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New Physics in Higgs Couplings

MWPF 2025

A. I. Hernández-Juárez
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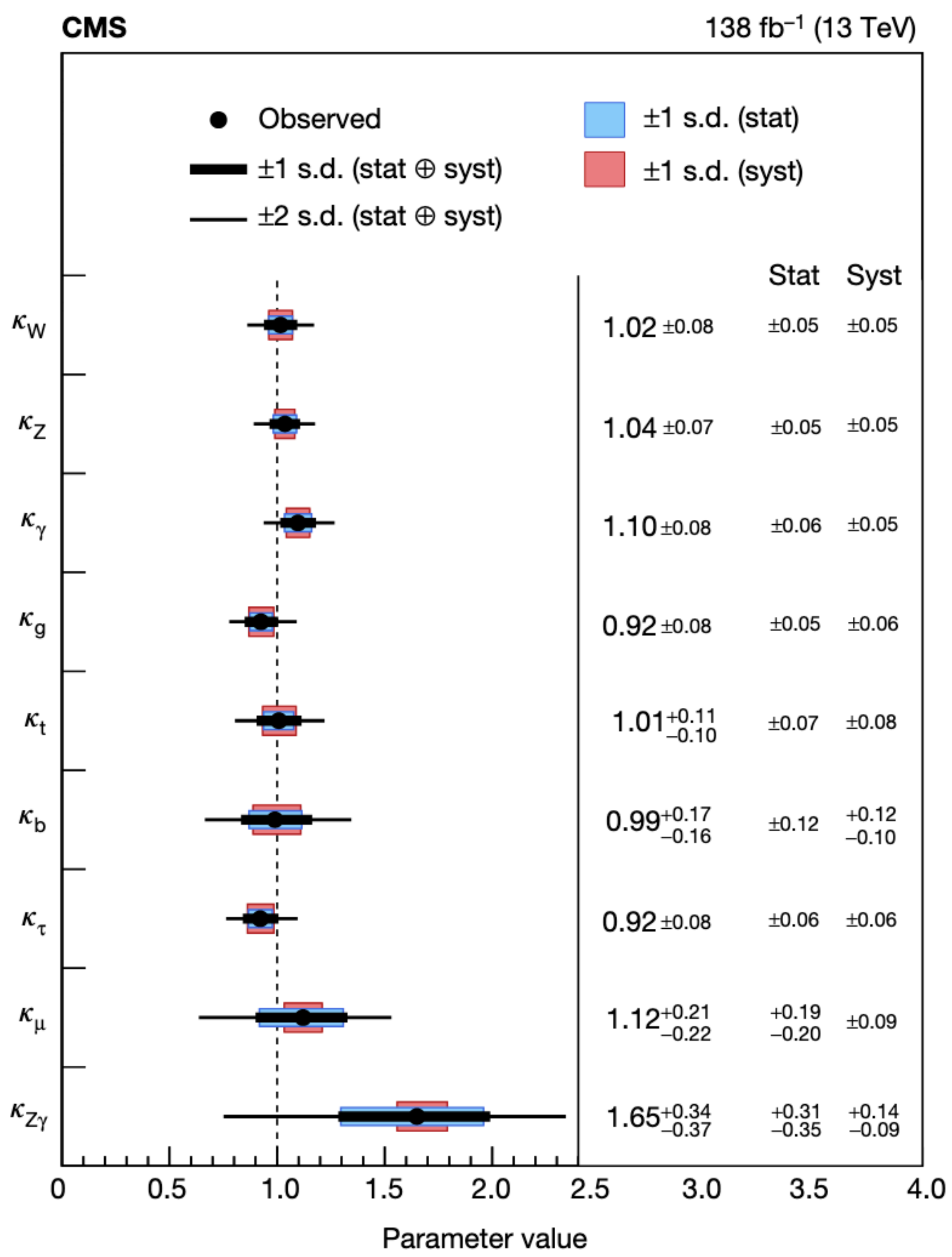
October 22, 2025

Motivation



- The measurement of the Higgs boson in 2012 is considered one of the most significant achievements in particle physics.
- Subsequent measurements have consistently corroborated the Higgs couplings as predicted by the SM.
- Nevertheless, ongoing studies at the LHC are still probing the Higgs properties…

The CMS Collaboration. A portrait of the Higgs boson by the CMS experiment ten years after the discovery. Nature 607, 60–68 (2022). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-04892-x.

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS **132,** 021803 (2024)

Editors' Suggestion | Featured in Physics

Evidence for the Higgs Boson Decay to a *Z* Boson and a Photon at the LHC

G. Aad *et al.*[*]
(ATLAS and CMS Collaborations)

(Received 8 September 2023; accepted 27 November 2023; published 11 January 2024)

The first evidence for the Higgs boson decay to a *Z* boson and a photon is presented, with a statistical significance of 3.4 standard deviations. The result is derived from a combined analysis of the searches performed by the ATLAS and CMS Collaborations with proton-proton collision datasets collected at the CERN Large Hadron Collider (LHC) from 2015 to 2018. These correspond to integrated luminosities of around 140 fb^{-1} for each experiment, at a center-of-mass energy of 13 TeV. The measured signal yield is 2.2 ± 0.7 times the standard model prediction, and agrees with the theoretical expectation within 1.9 standard deviations.

DOI: 10.1103/PhysRevLett.132.021803

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

The signal strength is defined as

$$\mu_i^{Z\gamma} = \frac{\sigma_i \mathscr{B}^{Z\gamma}}{(\sigma_i)_{\text{SM}}(\mathscr{B}^{Z\gamma})_{\text{SM}}} = 2.2 \pm 0.7,$$

- σ_i is the cross-section of the Higgs production
- $\mathscr{B}^{Z\gamma}$ is the branching ratio of the $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

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Experimentally measured

SM prediction

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Possibilities of new physics!

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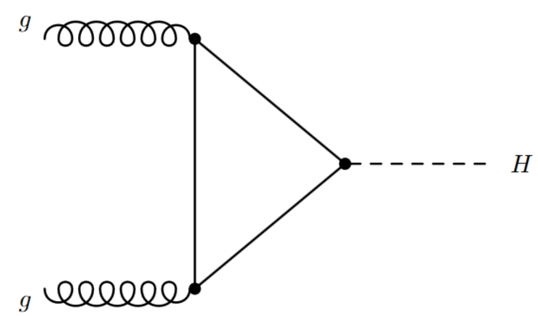
s!

Where is the new physics?

- $\mathscr{B}^{Z\gamma}$ is the branching ratio of the $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

The Higgs production is well measured and agrees with the SM prediction through a top quark loop in gluon fusion.



$$\sigma_i = (\sigma_i)_{\text{SM}}$$

Therefore, the new physics can only arise from the $H \to Z\gamma$ decay:

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A lot of models trying to explain this excess (THDM, MSSM, left-right models, new particles,…)

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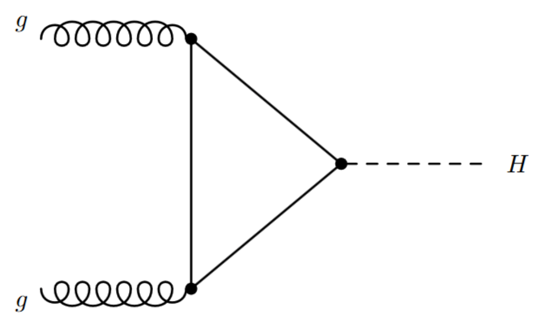

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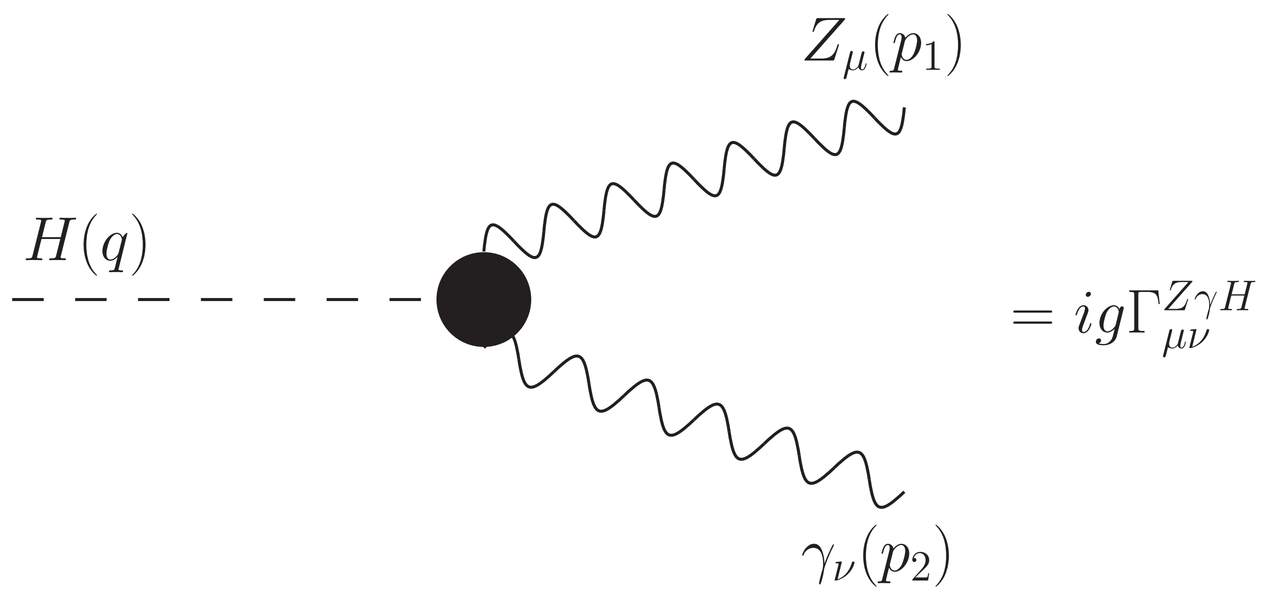
CP violation can also explain this excess!

A lot of models trying to explain this excess (THDM, MSSM, left-right models, new particles,…)

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay can be parametrized by the vertex function $\Gamma^{\mu\nu}_{Z\gamma H}$.



The general form of the vertex function $\Gamma^{\mu\nu}_{Z\gamma H}$ is given as follows

$$\Gamma^{\mu\nu}_{Z\gamma H} = h_1^{Z\gamma}\left(g^{\mu\nu} + \frac{2}{m_Z^2 - h_H^2} p_1^\nu p_2^\mu\right) + h_3^{Z\gamma} \epsilon^{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} p_{1\alpha} p_{2\beta},$$

$h_1^{Z\gamma}$ is complex

$\sim 10^{-1}$ in the SM

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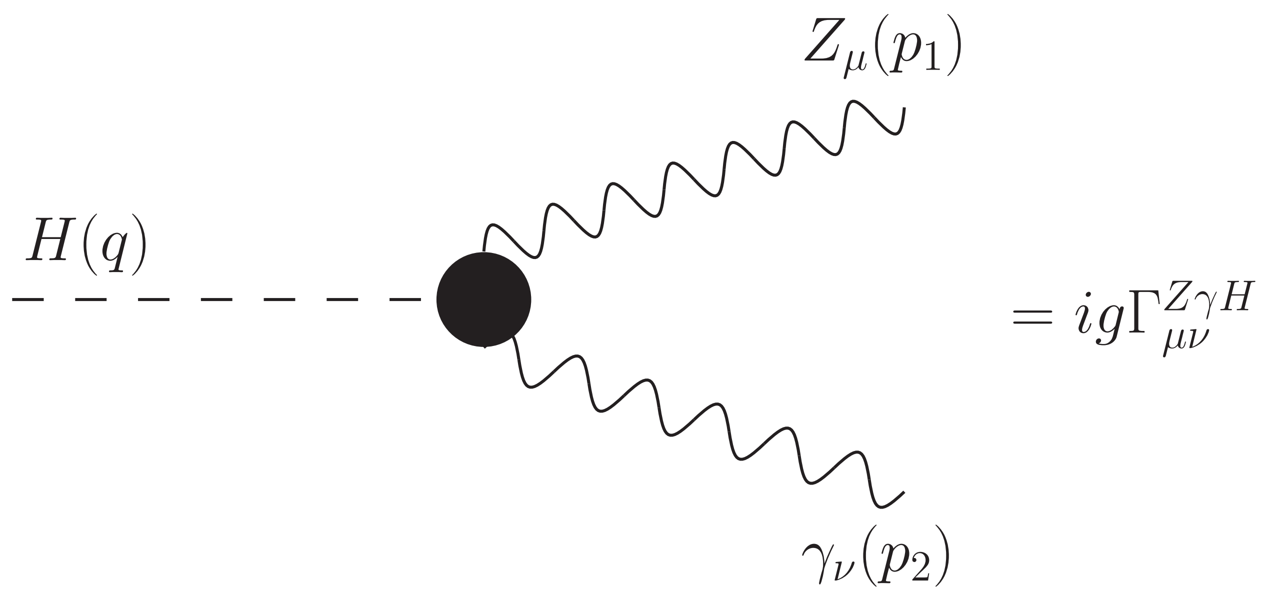

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$h_1^{Z\gamma}$ is complex
$\sim 10^{-1}$ in the SM

CP-violating and zero in the SM

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

$$\Gamma(H \to Z\gamma) = g^2 \frac{m_H^2 - m_Z^2}{32\ \pi m_H^3 m_Z^4}\left(4\,|\,h_1^{Z\gamma}|^2 m_Z^4 + |\,h_3^{Z\gamma}|^2 \left(m_H^2 - m_Z^2\right)^2\right)$$

$$= \Gamma^{\textbf{SM}}(H \to Z\gamma) + \delta\Gamma(H \to Z\gamma),$$

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$h_1^{Z\gamma}$ is complex
$\sim 10^{-1}$ in the SM

CP-violating and zero in the SM

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

The signal strength $\mu^{Z\gamma}$ can be expressed as follows

$$\mu^{Z\gamma} \simeq \frac{\mathscr{B}^{\textbf{SM}}(H \to Z\gamma) + \delta\Gamma(H \to Z\gamma)/\Gamma_H}{\mathscr{B}^{\textbf{SM}}(H \to Z\gamma)},$$

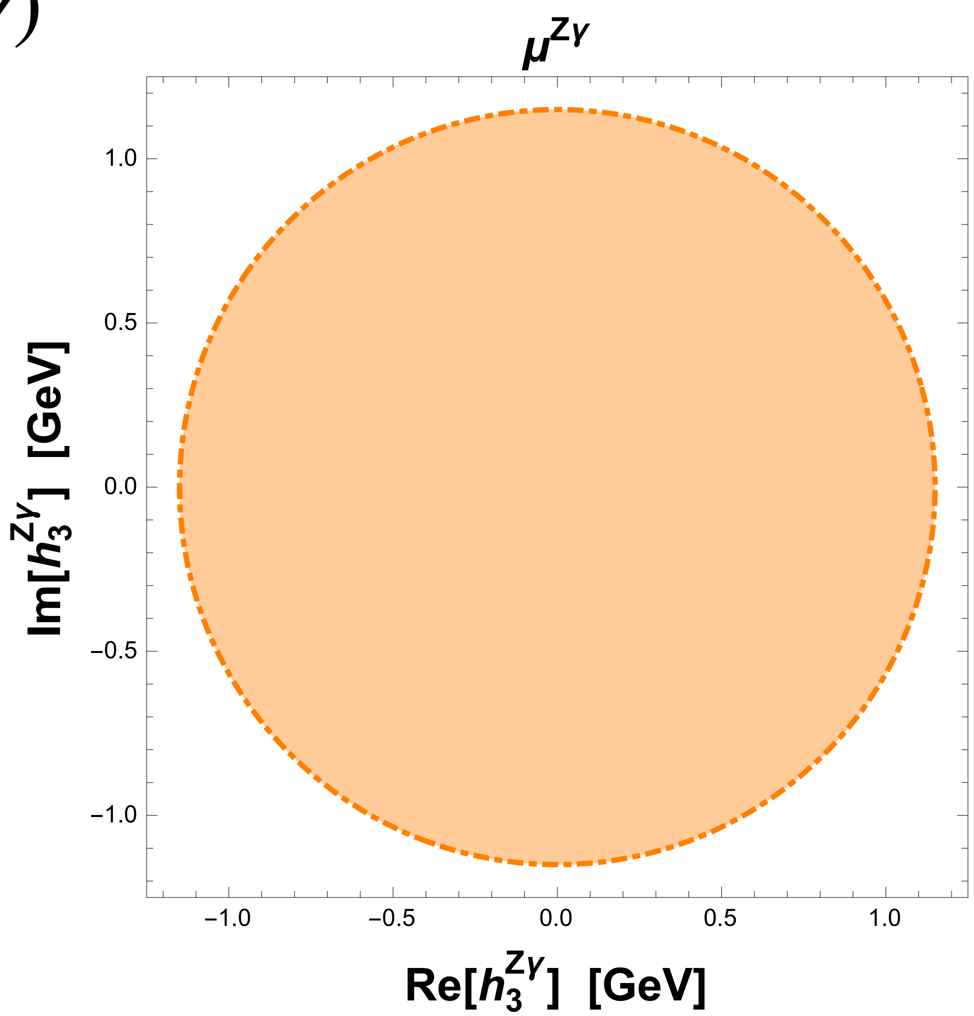
Where

$$\delta\Gamma(H \to Z\gamma) = g^2 \frac{\left(m_H^2 - m_Z^2\right)^3}{32\ \pi m_H^3 m_Z^4} |h_3^{Z\gamma}|^2 .$$

A. I. Hernández-Juárez, R. Gaitán and R. Martinez, H → Zγ decay and CP violation, Phys. Rev. D 111, 015001 (2025), arXiv:2405.03094 [hep-ph].

$\left|\mathrm{Re}\left[h_3^{Z\gamma}\right]\right|, \left|\mathrm{Im}\left[h_3^{Z\gamma}\right]\right| \lesssim 1.15$ **GeV** **at 95 % CL.**

First direct limit on $h_3^{Z\gamma}$ from experimental data



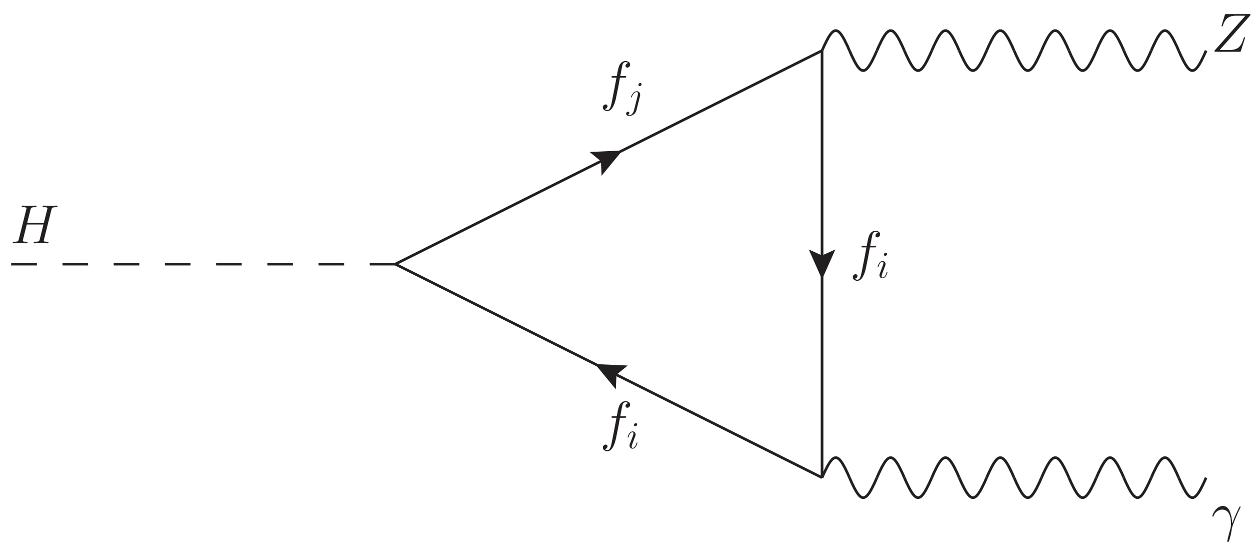
The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

Effective Lagrangian that induces FCNC of the Higgs and Z boson:

$$\mathscr{L} = \frac{g}{c_W} \bar{f}_i \left(g_V^{ij} - g_A^{ij} \gamma^5 \right) f_j Z^\mu + \frac{g}{2m_W} \bar{f}_i \left(g_S^{ij} + g_P^{ij} \gamma^5 \right) f_j H,$$

g_V^{ij}, g_A^{ij}, g_S^{ij} and g_P^{ij} complex constants

A possible new physics contribution:



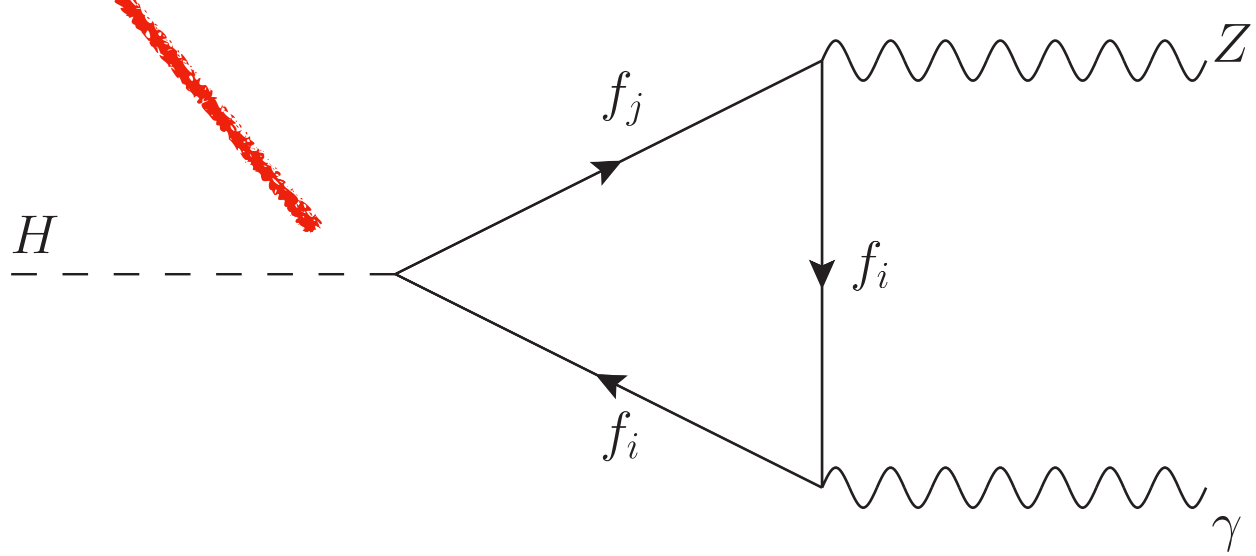
It does not contribute to the $H \to \gamma\gamma$ decay

The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

$$h_3^{Z\gamma} = \frac{g\ \mathcal{Q}\ e\ m_Z^2\ N_c}{4\pi^2 c_W m_W}\Bigg\{ m_j \mathbf{C}_0\left(0, m_H^2, m_Z^2, m_j^2, m_j^2, m_i^2\right)\Big[-\mathrm{Im}\Big\{ g_A^{ij}\left(g_S^{ij}\right)^* \Big\} + \mathrm{Im}\Big\{ g_V^{ij}\left(g_P^{ij}\right)^* \Big\}\Big]$$
$$+ m_i \mathbf{C}_0\left(0, m_H^2, m_Z^2, m_i^2, m_i^2, m_j^2\right)\Big[\mathrm{Im}\Big\{ g_A^{ij}\left(g_S^{ij}\right)^* \Big\} + \mathrm{Im}\Big\{ g_V^{ij}\left(g_P^{ij}\right)^* \Big\}\Big]\Bigg\}$$

Calculated for the first time also

A possible new physics contribution:



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The $H \to Z\gamma$ decay

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Limits on top quark FCNC couplings:

$|g_{V,A}^{tc}| < 0.0095, \quad |g_{S,P}^{tc}| \lesssim 0.25$ **GeV**

- We estimate that for FCNC of the top quark $h_3^{Z\gamma} \approx 10^{-5}$ GeV, too small to explain the $\mu^{Z\gamma}$ excess.

- Contributions from new quarks are also possible and close to the bounds on $h_3^{Z\gamma}$.

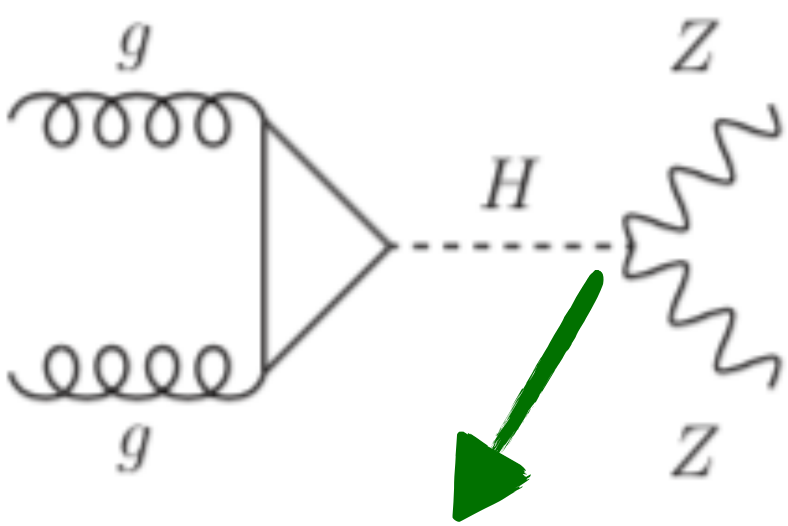
The HZZ vertex

nature physics
ARTICLES
https://doi.org/10.1038/s41567-022-01682-0
Check for updates

OPEN

Measurement of the Higgs boson width and evidence of its off-shell contributions to ZZ production

The CMS Collaboration*✉



$$m_H < 2m_Z$$

→ **The Higgs boson must to be off-shell to produce two on-shell Z bosons**

ATLAS EXPERIMENT
Submitted to: Phys. Lett. B.
CERN
CERN-EP-2023-03
5th April 2023

Evidence of off-shell Higgs boson production from ZZ leptonic decay channels and constraints on its total width with the ATLAS detector

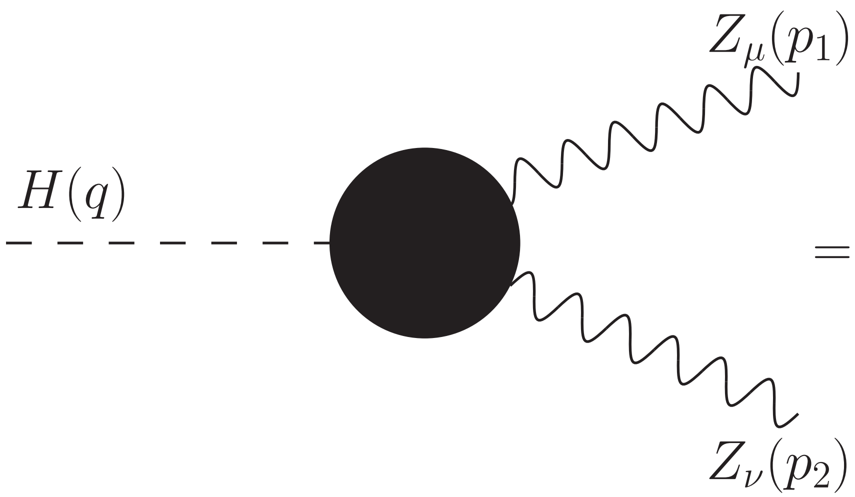
The ATLAS Collaboration

$$\Gamma_H = 3.2^{+2.4}_{-1.7}\ \textbf{MeV}$$

The $H \to ZZ^*$ well measured at the LHC

The HZZ vertex

Anomalous couplings for the ZZH vertex can be induced



$$= i\frac{g}{c_W} m_Z \Gamma^{ZZH}_{\mu\nu}(p_1^2, p_2^2, q^2)$$

h_i^V in terms of the anomalous couplings

$$\Gamma^{ZZH}_{\mu\nu} = h_1^V g_{\mu\nu} + \frac{h_2^V}{m_Z^2} p_{1\nu} p_{2\mu} + \frac{h_3^V}{m_Z^2} \epsilon_{\mu\nu\alpha\beta} p_1^\alpha p_2^\beta,$$

HZZ vertex function

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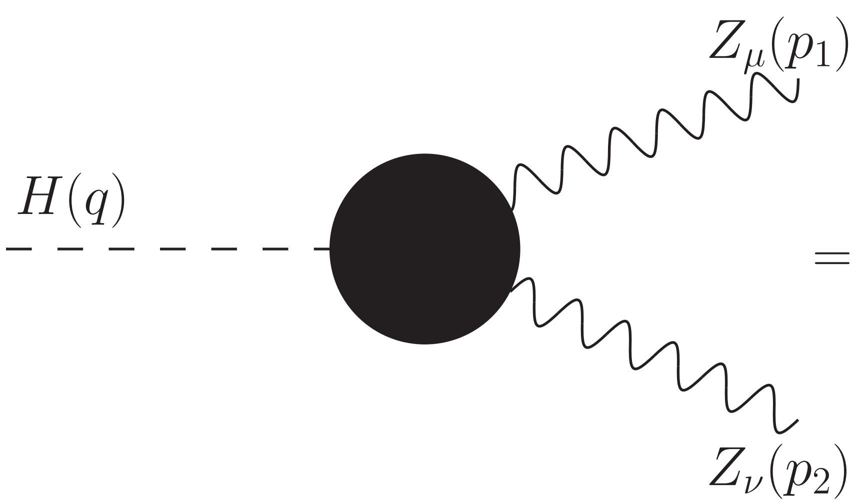

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CP-conserving

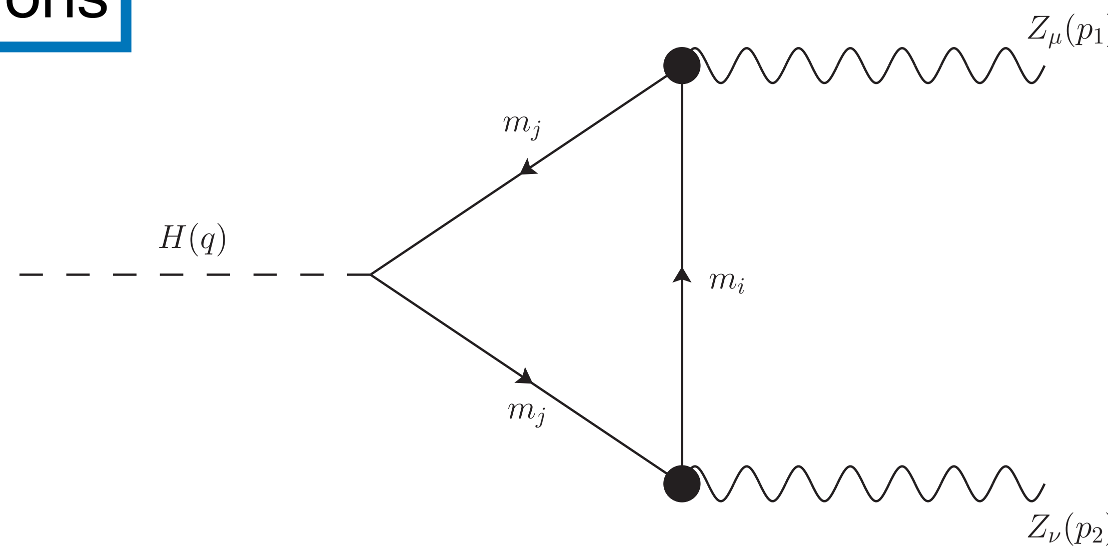
CP-violating → Possibilities of new physics!

HZZ vertex function

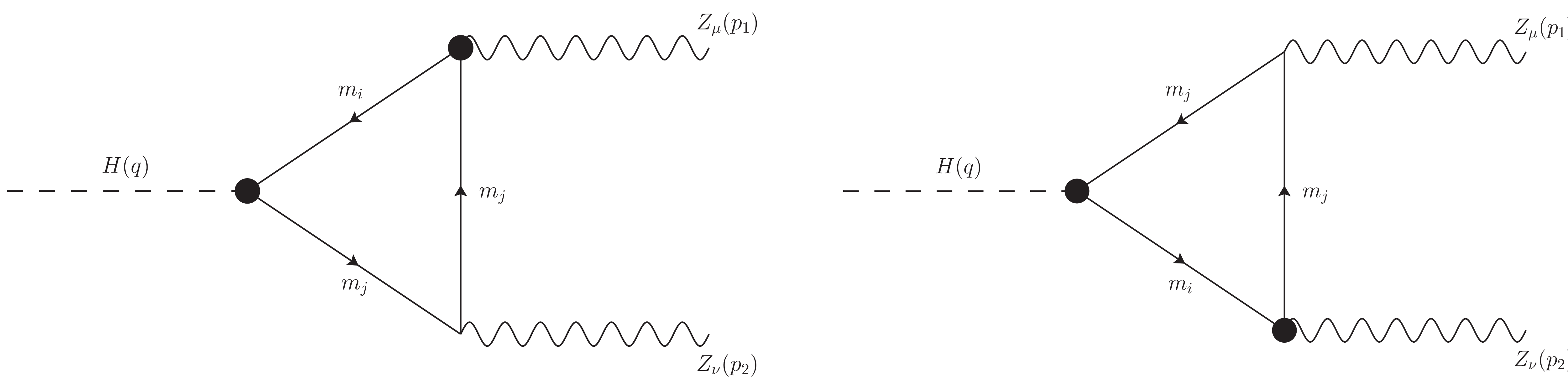
Again FCNC of Z and H bosons: $$\mathscr{L} = \frac{g}{c_W}\bar{f}_i\left(g_V^{ij} - g_A^{ij}\gamma^5\right)f_j Z^\mu + \frac{g}{2m_W}\bar{f}_i\left(g_S^{ij} + g_P^{ij}\gamma^5\right)f_j H,$$

Two different contributions

Type I:



Type II:



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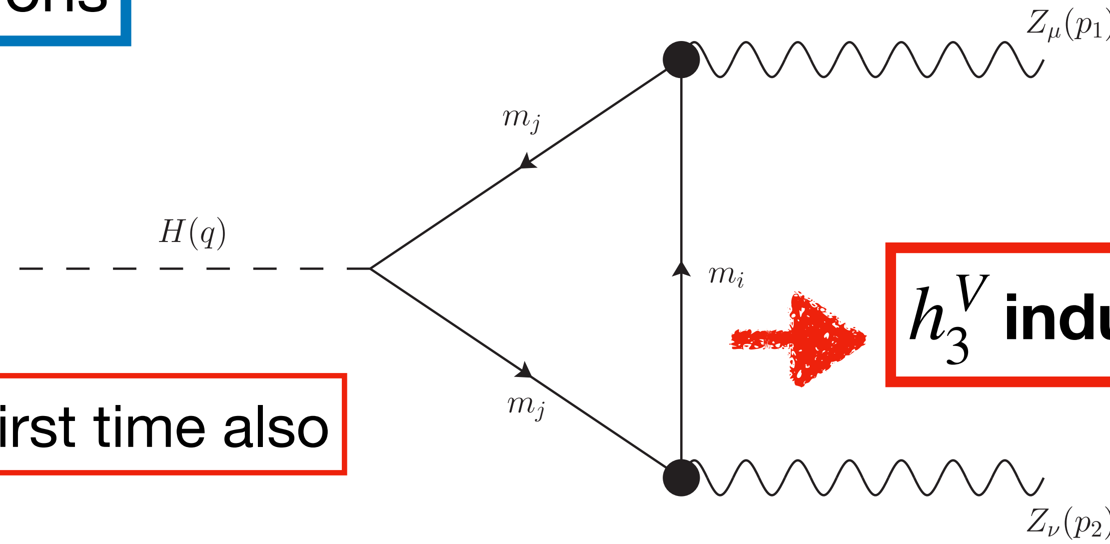
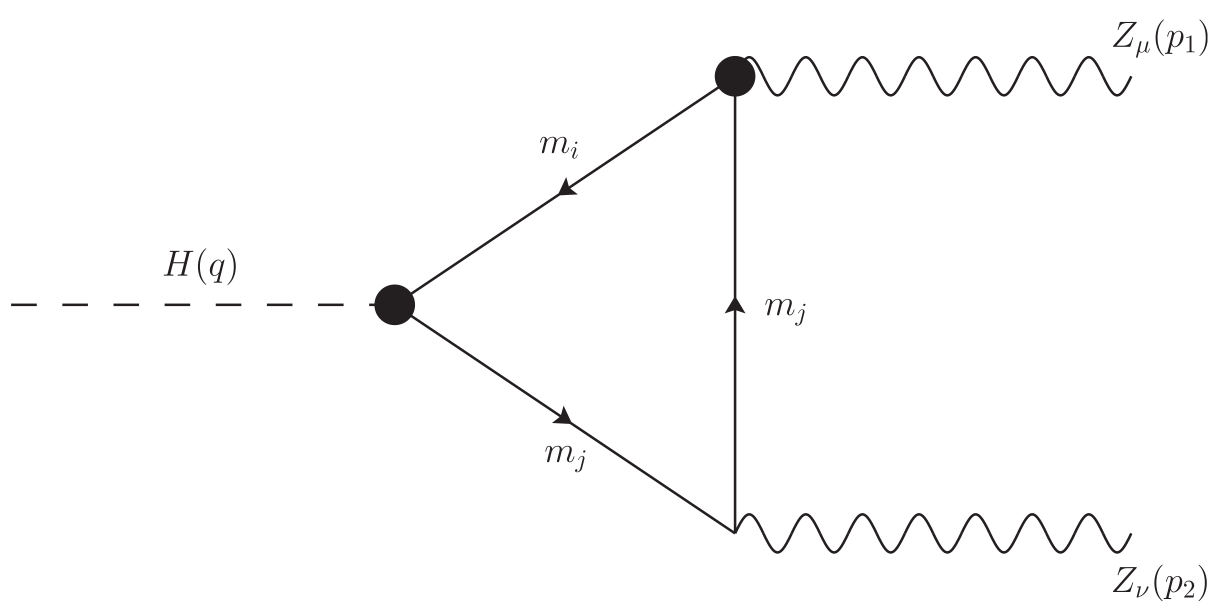
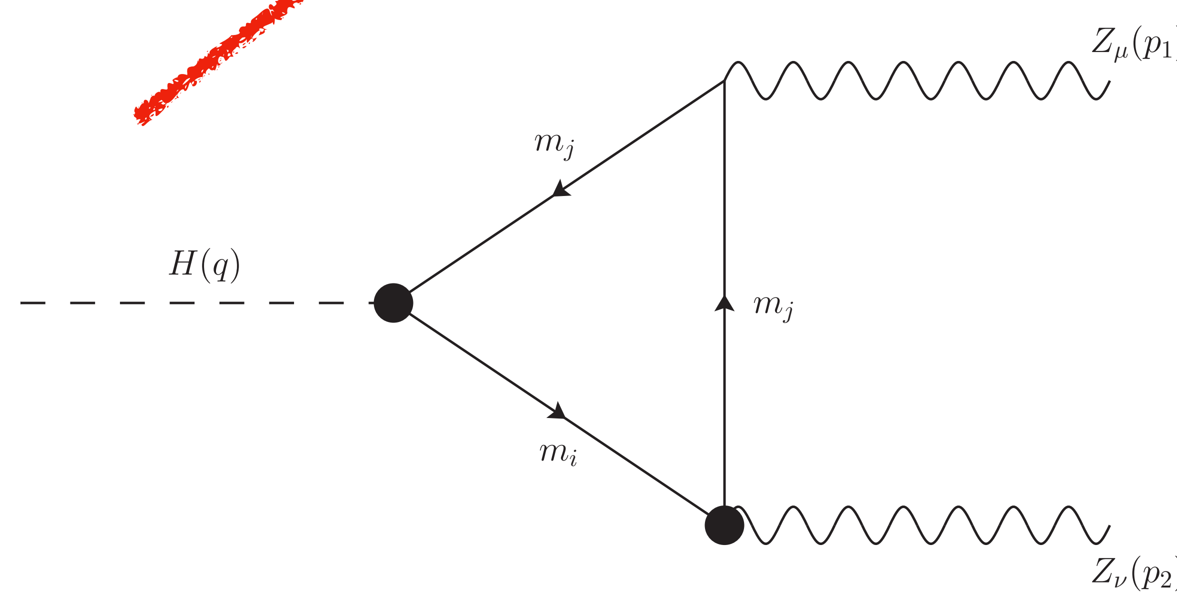


h_3^V **induced at the one-loop level**

Calculated for the first time also

Type II:





HZZ vertex function

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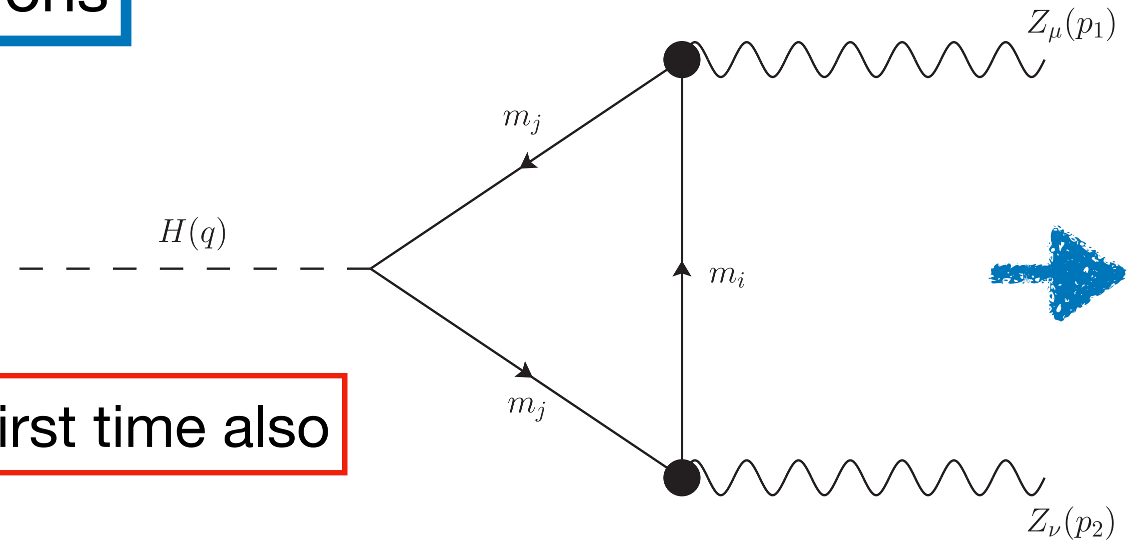
Two different contributions

Type I:

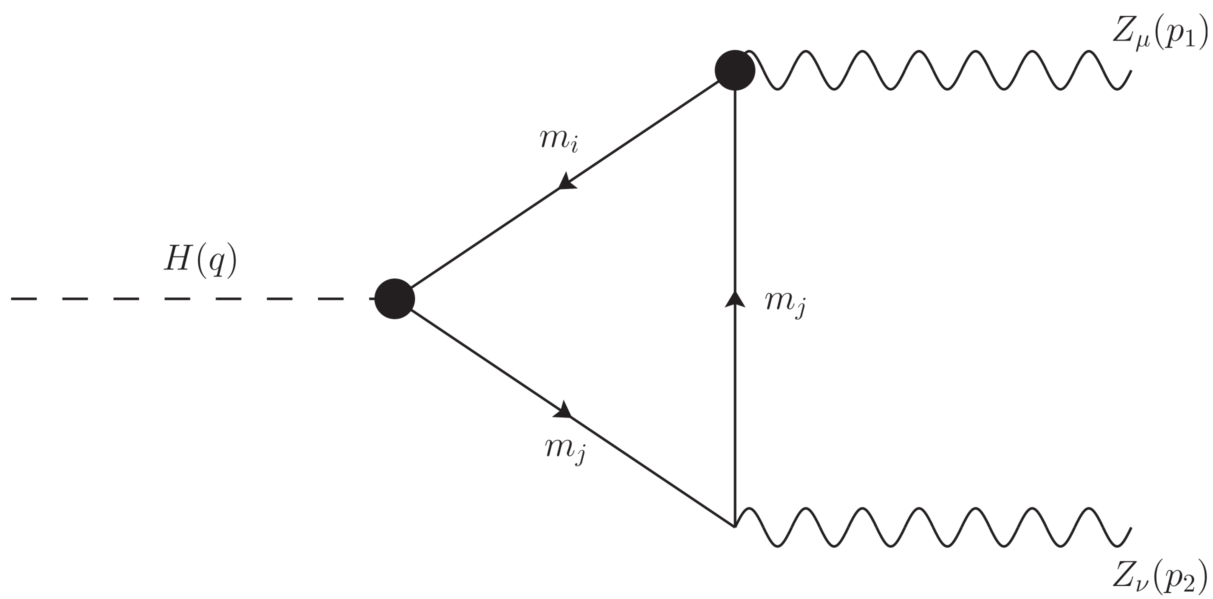


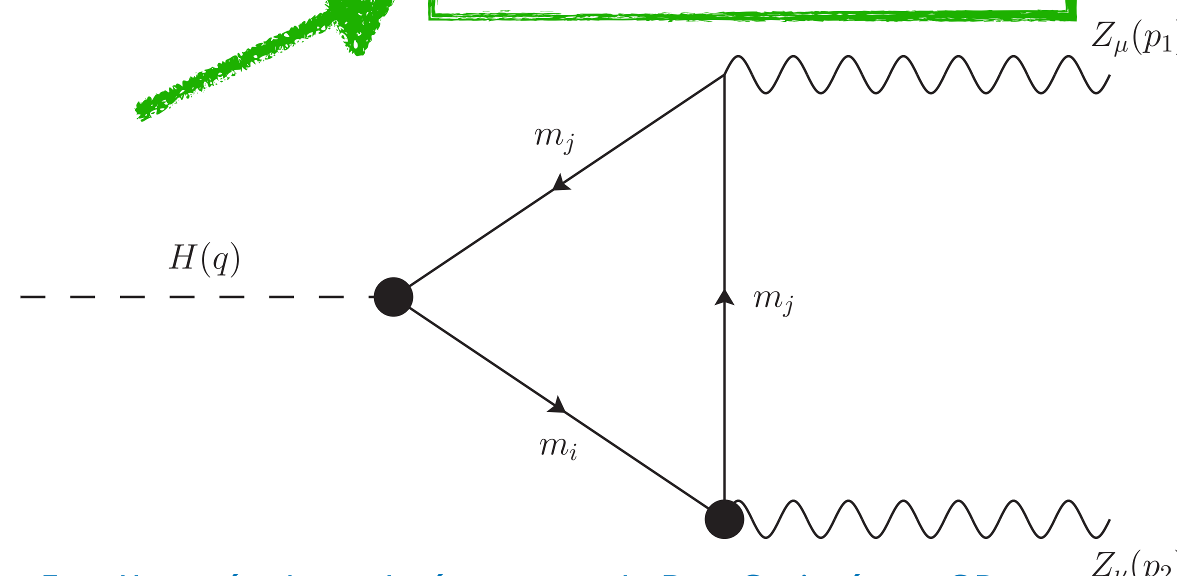
Our estimation:
$h_3^V \sim 10^{-8}$

Calculated for the first time also

Our estimation:
$h_3^V \sim 10^{-7}$

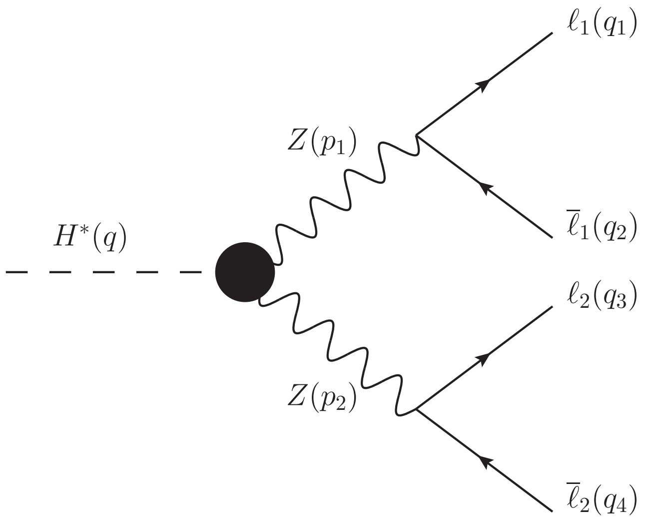
Type II:





A. I. Hernández-Juárez and R. Gaitán, CP violation in the HZZ vertex and left-right asymmetries, Phys. Rev. D 112 (2025) 033006.

HZZ vertex function



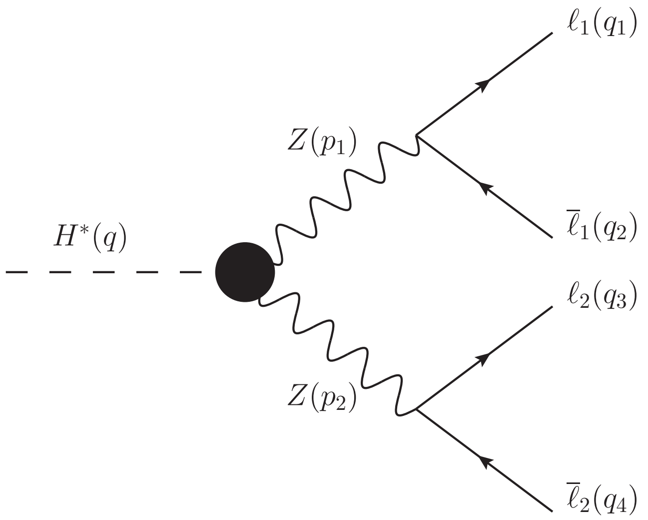
- Small effects of h_3^H in the process $gg \to H^* \to ZZ \to 4l$

Polarized process: $gg \to H^* \to Z_\lambda Z_\lambda \to 4l$ $\quad \lambda = R, L$ and 0

- Left-Right asymmetry:

$$\mathscr{A}_{LR}^H = \frac{\Gamma_{H^* \to Z_L Z_L} - \Gamma_{H^* \to Z_R Z_R}}{\Gamma_{H^* \to Z_L Z_L} + \Gamma_{H^* \to Z_R Z_R}}$$

HZZ vertex function



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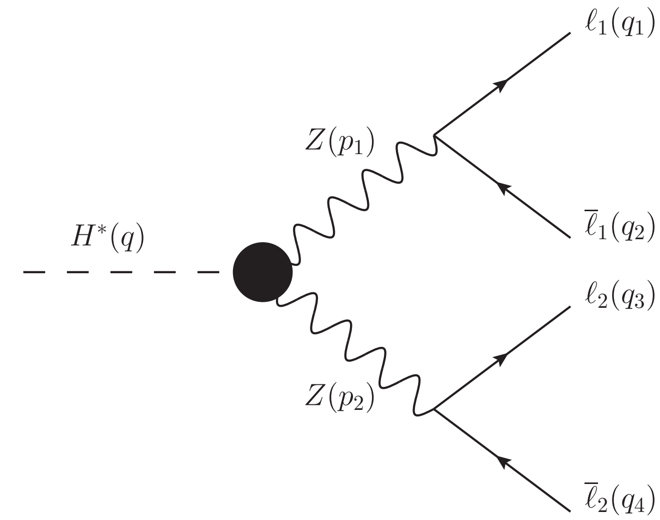
- Left-Right asymmetry:

$$\mathscr{A}_{LR}^H \sim \mathrm{Re}\left[h_1^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_3^H\right] - \mathrm{Re}\left[h_3^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_1^H\right]$$

HZZ vertex function



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Polarized process: $gg \to H^* \to Z_\lambda Z_\lambda \to 4l \qquad \lambda = R, L$ and 0

- Left-Right asymmetry:

CP-violation

$$\mathscr{A}_{LR}^H \sim \mathrm{Re}\left[h_1^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_3^H\right] - \mathrm{Re}\left[h_3^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_1^H\right]$$

h_1^H complex in the SM

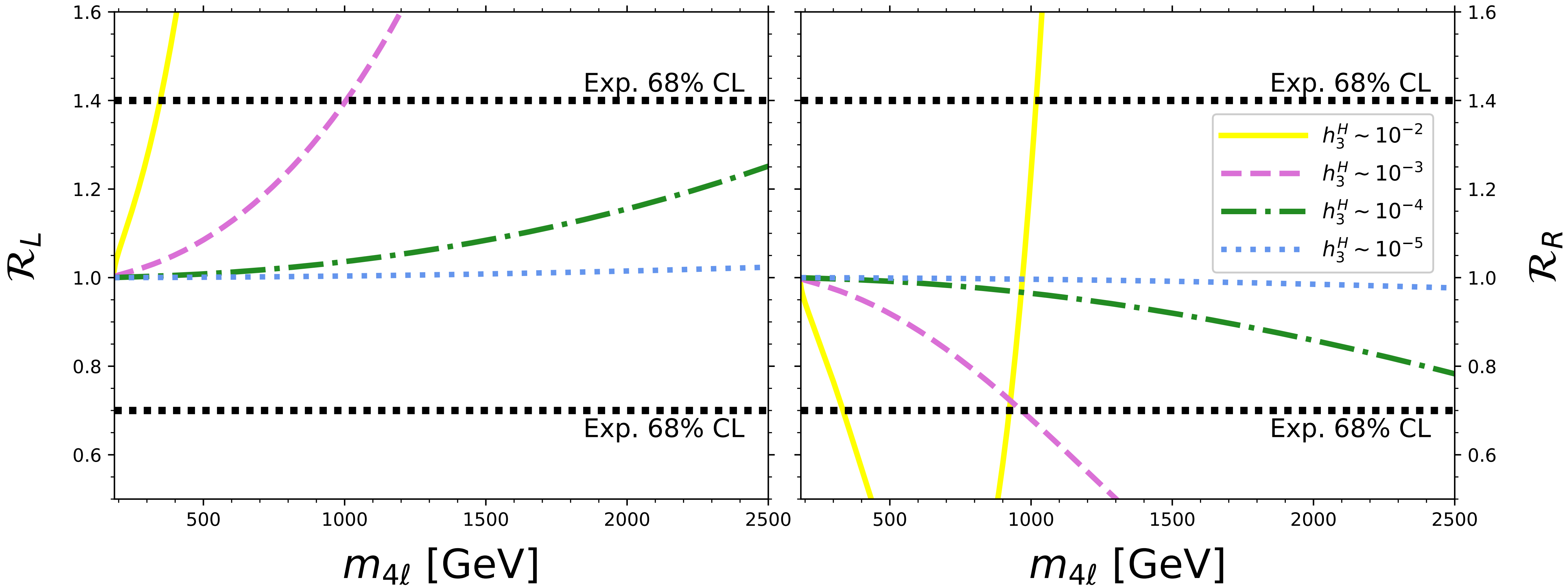
Imaginary parts

The observation of the $\mathscr{A}_{LR}^H$ asymmetry would imply a new source of CP violation

HZZ vertex function

Is it possible to measure this asymmetry?

A. I. Hernández-Juárez and R. Gaitán, CP violation in the HZZ vertex and left-right asymmetries, Phys. Rev. D 112 (2025) 033006.



We estimate that to observe effects of CP-violating contributions of order 10^{-5}, the sensitivity on $\mathscr{R}_{L.R}$ would need to be increased by at least two orders of magnitude.

Summary

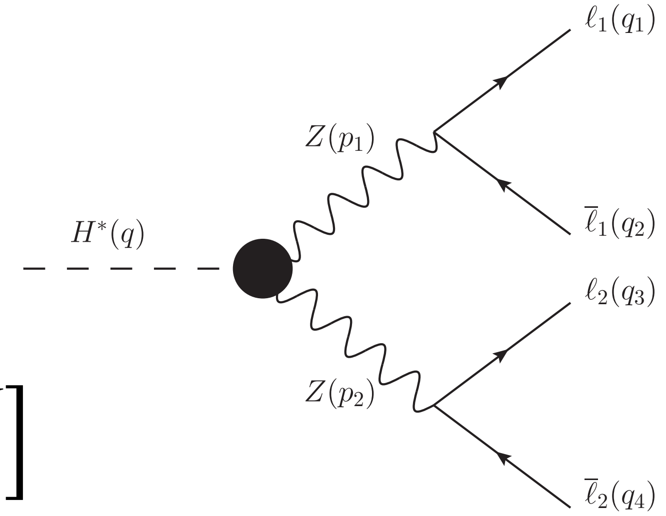
- Effects of new physics are still possible in Higgs couplings.

- CP-violation can explain the reported excess in the $H \to Z\gamma$ decay.

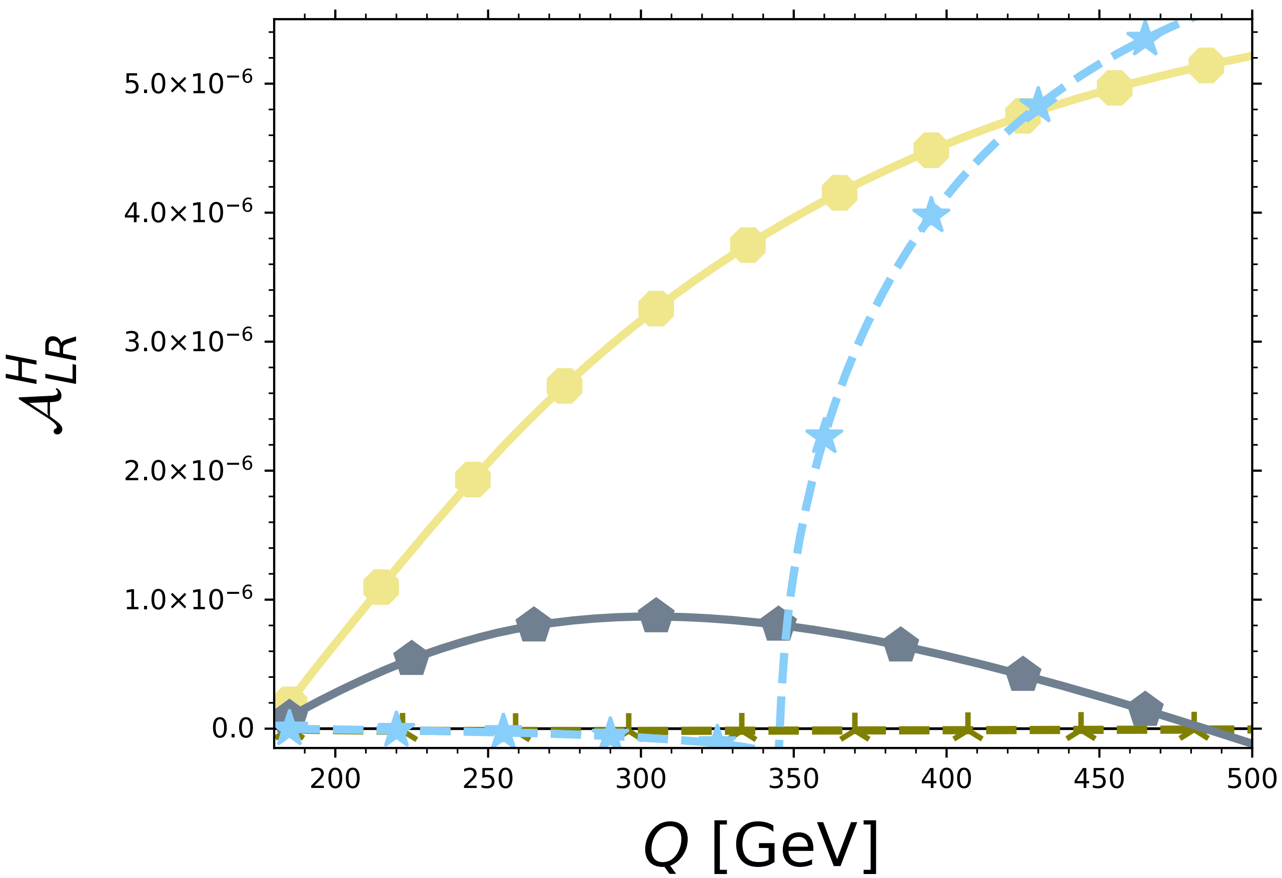
- New sources of CP-violation in the HZZ vertex.

¡Gracias!

HZZ vertex function



$$\mathscr{A}^H_{LR} \sim \mathrm{Re}\left[h_1^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_3^H\right] - \mathrm{Re}\left[h_3^H\right]\mathrm{Im}\left[h_1^H\right]$$



The observation of the $\mathscr{A}^H_{LR}$ asymmetry would imply a new source of CP violation