷	52	
6.4 Gamma ray	spectrum	of radia	tion e	mitted	bу	11Na ²²	53	
6.5 Gamma ray	spectrum	of radia	tion e	emitted	bу	27Co ⁶⁰	54	
6.6 Gamma ray component 27Co57 an	spectrum source mi d 25Mn ⁵⁴	of radia xtures.	tion e Compo	emitted onents:	by 11	three Na ²²	55	
component	spectrum source mi 5Mn ⁵⁴ and	xtures.		emitted onents:	by 11	four Na ²²	56	
6.8 Gamma ray component 27Co ⁶⁰ , 2	spectrum source mi 5Mn ⁵⁴ , 25M	of radia xtures. In ⁵⁴ and	tion e Compo 55Cs ¹³	emitted pents:	bу 11	five Na ²² ,	57	
A.1 Arrangeme	nt of inpu	it card o	leck fo	r PRGA-	-Cod	e.	65	

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the last decade or so the development of lithium drifted germanium detectors requiring cryogenic techniques and associated low noise electronics and the use of such detectors with various sophisticated data acquisition systems, featuring such items as multichannel analysers with large memories, often interfaced with digital data processors - made a considerable impact on experimental photon spectrometry.

Improvement of the experimental techniques resulted not only in higher accuracy, and better resolution, but also in an unprecedentedly large quantity of available gamma spectral data. In order to match the efficiency of data acquisition to that of converting these data into meaningful information: numerical techniques are required.

Such techniques not only provide considerable savings in time but also significantly improve the accuracy of data analysis.

Ideally even the most complex spectra should be analysable, qualitatively as well as quantitatively, with little or no man-machine interference. However, before such rather ambitious objective could be achieved, several simpler partial programs need to be developed and checked out, each of them designed to perform a partial task in the framework of

complete analysis. Once all the partial programs are operative, they are integrated into a complete system, capable to determine background, to resolve and fit complex peakgroupings, to determine the energies and intensities of the gamma rays as well as the amount of source nuclides within the analysed mixture.

The Nuclear Engineering Department of the University of Puerto Rico, recently acquired a high resolution gamma detecting system consisting of a lithium drifted germanium detector, (manufactured by Princeton Gamma-Tech) to be used in conjunction with a multichannel analyser (model No. 88-0415 manufactured by Nuclear Data, Inc.). This system is to be used in a rather extensive neutron activation project planned by the Department.

It is felt that a reliable and efficient computer codewritten especially for analysing data, acquired by the above described, Ge(Li) diode equipped, gamma spectrometer would be a welcome contribution to the departamental efforts in the field of neutron activation.

With this general objective in mind, and as a first step towards it - in the present thesis a computer code PRGA was developed that is capable to decompose gamma spectra emitted by certain source mixtures

PRGA is written in FORTRAN IV and is operative on the IBM-360/40 Computer at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus Computing Center. The code has been tested

on gamma spectra emitted by several different premeasured source mixtures and its performance has been found satisfactory.

All gamma spectra used in testing the PRGA code were acquired by means of the Ge(Li) diode equipped gamma ray detector system of the Radioecology Division of the Puerto Rico Nuclear Center, the description of which is given in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gamma ray spectrometry is among the most versatile, most important and most frequently applied methods of modern science, accordingly, the professional literature pertinent to that subject cannot be exhaustively reviewed within the scope of the present thesis. An attempt is made, however, to briefly review a selected set of outstanding original papers on the subject of computerized decomposition techniques ("unscrambling") of gamma spectra.

- J. MILLS (1) has developed a computer program AUTSPAN for analysis of complex gamma spectra obtained with Ge(Li) detectors. The program contains options for data smoothing, peak location and determination of peak parameters.
- G. D. ATKINSON Jr., J. B. WHITWORTH and S. J. GAGE (2) have written a code, NAA, which seeks out peaks, locates the peak maxima, predicts Compton knees, single and double escape peaks and identifies the unknown nuclides present. The code is written in FORTRAN IV and operative on the CDC-6600 computer.

JEAN KERN (3) after a review of the most accurately known gamma calibration lines, presented a method of obtaining new secondary standards of similar precision, but extending to higher energies. Her method uses simultaneously pair peak method, energy combinations and experimental non-

linearity curves.

- W. C. WHITE, M. B. SHAPIRO and A. W. PRATT (4) applied linear programming to decomposing spectra.
- J. T. ROUTTI and S. G. PRUSSIN (5) have written a Fortran program which searches and fits the single and multiple peaks. In addition their code performs the energy, efficiency, line shape calibration, and error estimates.

The program given by R. G. HELMER, R. L. HEATH, M. PUTNAM and D. H. GIPSON (6) computed the gamma ray energies and intensities and provided an estimate of uncertainty, by fitting the gamma ray peaks to a Gaussian and applying a correction for the nonlinearity of the electronic system, for the data obtained both by NaI(T1) and Ge(Li) detector systems.

R. GUNNINK and J. B. NIDAY (7) have constructed an elaborate program, GAMANAL, which determines the background, the energies and intensities of the gamma spectrum and the amounts of the source nuclides present in the mixture.

Taking selected channels of data of pulseheight distribution F. D. KNIGHT (8) applied the method of simultaneous linear equations to find the abundance of the concerned nuclides present with the knowledge of the component spectra and the composite spectrum.

The computer program, GAUSS-V, developed by R. G. HELMER and M. H. PUTNAM (9) locates the gamma ray peaks, determines the peak parameters, finds the gamma ray intensities and energies applying nonlinear least square curve fit for the

pulse height distribution obtained with a Ge(Li) detector system.

- M. CIAMBI, L. DADDI and V. D. ANGELO (10) have fitted the gamma ray photo peaks to a Gaussian, using a maximum probability method and compared the results with those obtained by the least square method.
- W. W. BLACK (11) used correlation techniques to locate the photo peaks, he analysed pulse height distributions obtained with Ge(Li), Si(Li), and NaI(Tl) detectors. He also applied this method to data obtained by means of neutron time of flight analysers.

An early paper of J. H. HUBBELL and N. E. SCOFIELD (12) deals with "unscrambling" experimental gamma spectra using matrix techniques.

WALTER R. BURRUS (13) used Fourier techniques to obtain the "unscrambled" spectrum and has assigned meaningful errorestimates to the results.

- H. I. WEST Jr. and B. JOHNSON (14) discussed an unfolding code for the IBM 650. They described a procedure for removing scale and energy dependency.
- R. L. HEATH, R. G. HELMER, L. A. SCHMITTROTH and G. A. CAZIER (15) used interpolation between experimental spectra, to calculate pulse height distributions obtained by NaI(T1) crystal system for sources emitting only one gamma ray.
- R. J. GEHRKE, J. E. CLINE and R. L. HEATH (16) developed a precise method to determine both the relative detection

efficiency and the linearity of the Ge(Li) detector system.

R. G. HELMER, R. G. GREENWOOD and R. J. GEHRKE (17) have measured the energies of gamma ray photons from 24 nuclides using a Ge(Li) detector and have applied correction for the nonlinearity of the detector system and for the recoiling nucleus.

MARIE PUTNAM, D. H. GIPSON, R. G. HELMER and R. L. HEATH (18) developed a computer program which performs a nonlinear least squares fit to pulseheight distributions, obtained both from NaI(Tl) and Ge(Li) detector systems. Their program fits the data to their modified Gaussian functions and prints out the peak parameters.

The program described by R. L. HEATH, R. G. HELMER, L. A. SCHMITTROTH and G. A. CAZIER (19) smoothens the gamma ray spectra, applies correction to the gainshift of the detector system and fits the data Gaussians using linear least squares criterion.

H. BABA, H. OKASHITA, S. BABA, T. SUZUKI, H. UMEZAWA and H. NATSUME (20) constructed a program to analyse gamma ray spectra obtained by using a Ge(Li) detector. The analysis is based on the first derivative method associated with a number of peak shape tests. The effects of data smoothing and change in peak width were studied.

K. LOW (21) attempted to find the contribution from known nuclides in a complex gamma ray spectrum, using least squares method.

- W. FILIPPONE and F. J. MUNNO (22) discussed the influence of deadtime losses on the magnitude and shape of the composite spectrum obtained by means of a multichannel analyser. They presented a relation including appropriate corrections.
- R. G. WAGGENER, L. F. ROGERS and P. ZANCA (23) Health Physics published a matrix method to correct for non linear energy response of NaI(Tl) spectrometer systems.
- R. K. GILLETTE (24) has developed a computer program for the analysis of neutron activation data containing an option for smoothing gamma spectra.
- J. I. TROMBKA (25) developed a least squares fitting technique for the analysis of complex gamma ray pulseheight spectra, synthesizing the polyenergetic distribution from a series of monoenergetic components in the incident beam.
- H. P. YULE (26) published an exhaustive review paper on computation of experimental results in activation analysis.
- D. D. TUNNICLIFF and G. E. A. WYLD (27) have developed a code, based on linear least squares, that computes directly the weights of the components in a source mixture.

CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In the literature numerous methods have been described, for computer aided analysis of gamma ray spectra obtained with Ge(Li) or NaI(Tl) detector-systems. In most of these methods the analysis is performed with the aid of calculated or measured response functions corresponding to monoenergetic photons or individual isotopic components of the sample.

The physical and statistical phenomena determining the response of a semiconductor type detector to a monoenergetic gamma photon, incident on it, are quite complex and the accurate fundamental calculation of peak shapes for the purpose of spectrum analysis is quite difficult. For this reason and because the peak shape may be sensitive to small variations in experimental parameters, it is desirable to determine a mathematical representation of the composite spectra directly from measured data.

In order to assign a suitable functional representation, it is important to examine some of the factors that determine the peak shape. The primary factor determining the width of a photo peak is the statistical fluctuation in the division of the observed energy between ionization and heating of the crystal lattice. This gives rise to a Gaussian distribution with a small specified width. The extent to which this distribution is reflected upon the experimental data, taken with

a particular system, is dependent on a number of factors. The material properties and the impurities in the detector affect the charge collection and the electronic noise associated with the leakage current.

The combined effect of incomplete compensation of impurities and incomplete charge collection worsen the resolution and give rise to low energy tailing of the photo peak. At low energies the contribution to the resolution from preamplifier noise is important and at higher energies the inabilities of the amplifier and the pulseheight analyser begin to affect the line width, especially when long counting times are involved. Although the use of the digital gain stabilizer can decrease the broadening, the stabilization may itself change the shape of the peak.

Finally random summing of pulses at high counting rates broadens the peaks and gives rise to tailing. The continuum under the peaks is due to Compton distribution from higher energy gamma rays and general counting background. Without detailed knowledge of the composition of the spectrum we can only say that the continuum in the short interval under one peak or a cluster of peaks is, except for statistical fluctuations, a continuous smoothly varying function of energy. Such a function can be approximated with a polynominal.

Among the several techniques used in computer aided decomposition of complex gamma spectra three major ones will

be discussed briefly, following references 6 and 11:

- (a) Linear least squares technique
- (b) Non linear least squares technique
- (c) Correlation technique

In the linear least squares technique the pulse height spectrum due to a polyenergetic distribution of gamma rays is synthesized by using a series of normalized pulse height distributions, due to either monoenergetic components or to the pulse height distribution characteristic of various single nuclides in the source-mixture. Each of these pulse height distributions is weighted so that their sum is a best fit based upon a least squares criterion to the experimentally determined polyenergetic pulse height distribution due to the source mixture under consideration.

It is assumed that the data points in a portion of the experimental spectrum can be represented by a function \bar{y}_i which depends on a set of parameters p_k . The purpose of a least squares fit is to find the value of the parameters, which minimizes the sum of the squares of the deviations of the data from the function; that is

$$R^{2} = \sum_{i} w_{i} \left[y_{i} - \bar{y}_{i} (p_{k}) \right]^{2}$$
 (3.1)

is minimized. The \bar{y}_i s are experimental data points, the w_i are the weights associated with the y_i , and the $\bar{y}_i(p_k)$ are

the values calculated from the function used to represent the data. The summation is overall the data points used in the fit.

A necessary condition for R^2 to be a minimum, as a function of the p_k , is that the set of equations

$$\frac{dR^2}{dp_k} = 0$$
 for $k = 1, 2, ... N$ (3.2)

hold simultaneously for all values of k.

If \bar{y}_i is a linear function of the parameters p_k , the problem is a linear least squares problem, and expressions can be derived for the "best" value of the parameters. However, if the function is not linear in the parameters, no explicit solution of the equations exist. In this case a method of "linearization" may be used.

One such method of linearization is that of Gauss. This method consists of linearizing the function with respect to a set of parameters δP_k by the use of a truncated Taylor series. Initial estimates, P_k^0 , of the parameters must be available in order to evaluate the derivatives in the expression; that is:

$$p_k = p_k^0 + \delta p_k$$
 and $\bar{y}_i(p_k) = \bar{y}(p_k^0) + \sum_k \frac{\partial \bar{y}_i}{\partial p_k} \delta p_k + \cdots$

(3.6)

plus expressions containing higher derivatives, where the derivatives are evaluated at the initial values of the parameter.

The function $\bar{y}(p_k)$ is a linear function of the p_k if all derivatives beyond the first are neglected. This gives

$$R^{2} = \sum_{i} w_{i} \left[y_{i} - \bar{y}(p_{k}^{0}) - \sum_{k} \frac{\partial y_{i}}{\partial p_{k}} \delta p_{k} \right]^{2}$$
 (3.3)

The conditions which now determine the minimum are given by

$$dR^2/d(\delta p_k) = 0$$
 for $k = 1, 2, ... N$ (3.4)

this gives as many equations as there are parameters p_k .

The solution of this set of equations can be represented in a compact form by the use of matrix notation. Let the desired changes in the parameters be given by the vector

$$\Delta P = (\delta P_1, \delta P_2, \delta P_3, \ldots)$$
 (3.5)

Let the vector B be defined as:

$$B = \left\{ \sum_{i} w_{i} (y_{i} - \bar{y}_{i}^{0}) (\partial \bar{y}_{i} / \partial p_{1}), \sum_{i} w_{i} (y_{i} - \bar{y}_{i}^{0}) (\partial \bar{y}_{i} / \partial p_{2}) \dots \right\}$$

The coefficients of the $\delta\, p_{j}$ are represented by a symmetric matrix with the elements

$$c_{1k} = \sum_{i} w(\partial \bar{y}_{i}/\partial p_{1}) \cdot (\partial \bar{y}_{i}/\partial p_{k}) \qquad (3.7)$$

The set of equations can now be written $C. \Delta P = B \qquad \qquad \text{where } \Delta P \text{ and } B \text{ are column vectors.}$ The solution is $\Delta P = A.B$, where the matrix $A = C^{-1}$.

Since the higher derivatives have been neglected in equation (3.3)this process does not yield the solution of equation(3.2). Therefore, equation(3.4)is solved again with the p_k^0 replaced by $(p_k^0 + \delta p_k)$. This process is repeated in an iterative manner until all the δp_k are less than some convergence criteria. These convergence criteria Δ_k are such that the iterations stop if $p_k \neq \Delta_k$ for all k simultaneously. At this point the fitting process is concluded for this peak.

In order to apply the non linear least squares method to pulse height distributions obtained by means of a Ge(Li) detector system, the following should be considered: A gamma ray spectrum, obtained with a Ge(Li) detector, coupled to a multichannel analyser, consists primarily of a smooth continuous distribution on which is superimposed a series of peaks. Let a portion of this spectrum be represented by

the function

$$\bar{y}_{i} = \sum_{j} y_{ij} + L_{i}$$
 (3.8)

where

$$y_{ij} = y_{oji}e^{-\mu} \left[1 + \alpha_{1j}(x_i - x_{oj})^m 1 + \alpha_{2j}(x_i - x_{oj})^m 2 \right]$$
 (3.9)

with

$$\mu = \left[(x_i - x_{oj}) / \left\{ \frac{1}{2} w_{oj} / (1n2)^{1/2} \right\} \right]^{2}$$

represents the contribution from a single peak and

$$L_{i} = a + b(x_{i}-x_{1})$$
 (3.11)

is a line which represents the continuous distribution.

In a complex peak the subscript j identifies the Gaussian in equation (3.9); the powers m_1 and m_2 are predetermined, even positive integers. The Gaussian parameters x_0 (center of photo peak in channels), y_0 (count at peak or x_0) w_0 (full width of peak at half maximum in channels) can be determined in the fit. The parameters a_1 and a_2 , which represent the deviation of the photo peak from a Gaussian, can also be determined. The line parameters a (value at first channel in fit) and b (slope) can be determined in the fit. In some

cases the α_1 and α_2 terms have been used in fitting photo peaks from NaI(Tl) data, but a Gaussian function i.e.

$$\alpha_1 = \alpha_2 = 0 \tag{3.12}$$

is usually used for Ge(Li) data.

The correlation technique utilizes the cross correlation function, which is defined as

$$c(\tau)=\lim_{t\to\infty}\frac{1}{2T}\int_{-T}^{T}f(t)g(t+\tau)dt$$
, when $T\longrightarrow\infty$ (3.13)

where f(t) is the signal to be isolated (e.g. the shape of a peak corresponding to a gamma photon of a certain energy) and g(t) is the signal actually detected (e.g. the pulse height distribution of the complex spectrum). Assuming that

$$g(t) = af(t)+n$$
 (3.14)

where a is a constant and n represents random noise and approximating f(t) and g(t) with a set of discrete values, the cross correlation function can be approximated as

$$C = \sum_{t} f_{t}g_{t+\tau}$$
 (3.15)

where t and τ are integers (e.g. channel numbers). For the purpose of discussion f(t) is referred to as search spectrum,

g(t) the data spectrum and C_{τ} as the correlation spectrum. According to its definition, the cross correlation function is generated by forming the products of $f_{t-\tau}$ and g_t keeping the search function sliding by one unit to the left each time τ is incremented by one. Thus C_{τ} will have a peak, whenever the peak in the search spectrum overlaps itself in the data spectrum. This fact can be used to localize monoenergetic components in the polyenergetic spectrum. In order to do so successfully, it is necessary to find a method of enhancing the structure in the correlation spectrum; it is also desirable to remove all of the background not associated with the structure. Assuming that the data structure has a form of

$$g_{\tau} = f_{\tau} + b \qquad (3.16)$$

with b constant it can be seen that

$$f_{t}(g_{t+\tau}^{-b}) = 0$$
 if $t+\tau < M-1$ and $f_{t}(g_{t+\tau}^{-b}) = 0$ if $t+\tau > M-1$ (3.17)

where M is the number of points in the search spectrum f(t).

This accomplishes both requirements, enhancement of the structure and supression of background. Therefore the expression of C_{τ} may be modified to read:

$$C_{\tau} = \sum_{t=0}^{M-1} f_{t} \left[g_{t+\tau} - A_{\tau} \right]$$

$$A_{\tau} = \frac{1}{M} \sum_{n=0}^{T+M-1} g_{n}$$
(3.18)

where

When applying this method to actual data, certain modifications have to be introduced in order to take care on random fluctuations. It is clear that the term

$$g_{++\tau}^- A_{\tau}$$

will no longer vanish beyond the structure for data where A is fluctuating in a statistical manner. However, remembering that the computation of A_{τ} , as given by equation (3.18), it can certainly be expected that fluctuations of one standard deviation or more would be smoothed out. Therefore the square root of A should be sufficient to suppress statistical fluctuations. With this in mind, the modified equation for C now reads:

$$C_{\tau} = \sum_{t=0}^{M-1} f_{t} \left[g_{t+\tau} - A + \sqrt{A} \right]$$
 (3.19)

When applying the cross correlation method to decomposition of pulse height spectra, the search spectrum is a Gaussian, therefore

$$C_{\tau} = N_{O} \sum_{t=0}^{M-1} \exp \left[-(\frac{t-t_{O}}{b})^{2} \right] \left[g_{t+r} - A_{\tau} + \sqrt{A_{\tau}} \right]$$
 (3.20)

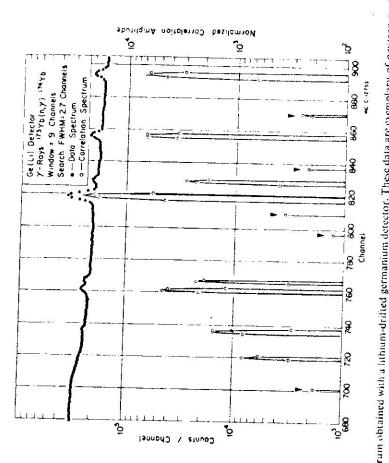
where

$$FWHM = 2b\sqrt{ln 2}$$
 (3.21)

The only input parameters are the window width M and the FWHM. $\rm\,N_{O}$ is a constant.

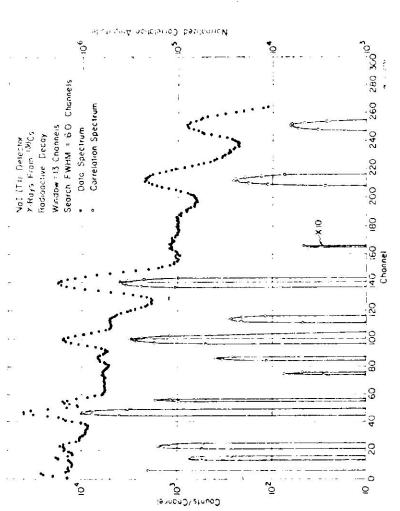
Figures 3.1 and 3.2 contain the pulse height distributions (data spectrum) and the pertinent cross correlation functions obtained using appropriate search spectra, plotted on the same diagram. Figure (3.1) refers to a spectrum obtained by a Ge(Li) detector. Figure (3.2) to one obtained by a NaI(Tl) crystal.

Both figures (quoted from reference 11) illustrate the effectiveness of the cross correlation method in locating peaks.



Data spectrum obtained with a lithium-drifted germanium detector. These data are exemplary of neutron-capture gamma-ray experiments. FIGURE 3.1

(from reference 11)



Results of applying the correlation method to data obtained with a sodium-iodide detector. This example illustrates the invensitivity of the method to the peak-width parameter, and also how Compton edges and backscatter peaks can result in structure appearing in the correlation spectrum.

(from reference 11)

FIGURE 3.2

CHAPTER IV

MATHEMATICAL BASIS OF THE PRGA-CODE

The PRGA code is based on a mathematical model using linear least squares techniques to calculate the mixing factors of a multicomponent spectrum.

In its simplest form, the problem may be formulated in the following manner:

Given the pulse height distribution spectrum of a source mixture, obtained by means of a certain gamma ray detector system, as well as normalized pulse height distribution spectra of the individual components obtained by means of the same gamma ray detector system, the mixing factors are to be determined.

In order to obtain a numerical solution of this problem, the following mathematical model is used:

- Let S(I,K) denote the count rate in the K th channel due to the I th isotope
 - C(I) the I th mixing factor to be determined
 - T(K) the count rate in the K th channel due to mixture (given)
 - II the total number of isotopes used in the mixture (given)
 - KK the total number of channel used (given)

Under the assumption that T(K) the count rate in the

K th channel due to the source mixture is produced by a linear combination of count rates corresponding to each component, T(K) may be expressed as:

$$T(K) = \sum_{i=1}^{II} C(i) *S(i,K)$$
 for $K=1,2, ..., KK$ (4.1)

In order to determine the optimal values of the C(I) mixing factors a linear least squares fit is used, searching for a minimum of the function:

$$U(C_{1}, C_{2},...C_{II}) = \sum_{K=1}^{KK} \left[T(K) - \left\{ \sum_{I=1}^{II} C(I) * S(I,K) \right\} \right]^{2}$$
 (4.2)

with respect of the choice of the C(I) mixing factors. The minimizing C(I) values are determined by differentiating U with respect to each C(I) and setting the derivatives to zero. This leads to the system of linear equations of the following form:

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial [C(J)]} = -\sum_{K=1}^{KK} \left\{ \left[T(K) - \sum_{I=1}^{II} C(I) * S(I,K) \right] S(J,K) \right\} = 0$$
 (4.3)

leading to:

$$\sum_{K=1}^{KK} T(K) *S(J,K) = \sum_{I=1}^{II} C(J) \left[\sum_{K=1}^{KK} S(I,K) *S(J,K) \right]$$
for $J = 1, 2, ...II$ (4.5)

denoting

$$\sum_{K=1}^{KK} T(K) *S(J,K) = B(J)$$
 (4.6)

and

$$\sum_{K=1}^{KK} S(I,K) * S(J,K) = A(I,J)$$
 (4.7)

one obtains
$$\sum_{I=1}^{II} A(I,J)*C(I) = B(J)$$
for J=1,2, ...II

The solution of the set of this system of equations yields the desired C(I) values.

To execute the above computation of the C(I) values, a computer program PRGA was developed. The arrangement of the card deck and the listing of the program are presented in APPENDIX I.

PRGA is written in FORTRAN IV, level 19, and is operative on the IBM 360/40 and on the DEC-PDP-10, both at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus, Computer Center.

In order to facilitate the debugging procedure, the PRGA was first tested on a simulated problem, which assumed a source mixture consisting of ten components and data from forty one channels.

After its performance on the simulated problem has been found excellent, PRGA was applied to actual experimental data, and the computed results found to be in satisfactory agreement with premeasured control data.

A brief description of the experimental equipment and procedures as well as a detailed comparison of the experimental mixing factors with those computed by the PRGA program are given in Chapters V and VI.

The performance of the PRGA has been improved by the inclusion of several routines for various corrections. The mathematical basis of these routines is briefly presented below:

a. Dead time correction was taken into account by first including the system dead time as an input parameter then correcting each raw count rate reading S in the following way:

$$S = \frac{S}{1 - \tau S} \tag{4.9}$$

where S is the raw count rate per second and is the system dead time in seconds. Dead time values used in this paper were computed from the percent values automatically recorded by the counting system. No attempt was made to include channel and half life dependent dead time correction such as advocated by W. FILIPPONE and F. J. MUNNO (see ref. 22) in the code, at this stage of its development, primarily because all control data referred to sources with half lives of several tens of days, thus the advocated correction would be negligible.

 b. Correction for natural background ia made simply by including the appropriate background count rates
 BB(K) as inputs in the program and by replacing

$$S(I,K) \leftarrow S(I,K)-BB(K)$$
 (4.10)
for $K = 1,2, ... KK$

c. Corrections related to counting statistics. Due the inherently random nature of radio active disintegration, allowance had to be made for the statistical fluctuations in the count rates. This was accomplished by assigning a weight factor wk to each value of

$$\left[T(K) - \sum_{i=1}^{II} S(i,K) * C(i)\right]$$

modifying the function entering the least squares fit in the following manner:

$$U = \sum_{K=1}^{KK} w_{K} \left[T(K) - \sum_{I=1}^{II} S(I,K) *C(I) \right]^{2}$$
 (4.11)

d. Correction for Compton scattering was made in a purely heuristic fashion, by deducting the pertinent ordinates of an appropriately chosen linear function from the measured values. Assuming that the peak occurs at $K=K_0$ and the tangential points S at K_0-M

resp. K_0^{+M} the linear function to be deducted is given by

$$Y(K) = \frac{Y(K_0+M)-Y(K_0-M)}{2M} (K-K_0+M)+Y(K_0-M)$$
 (4.12)

and the proper correction consists in replacing $S(I,K) \longrightarrow S(I,K)-Y(K)$ for

$$K = K_0 - M, K_0 - M + 1, \dots, K_0 + M$$
 (4.13)

Admittedly, the nonlinear method of fitting the individual peaks to the sum of a Gaussian and a linear function, as described in Chapter III, is better justified from the theoretical point of view; it should be observed, however, that even the above described simple linear routine is used by several authors (refs. 5, 9) and that its use in PRGA yielded satisfactory results.

e. Decay corrections are necessary when the code is applied in neutron activation analysis involving short lived isotopes.

In order to understand how this correction has been applied let us consider the time behaviour of a single isotope's activity assuming that

0 to t_1 - is the irradiation time

 t_1 to t_2 - is the cooling time

 t_2 to t_3 - is the counting interval

 Φ - the activating flux

 λ_i - is the decay constant of the i-th isotope

 $\sigma_{
m i}$ - is the activation (microscopic) cross section of the nuclide producing the i-th isotope

 $A_{i}(t)$ - the time dependent activity of the i-th isotope

 $N_{i}(t)$ - the time dependent number density of the i-th isotope and

 $N_{\rm O}^{\rm i}$ - the number density of the nuclide, the activation of which yields the i-th isotope.

Under these assumptions the following holds:

$$\frac{dN_{i}(t)}{dt} = N_{0}^{i}\Phi\sigma_{i} - \lambda_{i}N_{i}(t) \qquad 0 < t < t_{1} \qquad (4.14)$$

leading to

$$N_{i}(t) = \frac{N_{0}^{i} \Phi \sigma_{i}}{\lambda_{i}} \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_{i} t} \right] \qquad 0 < t < t_{1}$$
 (4.15)

during cooling, i.e. when $t_1 < t < t_2$

$$N_{i}(t) = \frac{N_{0}^{i} \Phi \sigma_{i}}{\lambda_{i}} \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_{i} t_{1}} \right] \left[e^{-\lambda_{i} (t - t_{1})} \right]$$
 (4.16)

and during counting, i.e. when $t_2 < t < t_3$

$$N_{i}(t) = \frac{N_{o}^{i} \Phi \sigma_{i}}{\lambda_{i}} \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_{i}t_{1}} \right] \left[e^{-\lambda_{i}(t - t_{1})} \right]$$
(4.17)

The activity of the sample at any instant of the counting interval is given by: t_2 t t_3

$$A_{i}(t) = \lambda_{i} N_{i}(t) = N_{o}^{i} \sigma_{i} \Phi (1 - e^{-\lambda_{i} t} 1) e^{-\lambda_{i} (t - t_{1})}$$
(4.18)

Therefore the count rate due to the i-th isotope will be proportional to:

$$\int_{t_{2}}^{t_{3}} A_{i}(t)dt = N_{0}^{i} \sigma_{0} \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_{i}t_{1}}\right] \cdot \Phi \cdot e^{-\lambda_{i}t_{1}} \int_{e^{-\lambda_{i}t_{2}}}^{t_{3}} dt =$$

$$\frac{N_{i}^{o} \sigma_{i} \Phi}{\lambda_{i}} \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_{i}t_{1}}\right] \left[e^{-\lambda_{i}(t_{2} - t_{1})} - 2i(t_{3} - t_{1})\right]$$

$$(4.19)$$

Hence in the case of a mixture consisting of short lived isotopes the mixing factors that will result from the least squares fit - described above - will depend upon t_1 , t_2 , t_3 , σ_i , and Φ and in order to get mixing factors characterizing the composition before irradiation, the following correction has to be applied:

$$CC(I) = \frac{C(I) \lambda_i}{\sigma_i \Phi \left[1 - e^{\lambda_i t_1} \right] \left[e^{-\lambda_i (t_2 - t_4)} - e^{-\lambda_i (t_3 - t_4)} \right]}$$

(4.20)

From the mixing factors, CC(I), of the unirradiated sample, the actual weights are computed by using the normalized activities and weights of the corresponding standard samples.

In order to compute the weights of the individual components in the unirradiated mixture, the following basic equation has to be used:

$$T(K) = \Phi \sum_{J=1}^{II} W(J) * A(K,J) * \left[\frac{e^{-\lambda_j (t_2 - t_i)} - e^{-\lambda_j (t_2 - t_i)}}{\lambda_j} \right] \left[1 - e^{-\lambda_j t_i} \right]$$
where:
$$(4.21)$$

T(K) = observed counts in channel K

 Φ = neutronflux

W(J) = weight of the J-th isotope in the sample

A(KJ) = specific activity for radioisotope J at channel K

 λ_j = decay factor for radio isotope J.

The validity of the above equation is subject to the following restrictions:

- (a) The number of counts observed for any component is directly proportional to the amount of the component present.
- (b) The spectra is additive.
- (c) The flux remains constant during irradiation.
- (d) The "deadtime" of the data acquisition system does not change during any counting period.

This results in a set of equations equal in number to the number of channels. If the specific activities A(K,J) have been determined by prior calibration, the this set of equations can be solved for the unknown weights W(J) using least square techniques.

CHAPTER V

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES AND EQUIPMENT

The performance of the PRGA code was evaluated by comparing premeasured mixing factors with those computed by the code.

Standard sources and source mixtures were prepared from a set of liquid reference sources manufactured by Atomic Development Corp.. The set included the following nuclides:

NUCLIDE	MOST PROBABLE ENERGIES MeV	HALF LIFE
Na ²²	0.511, 1.275	2.62 yr.
Mn ⁵⁴	0.829	300 days
Co ⁵⁷	0.122, 0.136	270 days
Co ⁶⁰	1.173, 1.332	5.2 yr.
Cs ¹³⁷	0.662	30 yr.
	Annual Control of the	

In order to ensure adequate accuracy self filling lambda pipettes were used for measuring radioactive liquids.

Health Physics regulations and instructions referring to handling open sources were strictly observed. After receiving the reference sources, they were tested for leakage by the PRNC - Health Physics Division (see copy of leak test report). All operations involving liquid sources were performed under a hood, with the experimenter wearing protective gloves.

Standards and mixtures were prepared at the same time in order to avoid errors due to decay. An aliquot of the reference liquid (e.g. $500\,\lambda$) was pipetted on a planchet. A multiple of that aliquot was entered into the planchet that was designated to hold the mixture. Care was taken to deposit the liquid at the center of the planchet in order to preserve identical geometry as much as possible. All sources were dried under a lamp and after drying all were covered with thin plastic covers.

All sources were counted on the Ge(Li) spectrometer of the PRNC Radioecology Division.

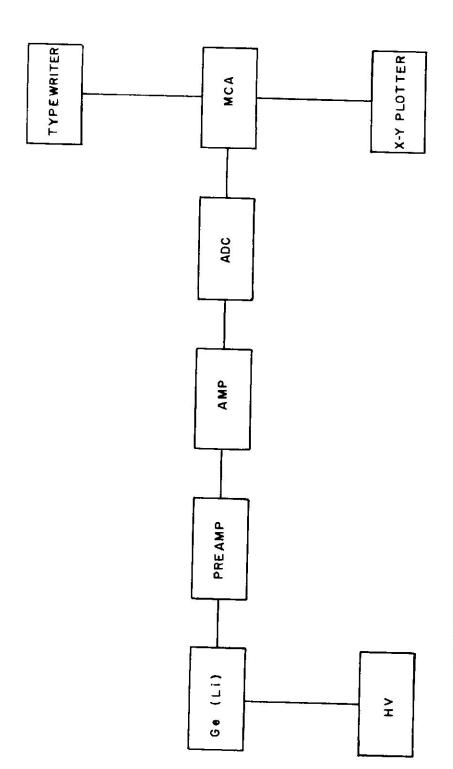
A block diagram of the counting equipment is shown in Figure 5.1 and a list of the components is given below.

Ge(Li) detector and associated data acquisition system components:

HV - High voltage power supply, manufactured by Hewlett-Packard; model No. 3015.

Ge(Li) - Lithium drifted germanium detector, manufactured by Canberra Industries Co.; model No. 7229-340; with cryostat model No. 7500.

PRE AMP - Preamplifier, manufactured by Canberra



BLOCK DIAGRAM OF Ge (Li) DETECTOR AND ASSOCIATED DATA ACQUISITION SYSTEM

FIGURE 5.1

Industries Co.; model No. 970.

AMP - Main Amplifier, manufactured by Tennelec; model No. TC200.

ADC - Analog to digital converter manufactured by Hewlett-Packard, model No. 160.

MCA - Multichannel Analyzer, manufactured by Hewlett-Packard; model No. 45.

TYPEWRITER Manufactured by IBM; model No. 11-C. X-Y PLOTTER Manufactured by Hewlett-Packard; model

No. 7590C.

The Ge(Li) detector used in this system is of open ended coaxial pin type. The starting material for the detector is p type germanium (doped with gallium). Lithium, acting as a donor is diffused, at high temperature (400 °C) into the cylindrical ingot creating a thin n-type layer on the surface. A bias voltage is used to cause the lithium ions to drift through the p type material. During this process an equilibrium condition is established where lithium ions pair with atoms of the doping material (gallium) creating a region with intrinsic properties. (See Figure 5.2).

The term intrinsic implies that charge carriers will have a very long lifetime with all recombination processes reduced to a negligible level. Under reverse bias the charge carriers can then be collected from this region resulting in the production of a solid state ionization cham-

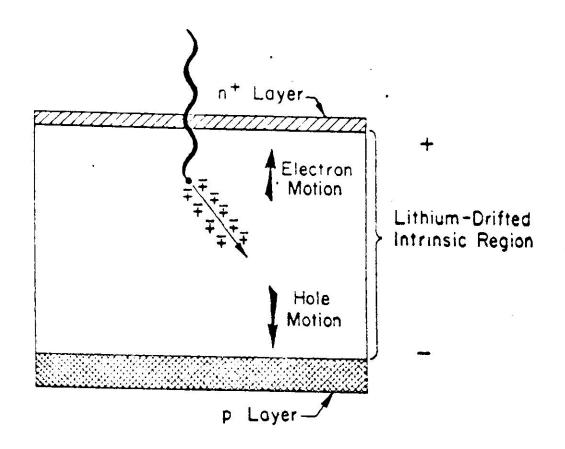


FIGURE 5.2

(from reference 28)

ber, schematically represented in Figure 5.2.

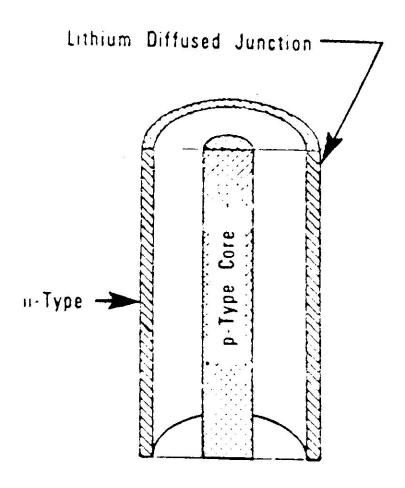
Since the mobility of lithium ions in germanium is not negligible at room temperature, such devices once fabricated, must be maintained at low temperatures to preserve the structure. A liquid nitrogen filled cryostate was used to maintain the required temperatures.

Figure 5.3 indicates the configuration of the Ge(Li) detector actually used in this project.

On the average only 2.84 eV is required to create an electron-hole pair in a Ge(Li) detector as compared to 30 eV in a gas filled ionization chamber or to 500 eV required to produce a photoelectron at the photo cathode of a scintillation detector system. It is this reduced energy requirement that improves the statistics and thereby the resolution of Ge(Li) detectors in comparison to gas-ionization chambers or scintillation detectors.

In Figure 5.4 energy vs. channel number is plotted, indicating excellent linearity of the counting system used for data acquisition. Source mixtures and pertinent standards were counted within a few hours - thus reducing errors due to decay. Maximum counting registered by the inbuilt deadtime counter were below 2%. Within each counting session the gainshift remained below observable.

In order to ensure acceptable counting statistics one hour counts were taken. Countrate-outputs were obtained both on an IBM typewriter and on an X-Y plotter.



Open-ended Coaxial Ge(Li) Detector

FIGURE 5.3

(from reference 28)

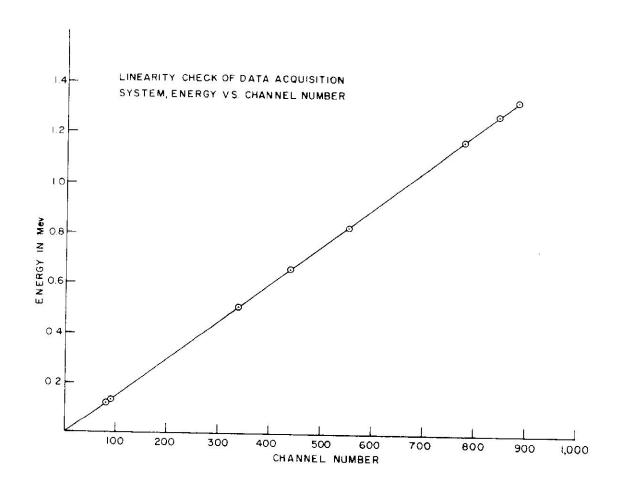


FIGURE 5.4

CHAPTER VI

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

PRGA computed results are presented in tabulated form side by side with premeasured mixing factors in order to facilitate comparison of the two. Entries in Table 6.1 refer to the ten-component simulated problem. Tables 6.2 through 6.5 contain results referring to two, three, four and five component source mixtures respectively. Discrepancies of premeasured and PRGA computed mixing factors are indicated in percents. Figures 6.1 through 6.8 are samples of pulse height distribution spectra of standard sources and of source mixtures plotted from data obtained by the Ge(Li) detector equipped data acquisition system described in Chapter V.

The excellent agreement between assigned and PRGA computed mixing factors in Table 6.1 indicate that the performance of the PRGA-code is essentially right. When applied to experimentally acquired data, which by the nature of the acquisition are affected by such factors as gainshift, counting statistics, spectral background, etc., the discrepancy of premeasured and PRGA computed results - understandably enough - increase substantially.

The PRGA computed results presented in Tables 6.2 through 6.5 are including corrections intended to compensate for errors related to background, deadtime, Compton scattering and

counting statistics.

Comparable published results quoted from three references are presented in Tables 6.6 through 6.8.

Based upon the results presented above, the following can be concluded:

- (a) The code developed can determine mixing factors of source mixtures, using gamma spectrum of the composite source as well as those of the standard sources as input.
- (b) The PRGA-code is operative on the IBM/360-40 and the DEC-10 computer both at the Computer Center of the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus.
- (c) PRGA's performance on a ten component simulated problem was found excellent.
- (d) PRGA computed mixing factors have been found in satisfactory agreement with premeasured values in a set of measurements performed on two, three, four and five component mixtures - especially prepared from reference source liquids for the purpose of this test.
- (e) As indicated by entry 3 in Table 6.3, PRGA gives a near-zero mixing factor for a standard absent from the composite spectrum.

TABLE 6.1

COMPARISON OF ASSIGNED AND PRGA-COMPUTED MIXING FACTORS
FOR TEN COMPONENT SIMULATED PROBLEM

	MIXI	NG FACTORS	
omponent	Assigned	PRGA Computed	Discrepancy (%)
Α	5.20	5.20	0.00
В	7.30	7.19	1.51
С	4.50	4.51	0.22
D	6.80	6.81	0.15
Е	10.60	10.61	0.09
F	13.80	13.81	0.07
G	11.40	11.40	0.00
Н	0.86	0.85	1.16
I	3.80	3.80	0.00
К	0.45	0.45	0.00

TABLE 6.2

COMPARISON OF PREMEASURED AND PRGA-COMPUTED MIXING FACTORS FOR TWO COMPONENT SOURCE MIXTURES

SAMPLE		MIXING F.	ACTORS	
NUMBER	COMPONENT	PRGA-COMP.	PREMEAS.	DISCREPANCY (%)
1	11 Na ²²	1.10	1.00	10.0
<u>+</u>	55Cs ¹³⁷	1.08	1.00	8.0
2	27 Co ⁵⁷	2.35	2.5	6.0
	11Na ²²	3.27	3.33	1.8
^	27 Co ⁵⁷	10.0	8.47	15.3
3	llNa ²²	7.0	5.90	15.7

TABLE 6.3

COMPARISON OF PREMEASURED AND PRGA-COMPUTED MIXING FACTORS FOR THREE COMPONENT SOURCE MIXTURES

SAMPLE		MIXIN	G FACTORS	
NUMBER	COMPONENT	PREMEAS.	PRGA-COMP.	DISCREPANCY %
	11Na ²²	2	1.86	7.0
1.	27 Co ⁵⁷	1	0.90	10.0
	25 Mn ⁵⁴	2	1.99	0.5
	11Na ²²	0.33	0.32	3.0
2	27 Co ⁵⁷	5.00	5.12	2.4
	27 Co ⁶⁰	0.15	0.17	13.3
	11 Na ²²	3.33	3.09	7.2
3	27 Co ⁵⁷	2.5	2.37	5.2
	27 Co ⁶⁰	0	0.07	_

TABLE 6.4

COMPARISON OF PREMEASURED AND PRGA-COMPUTED MIXING FACTORS FOR FOUR COMPONENT SOURCE MIXTURES

SAMPLE		MIXING	FACTORS	
NUMBER	COMPONENT	PREMEAS.	PRGA-COMP.	DISCREPANCY %
	11Na ²²	2	1.62	19.0
1 *	25Mn ⁵⁴	11	0.88	12.0
- L u	27Co ⁶⁰	2	1.95	2.5
	55Cs ¹³⁷	2	1.64	18.0
	11Na ²²	2	1.64	18.0
2 * *	25Mn ⁵⁴	1	0.92	8.0
2	27Co ⁶⁰	2	1.95	2.5
	55Cs ¹³⁷	2	1.61	19.5

^{*} Computed with $w_k = 1/T(K)$

^{**} Computed with $w_k = 1/SQRT(T(K))$

TABLE 6.5

COMPARISON OF PREMEASURED AND PRGA-COMPUTED MIXING FACTORS FOR FIVE COMPONENT SOURCE MIXTURES

CAMDIT		MIXING	FACTORS	
SAMPLE NUMBER	COMPONENT	PREMEAS.	PRGA-COMP.	DISCREPANCY %
	11Na ²²	1	0.92	8.00
1*	27Co ⁵⁷	11	0.76	24.00
	25Mn	1.6	1.45	9.37
	27Co ⁶⁰	1	1.03	3.00
	55Cs ¹³⁷	2	1.81	9.50
	11Na ²²	1	0.93	7.00
2 **	27Co ⁵⁷	1	0.79	21.00
2	25Mn ⁵⁴	1.6	1.47	8.10
	27Co ⁶⁰	1	1.03	3.00
	55Cs ¹³⁷	2	1.77	11.50
I	<u></u>			

^{*} Computed with $w_k = 1/T(K)$

^{**} Computed with $w_k = 1/SQRT(T(K))$

TABLE 6.6

RESULTS QUOTED FROM REFERENCE (25)
FOR TEN COMPONENT MIXTURE

	OHAN	TO T TOY	
	QUAN	TITY	DICODEDANO
COMPONENT	PREMEASURED	COMPUTED	DISCREPANCY %
11Na ²²	5.00 μgm	7.7 μgm	54.0
17C1 ³⁸	36.8 μgm	38.0 µgm	3.3
19K ⁴²	0.404 mgm	0.301 mgm	25.4
25Mn ⁵⁶	0.101 μgm	0.0904 _{µgm}	10.4
21Sc ⁴⁶	14.2 μgm	12.2 µgm	14.1
33As ⁷⁶	5.00 μgm	4.98 µgm	0.4
29Cu ⁶⁴	2.23 μgm	2.11 µgm	0.9
24Cr ⁵ 1	1.82 gm	1.56 µgm	.14.0
531 ¹²⁸	2.49 µgm	2.68 μgm	7.6
57La ¹⁴⁰	2.19 µgm	3.02 µgm	37.9

TABLE 6.7

RESULTS QUOTED FROM REFERENCE (8)
FOR THREE COMPONENT SOURCE MIXTURES

	MIXING	FACTORS	
COMPONENT	PREMEASURED	COMPUTED	DISCREPANCY %
58Ce ¹⁴⁴	1	1.03	2.91
55Cs ¹³⁷	5.2	5.31	2.07
27Co ⁶⁰	5	5.11	2.15

TABLE 6.8

RESULTS QUOTED FROM REFERENCE (6)
FOR FIVE COMPONENT MIXTURE

	MIXII	NG FACTORS	
COMPONENT	PREMEASURED	COMPUTED	DISCREPANCY %
1	1	0.990	1.00
2	1	1.009	0.89
3	1	1.008	0.79
4	1	1.015	1.50
5	1	1.010	0.99

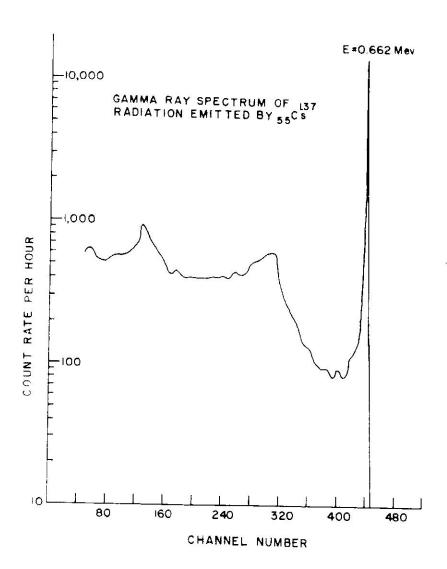


FIGURE 6.2

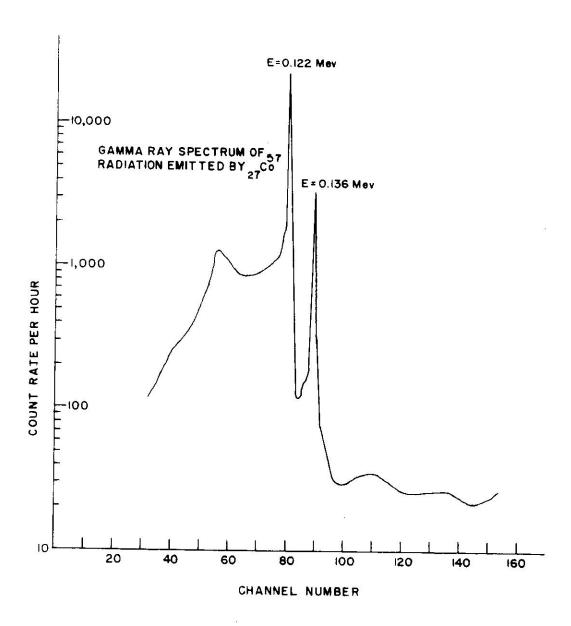


FIGURE 6.3

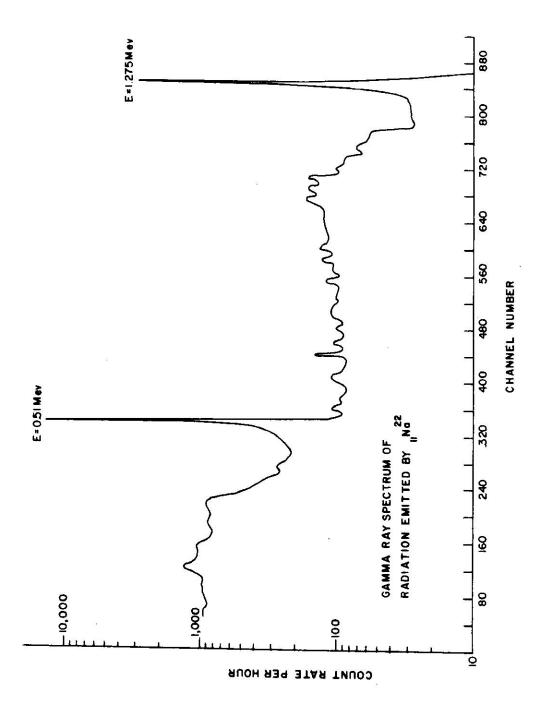


FIGURE 6.4

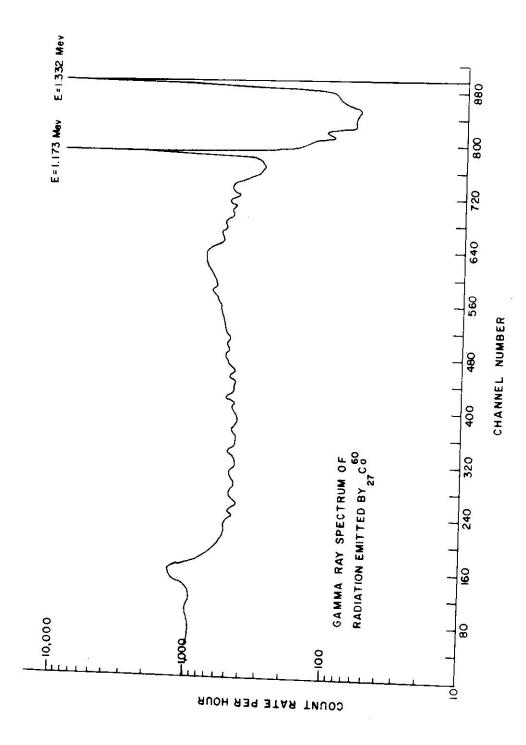


FIGURE 6.5

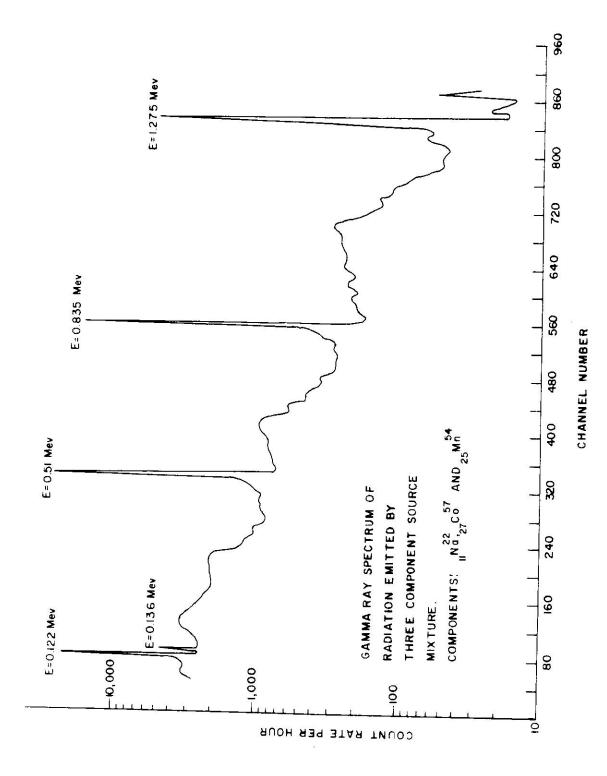


FIGURE 6.6

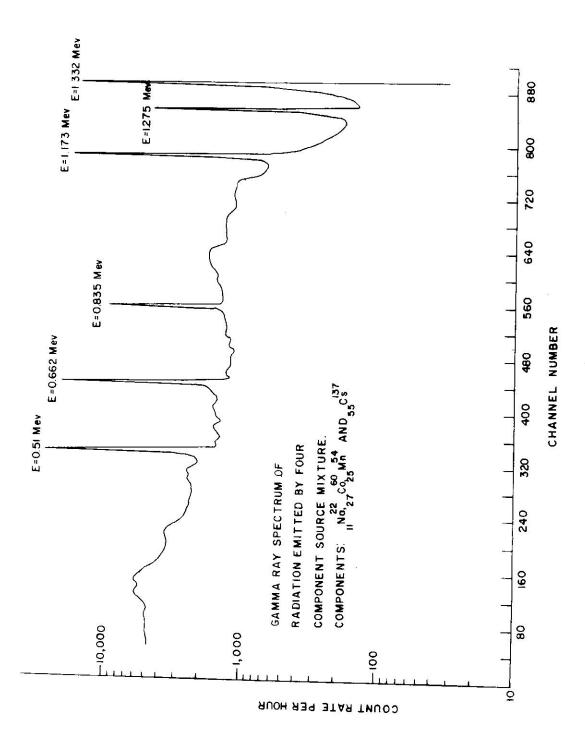


FIGURE 6.7

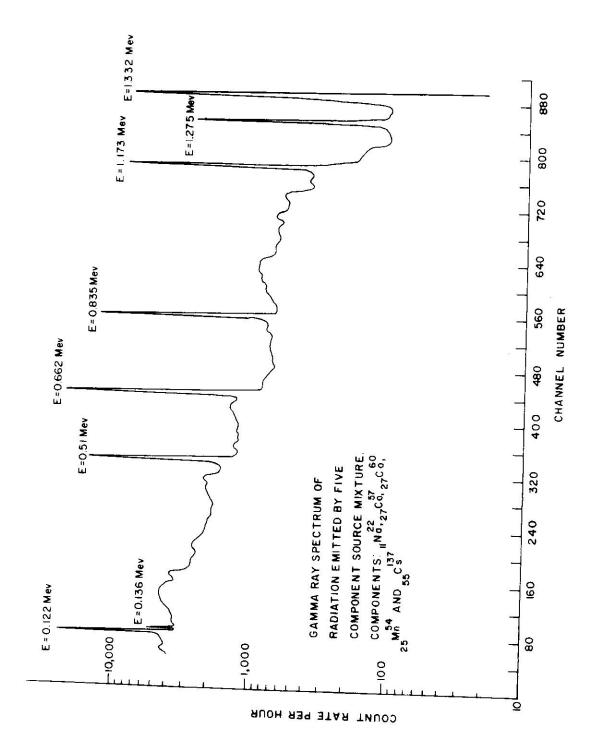


FIGURE 6.8

Future plans include both increasing the accuracy and extending of the scope of applicability of the PRGA-code.

The accuracy is hoped to be increased by

- a) Establishing a library tape on which the spectra of individual standards, obtained with very good counting statistics, will be recorded. Whenever data on an additional standard spectrum will become available, it will be entered into the library tape using an appropriate format.
- b) A baseline and gainshift routine will be added to the existing code. According to Parr and Lucas (31) even a gainshift of one channel may change results considerably.

The scope of applicablity of PRGA is tought to be extended beyond the present one by

- (a) Including a routine based on cross correlation techniques for locating peaks.
- (b) Including an option for locating peaks emitted by the same nuclide and assigning them the same intensity.
- (c) Applying nonlinear least square fit techniques i.e. to fit experimental points to the sum of a Gaussian and a linear function.

The ultimate objective in computer aided spectral decomposition as indicated by several authors (28, 30) is to have a set of activation analysis data fed to the computer and have the computer to determine the composition of the un-irradiated mixture with no further man-machine interference. Better even have the computer continually monitor the output of the spectrometer, computing and evaluating while the counting is in progress, controlling the counting time, so that the sample is counted just long enough to get the desired statistical accuracy and then request the system to change samples.

It is towards those very ambitious objectives that our future research efforts will be dedicated.

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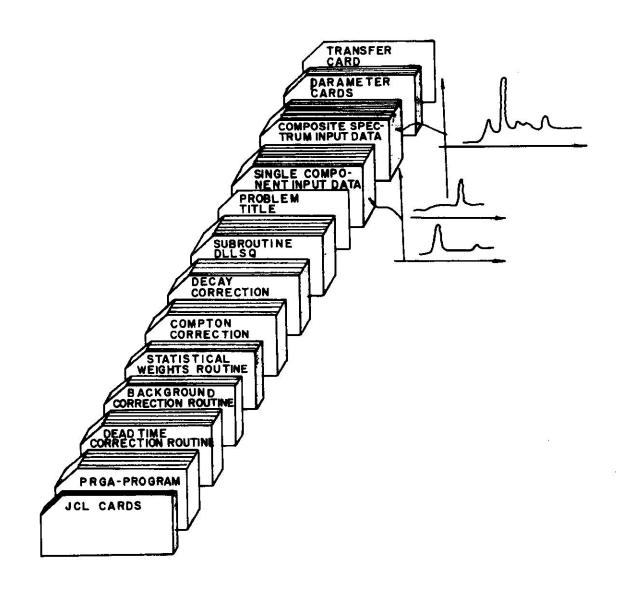
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APPENDIX

ARRANGEMENT OF INPUT CARD DECK FOR PRGA-CODE AND CODE LISTING



ARRANGEMENT OF INPUT CARD DECK FOR PRGA - CODE.

FIGURE A.1

PRGA-CODE LISTING

WRITE(3,90)MC,KKP

AD.F4

```
WRITE(3,700)EPS
             700 FORMAT ('1 EPSILON= 'E8.2)
                        CALL DLLSQ (A,B,M,NN,L,X,IPIV,EPS,IER,AUX)
                         WRITE (3,445)
445 FORMAT('1 MIXING FACTORES')
                         WRITE(3,444)(X(K),K=1, [])
            444 FORMAT(1HØ,5F12.2)
      C
                        DECAY CORRECTION
                        READ(2,303)(DLAM(J),J=1,II)
             303 FURMAT (5E12.2)
                        READ(2,304)(SIG(J),J=1,II)
            304 FORMAT (5E12.2)
                        READ(2,305) T1, T2, T3, F1
            305 FORMAT (3F8.2,E10.2)
                       DU 342 J=1,4
                        F=DLAM(J)+T1
                       G=BLAM(J)+T2
                                                                                          The second secon
                        H=DLAM(J)#T3
                       FF=EXP(-F)
                        GG=EXP(F-G)
                       HH=EXP(F-H)
                       DNUM=SIG(J)*F1*FA*(GG-HH)
                        CC(J)=X(J)*DLAM(J)/DNUM
            342 CONTINUE
                                                                    ero pres pri se manente
                        WRITE(3,777)
           777 FORMAT( 1 MIXING FACTORS WITH DECAY CORRECTIONS !////)
                        WHITE(3,778)(CC(J),J=1,II)
           778 FURMAT(1H0,5F12.2)
                       CALL EXIT
                       ENU ...
```

		V26(14) 29-JAN-73 11:02	71
	·	IF (K-N)14,19,19	
	14	PIV=0.00	
	c (#	ID=0	
		JST=K+1 KPIV=JST	
		00 18 J=JST,N	
•		IC=ID+M	
*	VI 25	H=0.DØ	
		DO 15 I = IST. IEND	
•	SUPERIOR CONTRACTOR	11=1+1D	,
	15	H=H+A(I)*A(II)	
		H=BETA*H	
	5 (800) 50 AV	DO 16 I=IST, IEND	
	900 9 4 3	11=1+10	
-	16	A(II)=A(II)-A(I)+H	
		II=IST+ID	
- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	(II)A*(II)A*(II)	
		AUX(J)=H IF(H-PIV)18,18,17	
	17	PIV=H	
	***	KPIV=J	•
55%	18	CONTINUE	
	19	DO 21 J=K,LM,M	
		H=Ø.DØ	
18		IEND=J+M-K	
		I [= [ST	
		DC 20 I=J, IEND	863
		H=H+A(II)*B(I)	
	20	[]= <u>[[+1</u>	
		H=BETA#H Il=1ST	
	90 0 NW A	00 21 I=J, IEND	
		B(I)=B(I)-A(II)*H	
	21	I = I I + 1	- <u></u>
		!ER=0	
		IEN	
		N=L*N	
		PIV=1.00/AUX(2*N)	
		00 22 K#N, LN, N	÷
		((K)=PIV*B(I)	,
·		= [+M	
	23	F(N-1)26,26,23	
		JST=(N-1)*M+N DO 25 J=2,N	
•		ST=JST=M-1	
		(=N+N+1-J	
		IV=1.DØ/AUX(K)	
		ST=K-N	
		D=IPIV(KST)-KST	■ state
•		S1=2-J	
		0 25 K=1,L	
		=B(KST)	
		ST=IST+N	4

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Identification of Samples: