

Broadband Cross-Polarization to Half-Integer Quadrupolar Nuclei: Wideline Static NMR Spectroscopy

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ABSTRACT: Cross-polarization (CP) is a technique commonly used for the signal enhancement of NMR spectra; however, applications to quadrupolar nuclei have heretofore been limited due to a number of problems, including poor spin-locking efficiency, inconvenient relaxation times, and reduced CP efficiencies over broad spectral bandwidths—this is unfortunate, since they constitute 73% of NMR-active nuclei in the periodic table. The Broadband Adiabatic Inversion CP (BRAIN-CP) pulse sequence has proven useful for the signal enhancement of wideline and ultra-wideline (i.e., 250 kHz to several MHz in breadth) powder patterns arising from stationary samples; however, a comprehensive investigation of its application to half-integer quadrupolar nuclei (HIQN) is currently lacking. Herein, we present



theoretical and experimental considerations for applying BRAIN-CP to acquire central-transition (CT, $+1/2 \leftrightarrow -1/2$) powder patterns of HIQN. Consideration is given to parameters crucial to the success of the experiment, such as the Hartmann–Hahn (HH) matching conditions and the phase modulation of the contact pulse. Modifications to the BRAIN-CP sequence such as flipback (FB) pulses and ramped contact pulses applied to the ¹H spins are used for the reduction of experimental times and increased CP bandwidth capabilities, respectively. Spectra for a series of quadrupolar nuclei with broad CT powder patterns, including ³⁵Cl (*S* = 3/2), ⁵⁵Mn (*S* = 5/2), ⁵⁹Co (*S* = 7/2), and ⁹³Nb (*S* = 9/2), are acquired via direct excitation (CPMG and WCPMG) and indirect excitation (CP/CPMG and BRAIN-CP) methods. We demonstrate that proper implementation of the sequence can enable ¹H-S broadband CP over a bandwidth of 1 MHz, which to the best of our knowledge is the largest CP bandwidth reported to date. Finally, we establish the basic principles necessary for simplified optimization and execution of the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence for a wide range of HIQNs.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since its introduction over 50 years ago, cross-polarization $(CP)^{1-3}$ has become arguably the most important technique in solid-state NMR (SSNMR) spectroscopy. This is largely due to the substantial signal enhancements and experimental time reductions it affords via the transfer of nuclear spin polarization from abundant to dilute spins, as well as its use in investigating and exploiting the spatial proximity of dipolar-coupled nuclei.⁴⁻⁹ As such, the CP pulse sequence motif is a standard building block in numerous pulse sequences that are applied for the study of a wide range of solid materials. The majority of publications featuring CP overwhelmingly report its use in tandem with magic-angle spinning (MAS),¹⁰ and they largely focus on CP between spin-1/2 nuclei (${}^{1}H \rightarrow {}^{13}C$ and ${}^{1}H \rightarrow$ ¹⁵N CP/MAS NMR experiments are by far the most widely reported).¹¹⁻¹³ CP involving integer and half-integer spin quadrupolar nuclei (HIQN) has been explored to a much lesser degree.^{14–19} This is in part due to nonoptimal relaxation times (e.g., T_{1o} , the rotating frame longitudinal relaxation time, and/or T_{IS} , the cross-relaxation time),^{2,20,21} reduced spinlocking efficiency (especially under MAS),²²⁻²⁴ and the complexities of broadband CP in experiments featuring spectra

with wideline patterns arising from anisotropic quadrupolar interactions. $^{25,26} \,$

SSNMR spectra of HIQN are influenced by the quadrupolar interaction (QI), as defined by the quadrupolar coupling constant, $C_{\rm Q} = eQV_{33}/h$ (in Hz), and the asymmetry parameter, $\eta_{\rm Q} = (V_{11} - V_{22})/V_{33}$ (dimensionless), where V_{11} , V_{22} , and V_{33} are the principal components of the electric field gradient (EFG) tensor, ordered such that $|V_{11}| \leq |V_{22}| \leq |V_{33}|$. The central transition (CT, $+1/2 \leftrightarrow -1/2$) pattern is influenced only by the second-order QI (SOQI), whereas the satellite transition (STs, other $\Delta m = \pm 1$ transitions) patterns are broadened by both the first-order (FOQI) and SOQI.^{27–29} The manifestation of $C_{\rm Q}$ in CT and ST patterns is determined by the quadrupolar frequency, $\omega_{\rm Q} = 2\pi\nu_{\rm Q} = 6\pi C_{\rm Q}/(2S(2S - 1))$, $\eta_{\rm Q}$, and the orientation dependences of the

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FOQI and the SOQI, where pattern broadening scales proportional to $\omega_{\rm Q}$ and $\omega_{\rm Q}^{2}/\omega_{0}$, respectively. As such, CT patterns have much smaller breadths than the ST patterns. Nevertheless, for most HIQN in the periodic table, the CT patterns can have breadths from 5 to 250 kHz (wideline NMR spectra), or even 250 kHz to tens of MHz (ultra-wideline (UW) spectra).^{30,31}

The use of MAS is of limited use for the acquisition of UWNMR spectra and, in particular, UW CT patterns of HIQN. While current state-of-the-art technology allows for spinning rates of >100 kHz,³² these are not sufficient for the complete averaging of first-order anisotropic interactions in many cases (i.e., chemical-shift anisotropy, homonuclear dipolar coupling, and the FOQI). Furthermore, the SOQI is unique in that it is only partially averaged by fixed-angle spinning experiments.^{33,34} Thus, the UW CT patterns of many HIQNs acquired under MAS display severe anisotropic broadening with significant overlap between the isotropic centerband and spinning side bands.

The large breadths of UWNMR powder patterns lead to two main problems: (i) UWNMR powder patterns inherently have low SNRs and (ii) the efficiency of conventional methods for the acquisition of UWNMR spectra is compromised, primarily due to the limited bandwidths of rectangular pulses for excitation, refocusing, and polarization transfer. Pulse sequences aimed at increasing SNRs for both direct excitation (DE) (i.e., Carr-Purcell Meiboom Gill (CPMG))³⁵⁻³⁷ and indirect excitation (i.e., CP) often fall short of the acquisition of UWNMR patterns due to their implicit use of rectangular pulses. The well-known solution to these problems is the implementation of frequency-swept (FS) pulses. Analogs of the CPMG and CP experiments that use FS pulses (notably, wideband uniform-rate smooth-truncation (WURST) pulses),38 including WURST-CPMG (WCPMG for short)^{39,40} and Broadband Adiabatic-Inversion CP (BRAIN-CP/WCPMG, BRAIN-CP for short),⁴¹ have found widespread use for the acquisition of UWNMR spectra via DE and broadband CP, respectively.

While the potential gain in signal from CP remains a lucrative option for HIQN, it is notoriously challenging to achieve under MAS. This is primarily due to the inability to efficiently spin lock CT magnetization relative to analogous static experiments.^{22–24,42} There is a complex dependence of the spin-locking efficiency on the relative magnitudes of the QI $(\omega_{\rm Q})$, the amplitude of the spin-locking pulse (ω_1) , and the spinning rate $(\omega_{\rm rot})$, where only when the adiabaticity parameter, α , is greater than 1, permit for efficient CP (i.e., $\alpha \approx \omega_1/(\omega_{\rm rot}\omega_{\rm Q}) > 1$);²² however, even this is not always a reliable determinant.^{43,44} Furthermore, anisotropic nutation behavior across the breadth of the CT pattern can occur, resulting in distorted powder patterns.^{45,46}

Herein, we demonstrate the application of the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence for the acquisition of CT powder patterns of HIQN under static conditions, featuring broadband CP from spin-1/2 nuclei to the HIQN (i.e., $I \rightarrow S$). Although there are several examples of BRAIN-CP for HIQN,^{47–49} a comprehensive experimental and theoretical investigation has not been reported (in contrast to those for spin-1/2 or integer spin quadrupolar nuclei).^{26,41} An analytical formulation of the Hartmann–Hahn (HH) matching conditions utilizing WURST pulse irradiation for the *S* spins is described. A combination of numerical and analytical simulations are used to monitor the mechanisms underlying CP, spin-locking, and

storage of spin polarization along the +z- and/or -z-axes; all of these offer insight into the optimal parameterization of the BRAIN-CP sequence for application to HIQN. Spectra are acquired using DE (CPMG and WCPMG) and CP (CP/ CPMG and BRAIN-CP) methods for a series of HIQN featuring different QIs and nuclear spin numbers, including 35 Cl (S = 3/2), 55 Mn (S = 5/2), 59 Co (S = 7/2), and 93 Nb (S = 9/2), in order to draw comparisons between methods. Consideration is also given to modifications of the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence aimed at the reduction of experimental times (e.g., flip-back (FB) ¹H pulses) and the improvement of the quadrupolar pattern uniformity (ramped ¹H contact pulses). Finally, we discuss the ease of implementation of the BRAIN-CP sequence for acquiring UWNMR spectra of HIQN, and the great potential of this methodology for increasing the SSNMR exploration of a wide range of nuclei from elements across the periodic table.

2. EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

2.1. Samples. Glycine HCl (Sigma-Aldrich), cyclopentadienylmanganese(I)tricarbonyl (η^{5} -CpMn(CO)₃, Sigma-Aldrich), chloropentaaminecobalt(III)chloride ([Co-(NH₃)₅Cl]Cl₂, Alfa Aesar), and cyclopentadienylniobium(V)-tetrachloride (CpNbCl₄, STREM Chemicals, Inc.) were purchased from the listed sources and used in all subsequent NMR experiments without further purification. All samples were ground into fine powders on the benchtop under ambient conditions and were packed into 5 mm polychlorotrifluoro-ethylene (PCTFE) sample holders with Viton o-rings designed at NHMFL and machined by Shenzhen Rapid Direct Co., Ltd.

2.2. SSNMR Spectroscopy. SSNMR spectra were acquired using a Bruker Avance NEO console and a 14.1 T Magnex/Bruker $\left[\nu_0({}^{1}\text{H}) = 600 \text{ MHz}\right]$ wide bore magnet at resonance frequencies of $\nu_0({}^{35}\text{Cl}) = 58.787 \text{ MHz}, \nu_0({}^{55}\text{Mn}) =$ 148.735 MHz, $\nu_0({}^{59}\text{Co}) = 142.363$ MHz, and $\nu_0({}^{93}\text{Nb}) =$ 146.857 MHz. A home-built 5 mm double-resonance (HX) probe was used for all experiments. All data were collected under stationary conditions (i.e., non-rotating samples). Spectra were acquired with ¹H continuous-wave (CW) decoupling with RF fields of 50 kHz. Chemical shift reference frequencies were calibrated using the following standards: (i) ³⁵Cl reference: NaCl (s) with $\delta_{iso} = 0.0 \text{ ppm}^{50}$; (ii) ⁵⁵Mn reference: 1.0 M KMnO₄ (aq) with $\delta_{iso} = 0.0 \text{ ppm}^{51}$; (iii) ⁵⁹Co reference: 0.1 M K₃Co(CN)₆ (aq) with $\delta_{iso} = 0.0 \text{ ppm}^{51}$; and (iv) ⁹³Nb reference: saturated NbCl₅ in acetonitrile with δ_{iso} = 0.0 ppm.^{52,53} RF pulse powers for all samples were calibrated by arraying the excitation pulse width in CPMG experiments (see Supplement S1).

In all CP experiments, calibrated spin-locking fields applied to the S and I spins, $\nu_{1,S}$ and $\nu_{1,b}$ were set between $\nu_{1,S} = 2-25$ kHz and $\nu_{1,I} = 12.5-50$ kHz. In conventional CP experiments, the optimal experimental HH matching conditions were chosen as the ratio of RF powers on the S and I channels yielding spectra with patterns of the highest signal intensity. In BRAIN-CP experiments, the HH match was set based on the above-mentioned criterion as well as optimal pattern uniformity (i.e., patterns most resembling the ideal powder pattern, with minimal distortions). A full listing of all parameters is given in the Supporting Information, Tables S1-S4. All DE schemes employ the eight-step phase cycling scheme used by Bhattacharyya and Frydman.⁵⁴ All CP schemes use the 16-step phase cycling scheme used by Larsen et al.³⁵ All pulse sequences described herein are available via https://github.com/rschurko.

2.3. Spectral Processing and Simulations. All data sets were processed in MATLAB via the coaddition of echoes, multiplication with a Gaussian function, fast-Fourier transform, and magnitude calculation (i.e., the spectra are not phased) using a custom-written code (available on request). Numerical simulations were performed with the Spinach 2.6 open-source software package.⁵⁵ All CP spin dynamics were simulated using an ABCX spin system with one S = 3/2 nucleus and three ¹H nuclei. The coordinates of the spin system are based on those from the DFT-D2* refined crystal structure of glycine HCl.⁵⁶ The spin system interactions are limited to quadrupolar, heteronuclear dipolar, and homonuclear dipolar only. Chemical shift interactions for all spins are ignored for simplicity. For numerical simulations, distinct values of $C_{\rm Q}$ are used, with $\eta_{\rm Q}$ set to zero in all cases. This allows for a description of the orientation of the largest component of the EFG tensor, V_{33} , with respect to the magnetic field, B_0 , by just one angle: β (the azimuthal angle, α , is undefined since $V_{11} = V_{22}$). In the case of $\eta_{\rm O}$ = 0, groups of nuclear spins sharing the same β have identical resonance frequencies in the rotating frame and are referred to herein as isochromats. Numerical simulations of powder patterns made use of the Zaremba-Conroy-Wolfsburg (ZCW) powder averaging scheme^{57,58} with 28,656 orientations. Calculations were performed on a MacBook Pro operating on macOS 13.1 with an Apple M1 Pro chip and on NMRBox virtual machines.⁵⁵

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Overview. Here, we discuss the development and application of BRAIN-CP methods for the acquisition of static SSNMR spectra of four HIQN: ³⁵Cl (S = 3/2), ⁵⁵Mn (S = 5/2), ⁵⁹Co (S = 7/2), and ⁹³Nb (S = 9/2). These nuclei and their respective samples represent a series of different nuclear spin numbers and distinct quadrupolar interactions, which are ideal for demonstrating the versatility and effectiveness of the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence (Scheme 1) for the acquisition of UWNMR spectra of HIQN. First, practical considerations for experimental optimization of the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence for the acquisition of SSNMR spectra of HIQN are discussed (Section 3.2). Then, it is demonstrated how BRAIN-CP can be used to acquire high-quality UWNMR spectra of CT patterns for the aforementioned nuclei (Sections 3.3–3.6). In each case, spectra obtained with CPMG, WCPMG, CP/CPMG, and

Scheme 1. Schematic Representation of the BRAIN-CP Pulse Sequence $\!\!\!^a$



"Excitation and refocusing pulse lengths are denoted by $\tau_{\rm exc}$ and $\tau_{\rm reft}$ respectively. The length of the contact pulses are denoted by $\tau_{\rm CT}$. The echo delay and ring-down delays are denoted by τ_1 and $\tau_{\rm deadr}$ respectively. The acquisition time of a single spin echo is denoted by $\tau_{\rm SE}$. The length of the flip-back pulse is denoted by $\tau_{\rm FB}$ and the dashed lines are indicative of its optional use.

BRAIN-CP pulse sequences (see Scheme S1 for descriptions of these sequences) are compared, and assessed in terms of spectral quality (i.e., relative signal intensity and pattern uniformity). Finally, we discuss several tenets that emerge from this work which can aid in the facile implementation of the BRAIN-CP sequence for the exploration of a range of systems containing half-integer-spin quadrupolar nuclei across the periodic table.

3.2. Practical Considerations. Polarization transfer afforded by the BRAIN-CP experiment can be maximized by the optimization of three key parameters in the pulse sequence: (i) the maximum amplitude of the contact pulse ($\omega_{1,S}$), (ii) the sweep width (Δ), and (iii) the contact time (τ_{CT}). The latter two parameters are used to define the phase modulation of the BRAIN contact pulse and are in general sample-dependent (i.e., determined by factors such as the identity of the target nucleus and the magnitude of the quadrupolar interaction), and are also related to the sweep rate ($R = \Delta/\tau_{CT}$, in kHz ms⁻¹). In the sections that follow, these parameters are given consideration in the context of HH matching, optimal sweep widths and contact times, and distortions appearing in the CT power patterns of stationary samples featuring HIQN with large quadrupolar interactions.

3.2.1. HH Matching. The amplitude of the contact pulse in the BRAIN-CP experiment should be chosen to simultaneously satisfy two conditions: (i) to establish the HH match and (ii) to adiabatically spin lock the spin polarization produced from CP as the effective field, B_{eff} , sweeps from $\pm z$ to $\mp z$ (the sign of the spin polarization at the end of the contact pulse depends on the sweep direction and the phase of the initial pulse on the ¹H channel, see Figure S3). The latter condition is less stringent than the former and has been thoroughly explored.^{60–62} In general, adiabatic spin locking involves the controlled application of the B_1 field to ensure that the spins precess about $B_{\mbox{\scriptsize eff}}$ at a constant rate in a state of quasi-equilibrium, without loss of polarization. This can be achieved with WURST pulses using varying amplitudes and sweep rates. Nevertheless, WURST pulses with very low amplitudes or very fast sweep rates tend to cause the spin polarization to behave in a nonadiabatic manner.

The generalized HH matching condition is also well understood⁵ (an analytical derivation of the HH matching condition is given in Supplement S2); however, key points regarding the manner in which it is established for BRAIN-CP to HIQN are discussed in the ensuing text. Provided that (i) $\omega_{1,S} \ll \omega_{Q}$ where $\omega_{1,S} = 2\pi\nu_{1,S} = -\gamma_S B_{1,S}$ is the amplitude of the *S* spin-locking pulse and (ii) Δ is greater than the pattern breadth (see Section 3.2.2), the HH match for each isochromat occurs at different points in time (herein referred to as the instantaneous HH match) when

$$\omega_{1,I} = \omega_{e,S}(t,\beta) \tag{1}$$

where $\omega_{1,I} = 2\pi\nu_{1,I} = -\gamma_I B_{1,I}$ is the proton spin-locking amplitude, $\omega_{e,S}(t,\beta)$ is the effective RF field of a WURST pulse applied to the *S* spins, and β is the angle between the direction of V_{33} and \mathbf{B}_0 . The effective frequency in a frame that rotates synchronously with the phase modulation $\varphi(t)$ (i.e., the frequency-modulated frame) is described as

$$\omega_{\rm e,S}(t,\beta) = \sqrt{(\Omega_{\rm S} + \omega_{\rm Q}^{(2)}(\beta) - \omega_{\rm p}(t))^2 + ((S+1/2) \cdot \omega_{\rm 1,S} \cdot A(t))^2}$$
(2)



Figure 1. Ideal ³⁵Cl (S = 3/2) pattern powder patterns ($C_Q = 6.5$ MHz and $\eta_Q = 0$) and single crystal spectra for EFG tensor orientations of (a) $\beta = \pi/4$ and (b) $\beta = \pi/2$ with respect to the external field \mathbf{B}_0 . Analytical (c and d) and numerical (e and f) numerical simulations of $I \rightarrow S$ CP during the contact time, τ_{CT} . In every case, the initial density matrix $\rho(t_0) = \mathbf{I}_x$. The middle row (c and d) shows $\nu_{e,S}(\beta,t)$ (red line, calculated according to eq 2) and $\nu_{1,I}$ (blue line, set to 50 kHz) plotted as a function of contact time for a BRAIN contact pulse of $\tau_{CT} = 20$ ms, $\Delta = 175$ kHz, $\nu_{1,S} = 25$ kHz, and the direction of the sweep from low to high frequency. The blue box surrounding $\nu_{1,I}$ highlights the regions between 45 and 55 kHz, representing the broadening of the matching conditions due to hetero- and homonuclear dipolar interactions. Intersections between $\nu_{e,S}(\beta,t)$ and the blue box are indicated by the dashed vertical lines, which are used to compare the HH matches in analytical and numerical simulations. The numerical simulations for a 4-spin system (3 × ¹H and 1 × ³⁵Cl) are shown in the bottom row (e and f). The amounts of polarization are normalized with respect to their theoretical maximum. Conditions identical to those in the analytical simulations are used. The calculations are done for an offset of $\Omega_S/2\pi = -15$ kHz, which corresponds to the center of gravity of the powder pattern.

where $\Omega_{\rm S} = \omega_{0,\rm S} - \omega_{\rm RF,\rm S}$ is the transmitter offset (where $\omega_{0,\rm S}$ is the resonance frequency in the laboratory frame and $\omega_{\rm RF,\rm S}$ is the time-independent transmitter frequency), $\omega_{\rm p}(t) = \mathrm{d}\varphi(t)/\mathrm{d}t$ is the instantaneous (i.e., time-dependent) transmitter frequency arising from the phase modulation, $\varphi(t) = \pm 2\pi \{(\Delta/2)t - (\Delta/2\tau_{\rm CT})t^2\}$, and $A(t) = 1 - |\cos(\pi t/\tau_{\rm CT})|^N$ is the amplitude modulation of the contact pulse, respectively (here N is an integer, commonly set to 2, 20, or 80).⁶¹ Assuming an axially symmetric EFG tensor (i.e., $\eta_{\rm Q} = 0$), the second-order quadrupolar frequency for the $m_{\rm S} \leftrightarrow m_{\rm S} - 1$ transition is defined as⁶³

$$\omega_{\rm Q}^{(2)}(\beta) = \frac{\omega_{\rm Q}^2}{12\omega_0} (3/2) \sin^2(\beta) [(A+B)\cos^2(\beta) - B]$$

where A and B are defined as

$$A = 24m_S(m_S - 1) - 4S(S + 1) + 9$$
$$B = (1/4)[6m_S(m_S - 1) - 2S(S + 1) + 3]$$

Analytical and numerical simulations can provide insight into the time-dependent CP processes that occur during the contact pulse (Figure 1). Analytical simulations (Figure 1c,d) involve plotting $\omega_{e,S}(t,\beta)/2\pi = \nu_{e,S}(t,\beta)$ according to eq 2 and $\omega_{1,I}/2\pi = \nu_{1,I}$ as a function of the contact time for two different EFG tensor orientations, $\beta = \pi/4$ and $\beta = \pi/2$, which correspond to isochromats with resonance frequencies at the low- and high-frequency edges of the powder pattern (Figure 1a,b), respectively, arising from different second-order quadrupolar shifts, $\omega_{O}^{(2)}(\beta)$. Intersections between $\nu_{e,S}(t,\beta)$ (red line) and $\nu_{1,I}$ (blue line) indicate the predicted HH matching conditions. The regions between 45 and 55 kHz are highlighted in light blue and are representative of the broadening of the matching conditions due to the heteroand homonuclear dipolar interactions.⁷ The vertical dashed lines denote the times in which CP is predicted to occur and are used for comparisons to numerical simulations. Numerical simulations in Spinach for a four-spin system (see Section 2.3) are used to calculate the expectation values of $\langle \mathbf{I}_{r} \rangle$ and $\langle \mathbf{S}_{r}^{(2-3)} \rangle$ for the $\beta = \pi/2$ and $\beta = \pi/4$ isochromats (Figure 1e,f), which describe the trajectories of the I and S spin polarizations, respectively, during the contact time. The operator $\langle S_z^{(2-3)} \rangle$ is a fictitious spin-1/2 operator^{64,65} describing the polarization of the (2-3) subspace (i.e., the population difference between the $1/2 \leftrightarrow -1/2$ states). Polarization transfer events are evidenced by simultaneous decreases in $\langle I_x \rangle$ and increases in $\langle S_z^{(2-3)} \rangle$. The following sets of parameters are used for analytical and numerical simulations: $C_{\rm Q}$ = 6.5 MHz and $\eta_{\rm Q}$ = 0 (corresponding to a 35 Cl CT pattern with a breadth of 90 kHz at 14.1 T); the proton spin-locking amplitude, $\nu_{1,I} = 50$ kHz; the quadrupolar spin-locking amplitude, $\nu_{1,S}$ = 25 kHz; the sweep width, $\Delta = 175$ kHz; the contact time, $\tau_{\rm CT} = 20$ ms (see Section 3.2.2 for discussion of the parameterization of Δ and $\tau_{\rm CT}$); and the transmitter offset, $\Omega_{\rm S}/2\pi$ = -15 kHz (corresponding to the center of gravity of the powder pattern).

The analytical and numerical simulations are first compared for the $\beta = \pi/4$ isochromat (low-frequency edge of the pattern). The analytical simulation (Figure 1c) predicts a matching condition in the region between ca. 3 and 7 ms, as that is the time during which $\nu_{e,S}$ ($t, \beta = \pi/4$) is between 45 and 55 kHz. At the start of the numerical simulation (Figure 1e, bottom row), $\langle \mathbf{I}_x \rangle = 1$ and $\langle \mathbf{S}_z^{(2-3)} \rangle = 0$. The phase modulation of the contact pulse and the initial phase of the starting density matrix are set such that the effective frequency sweeps from low to high frequency, resulting in magnetization buildup along the +z-axis (Figure S3).^{26,41} The simultaneous increase in $\langle \breve{S}_z^{(2-3)}\rangle$ and decrease in $\langle I_x\rangle$ is indicative of a CP event that occurs within the time frame predicted by the analytical simulation. The continued buildup of $\langle S_z^{(2-3)} \rangle$ between ca. 7 and 20 ms is indicative of efficient spin locking by the time- and orientation-dependent **B**_{eff} (i.e., $\omega_{e,S}(t, \beta = \pi/$ 4)). The oscillations observed in the plot of $\langle S_z^{(2-3)} \rangle$ arise from multiple heteronuclear dipolar couplings.⁶⁶

The second case ($\beta = \pi/2$ isochromat) shows similar behavior, both analytically and numerically. The analytical expression for the effective frequency (Figure 1d) is a mirror image of that of the $\beta = \pi/4$ isochromat, as the resonance frequencies of the isochromats are equidistant from Ω_s in opposite directions. Since the resonance frequency of the $\beta = \pi/2$ isochromat is at the high-frequency edge of the powder pattern, its predicted matching conditions occur much later in the contact time period compared to those of the $\beta = \pi/4$ isochromat, between ca. 12 and 17.5 ms, as the pulse is swept from low to high frequency. Numerical simulations predict the CP event timing to match well with that in the analytical simulation (Figure 1f), as the decrease in $\langle I_x \rangle$ and increase in $\langle \mathbf{S}_{z}^{(2-3)} \rangle$ occur within the region indicated by the dotted lines, wherein $\nu_{e,S}$ (*t*, $\beta = \pi/2$) = 45–55 kHz.

While eq 2 provides an accurate prediction of the HH matching conditions for different groups of spin isochromats, it is informative for the experimentalist to consider the conditions required for the match to be satisfied for all isochromats. These conditions are realizable so long as the sweep width, Δ , of the contact pulse is chosen such that it is greater than the pattern breadth (vide infra). This allows for the instantaneous frequency to be equal to the shift of each isochromat relative to the transmitter offset at some point in time during the pulse [i.e., $\omega_p(t) = \Omega_S + \omega_Q^{(2)}(\beta)$]. As a result, the first squared term in eq 2, $(\Omega_S + \omega_Q^{(2)}(\beta) - \omega_p(t))$, is zero for each isochromat as its matching condition occurs. Therefore, the matching condition which allows for maximum polarization transfer to all isochromats across the entire powder pattern can be approximated as

$$\omega_{1,I} \approx (S+1/2)\omega_{1,S} \tag{3}$$

which is similar to the HH matching condition that has been established for CP from spin-1/2 to HIQN.^{42,67} It is emphasized that while the spin dynamics do follow eq 2, eq 3 is provided solely for practical purposes (i.e., facile determination of an initial HH match).

3.2.2. Phase Modulation of the Contact Pulse. In order to achieve broadband CP, consideration must be given to the two parameters used to define the phase modulation of the contact pulse: the sweep width, Δ , and the contact time, $\tau_{\rm CT}$. The value of Δ yielding the highest CP enhancement depends on the NMR characteristics of the target HIQN (S and eQ), the quadrupolar parameters (C_0 and η_0), and the magnitude of **B**₀, since these together determine the CT pattern breadth. In order to adiabatically spin lock isochromats across the entire breadth of a powder pattern, Δ must be larger than that of the pattern breadth.^{62,68,69} Experimental results (and numerical simulations, see Figure S4 and discussion below) suggest that the value of Δ resulting in maximum polarization transfer is between 1.5 and 2 times the breadth of the intended powder pattern (vide infra). Larger sweeps unnecessarily shorten the time at which the instantaneous HH match is met for each isochromat, which can decrease the CP efficiency. While the pattern breadth also has a large influence on the choice of $\tau_{\rm CT}$, careful consideration must also be given to γ of the HIQN (vide infra). The rate of cross-relaxation during CP scales directly with the magnitude of the heteronuclear dipolar coupling;^{3,20,21} therefore, $\tau_{\rm CT}$ must be chosen to allow for sufficient CP at each instantaneous HH match. It is noted that relaxation can also determine the choice of $\tau_{\rm CT}$ in the limit of short $T_{1\rho}$ time constants for both I and S spins.

Numerical simulations are used to gain insight into the dependency of polarization buildup on the length of $\tau_{\rm CT}$ during BRAIN-CP experiments, with consideration given to the magnitude of the heteronuclear dipolar couplings (Figures 2 and S4). As in previous simulations, a four-spin system is used (see Section 2.3). This time, however, the identity of the *S* nucleus and the magnitude of $C_{\rm Q}$ are adjusted to represent systems with heteronuclear dipolar couplings of varying magnitudes and powder patterns of increasing breadths, respectively. The two *S* nuclei used are ³⁵Cl and ⁷⁵As, both spin-3/2, with γ (⁷⁵As) \approx 1.75 γ (³⁵Cl), engendering a proportional difference in heteronuclear dipolar coupling constants [i.e., $R_{\rm DD}$ (⁷⁵As, ¹H) \approx 1.75 $R_{\rm DD}$ (³⁵Cl, ¹H)]. At 14.1 T, $C_{\rm Q}$ (³⁵Cl) values of 6.5, 9.6, and 13.5 MHz correspond to CT patterns of



Figure 2. Numerical simulations of $\langle \mathbf{S}_z^{(2,3)} \rangle$ for an $I \to S$ CP at the end of the BRAIN contact pulse calculated as a function of increasing values of $\tau_{\rm CT}$ for the $\beta = \pi/2$ isochromat, where values of $C_{\rm Q}(^{35}{\rm Cl})$ and $C_{\rm Q}(^{75}{\rm As})$ are used to generate CT pattern breadths of 100, 200, and 400 kHz. In every case, $\eta_{\rm Q} = 0$, $\nu_{1,I} = 50$ kHz, Δ is set to 1.5× the pattern breadth, and $\Omega_{\rm S}/2\pi$ is set to the center of gravity of the powder pattern.

ca. 100, 200, and 400 kHz in breadth, respectively. $C_Q(^{75}\text{As})$ values of 8.5, 12.8, and 18 MHz correspond to CT patterns of breadths comparable to those in the ³⁵Cl series (all values of $\eta_Q = 0$). The following experimental parameters are used: $\nu_{1,l} = 50$ kHz; Δ is set to ca. 1.5 times the pattern breadth; $\Omega_S/2\pi$ is set to the center of gravity of the pattern (-15, - 30, and -60 kHz for patterns of 100, 200, and 400 kHz, respectively).

For all six examples, the value of $\langle \mathbf{S}_{z}^{(2-3)} \rangle$ for the $\beta = \pi/2$ isochromat at the end of the BRAIN-CP pulse is plotted in Figure 2 as a function of increasing values of $\tau_{\rm CT}$. The CP enhancement is associated with the breadth of the pattern, as maximum $\langle \mathbf{S}_{z}^{(2-3)} \rangle$ is obtained only for the narrower patterns. The diminished CP buildup observed with increasing pattern breadths is attributed to the shortening of the instantaneous matching conditions as the contact pulse sweeps across larger frequency ranges. This decrease in CP efficiency with larger pattern breadths (and accordingly larger frequency sweeps) is more pronounced in the ³⁵Cl examples, further illustrating the need for long contact times when acquiring the spectrum at one transmitter offset, especially when polarizing samples with low- γ nuclei and/or weak heteronuclear dipolar couplings.

The application of long contact pulses with high RF amplitudes in BRAIN-CP experiments is normally not an option since modern solid-state NMR probes have a range of limiting duty cycles; for example, for typical solids probes, pulse sequences using solely high-frequency pulses (e.g., ¹⁴H, ¹⁹F; 50–300 W) have lower duty cycles than those using solely low-frequency pulses (e.g., ¹³C and lower- γ nuclei; 200–400 W).^{70,71} Therefore, a balance between long contact times and higher RF amplitudes must be struck (fortunately, the WURST-based contact pulses often function well with low RF fields; vide infra). Furthermore, to exploit the effective transverse relaxation (T_2^{eff}) characteristics to maximize the signal obtained from CPMG or WURST-CPMG experiments,

high-power ¹H decoupling is often applied to hydrogen-rich samples over the entire course of the echo acquisition train to reduce the impact of dipolar transverse relaxation mechanisms,^{72,73} which further adds to the duty cycle. Hence, for nuclei with moderate values of γ , we have found that contact times between 10 and 20 ms are usually sufficient; however, as discussed above, systems with low heteronuclear dipolar couplings may benefit from or necessitate longer contact times.

3.2.3. Pattern Distortions. Altenhof et al. and Hansen et al. previously reported "dips" in the CT patterns of spectra of HIQN with axially symmetric EFG tensors (i.e., distortions away from pattern uniformity in localized frequency regions).⁷⁴⁻⁷⁶ This is attributed to the transfer of polarization between multiple Zeeman states for EFG tensor orientations with β values at or near 54.74°. Isochromats corresponding to these orientations have similar resonance frequencies for the CT and STs (i.e., degenerate or nearly degenerate Zeeman levels in a frame that rotates at $\omega_0 + \omega_Q^{(1)}(\beta) + \omega_Q^{(2)}(\beta)$, herein referred to as the rotating quadrupolar frame (RQF)), making selective manipulation of the CT via RF pulses difficult. Upon irradiation of these isochromats, spin polarization is distributed among the different Zeeman levels, and a pronounced "dip" in the CT powder pattern is often observed. However, this effect is not unique to systems with axially symmetric EFG tensors. As detailed in Supplement S3, regardless of the value of η_{0} , certain isochromats have nearly degenerate Zeeman levels in the RQF, making such dips ubiquitous in CT patterns of HIQN. However, these distortions are most prominent in systems with $\eta_Q = 0$, as the quadrupolar frequency only depends on the angle β , meaning that the resonance frequencies of isochromats with degenerate Zeeman levels are all similar. In cases of non-axially symmetric EFG tensors $(\eta_{\rm O} \neq 0)$, the resonance frequencies of isochromats with degenerate Zeeman levels can occur across the entire frequency range of the powder pattern, and thus, the polarization loss is not localized to a specific subset of frequencies. We emphasize that while these distortions can result in powder patterns that deviate from the ideal pattern shapes, they usually do not hinder the extraction of accurate EFG and CS tensor parameters.

3.3. ³⁵Cl SSNMR Experiments. Glycine HCl is an ideal test sample for making comparisons between spectra acquired with DE and CP experiments and exploring the effects of different parameters in the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence: its ³⁵Cl static NMR spectrum features a wideline CT pattern (ca. 150 kHz in breadth at 14.1 T) that is primarily influenced by the SOQI, the $T_1({}^{1}\text{H})$ and $T_1({}^{35}\text{Cl})$ are both small (allowing for short recycle delays in both DE and CP experiments), and the high natural abundance of ³⁵Cl and high wt-% of chlorine in the sample both enable fast acquisition.^{77,78} Spectra acquired with the CPMG and CP/CPMG pulse sequences using standard rectangular pulses are compared to those acquired with the WCPMG and BRAIN-CP pulse sequences featuring FS pulses (Figure 3). We note that because of inherent differences between WURST and rectangular pulses, quantitative comparisons of signal intensities are only made between BRAIN-CP and WCPMG spectra and CP/CPMG and CPMG spectra, respectively.⁷⁹ All spectra were acquired with 16 transients and optimized recycle times of 1 and 2 s for DE and CP experiments, respectively (see Tables S1-S4 for a listing of all experimental parameters). The CPMG sequence, as applied, yields signal across the breadth of the powder pattern; however, the intensities near the pattern edges are reduced



Figure 3. (a-d)³⁵Cl SSNMR spectra of glycine HCl acquired at 14.1 T with the indicated pulse sequences. The RF powers for the excitation and refocusing pulses are displayed next to each DE spectrum. Experimentally optimized HH matching conditions and contact times are shown for CP experiments. All spectra are displayed on the same relative intensity scale. The simulated ideal powder pattern is shown as the trace in red above the spectrum acquired using BRAIN-CP (d).

due to the bandwidth limitations of the rectangular pulses (Figure 3a). CP/CPMG provides large signal enhancement; yet, the frequency bandwidth over which CP occurs is substantially less than the total pattern breadth (Figure 3b). By contrast, the WURST pulses in WCPMG yield a uniform powder pattern (Figure 3c) that matches the ideal pattern. Finally, the BRAIN-CP sequence allows for the acquisition of a powder pattern with high S/N that closely resembles the ideal pattern (Figure 3d). Using a spin-locking pulse of $\nu_{II} = 50$ kHz, the predicted HH match from eq 3 is $\nu_{1S} = 25$ kHz. Experimentally we find a similar match of $\nu_{1S} = 19.9$ kHz.

Of the four nuclei investigated herein, 35 Cl presents a unique case due to its low γ . The heteronuclear dipolar couplings of this sample are significantly lower than those of the others, which in turn means significantly slower rates of cross-relaxation during CP in the former (vide supra). As discussed

above (Section 3.2.2), the lengthening of the instantaneous HH match via long BRAIN-CP contact pulses is instrumental in achieving optimal CP. Unsurprisingly, the contact time required to achieve maximum CP enhancement in BRAIN-CP is significantly longer than that required in CP/CPMG. Spectra acquired with CP/CPMG and BRAIN-CP using contact times ranging from 5 to 25 ms are compared in Figure 4. Contact times between 10 and 20 ms result in maximum signal enhancement using CP/CPMG, whereas the integrated intensity of the spectra acquired with BRAIN-CP continues to increase with increasing contact times. We note that while the integrated intensities of powder patterns acquired with CP/CPMG are higher than those acquired with BRAIN-CP at lower contact times (as is typically the case due to the much longer time frame during which polarization transfer is allowable in the former), the CP bandwidths are limited for the former.

3.4. ⁵⁵Mn SSNMR Experiments. A comparison of the ⁵⁵Mn static NMR spectra of η^5 -CpMn(CO)₃ acquired at 14.1 T with the four different pulse sequences is shown in Figure 5. The ideal CT powder pattern has a breadth of ca. 1 MHz at 14.1 T, primarily due to second-order quadrupolar broadening arising from the large quadrupolar interaction $(C_0)^{55}$ Mn) = 64.3 MHz).⁸⁰ The DE CPMG spectrum, which was acquired with short, high-power pulses (i.e., $\tau_{\pi/2}^{\text{sel}} = 1.3 \ \mu\text{s}$), features signal over the entire breadth of the powder pattern (but with significant distortions), demonstrating the bandwidth limitations of rectangular pulses (Figure 5a). As in the case of the ³⁵Cl NMR experiments, CP/CPMG allows for the acquisition of only a small portion of the total powder pattern (Figure 5b). Acquisition of the powder pattern with WCPMG using excitation and refocusing pulses of low RF amplitudes results in a spectrum with a uniform powder pattern of high S/N, although with clear departures from ideality between -700 and -800 kHz (Figure 5c). The presence of these "dips" is more readily observed here than in the ³⁵Cl NMR spectra (Figure 3) due to the higher spin number of ⁵⁵Mn (giving rise to more STs) and the lower η_0 value (isochromats with $\beta \approx 54.74^\circ$ for which this phenomenon occurs have similar resonance frequencies). Finally, the spectrum acquired using BRAIN-CP with a ramped ¹H spin-locking pulse ($\nu_{1,I}$ is ramped linearly from 37 to 57 kHz) also features the entire pattern (Figure



Figure 4. ³⁵Cl SSNMR spectra of glycine HCl acquired at 14.1 T using CP/CPMG (a) and BRAIN-CP (b) using contact times from 5 to 25 ms (left to right). The pattern areas of each spectrum are measured by integration and compared to the first spectrum of each row, which is normalized to 1.0. All spectra are presented on the same relative intensity scale.



Figure 5. (a-d) ⁵⁵Mn SSNMR spectra of η^5 -CpMn(CO)₃ acquired at 14.1 T with the indicated pulse sequences. The RF powers for the excitation and refocusing pulses are displayed next to each DE spectrum. Experimentally optimized HH matching conditions and contact times are displayed for CP experiments. The simulated ideal powder pattern is shown as the trace in red above the spectrum acquired using BRAIN-CP (d). The intensity of (d) is scaled by a factor of 4 relative to all other spectra.



Figure 6. ¹H-⁵⁵Mn BRAIN-CP static SSNMR spectra of η^5 -CpMn(CO)₃ acquired at 14.1 T using (a) constant ¹H spin-locking pulse of 40 kHz and (b) ramped ¹H spin-locking pulse from 35.8 to 56.7 kHz. For each case, $\nu_{1,S}$ is arrayed using calibrated spin locking powers from 8 to 25 kHz in increments of 0.5 kHz. The dashed line at $\nu_{1,S} = 11.5$ kHz indicates the best matching conditions that result in the most uniform powder pattern of the highest intensity, which is displayed above each contour plot.

5d), though with lower S/N (note the scaling factor of 4) and reduced uniformity than that in Figure 5c.

Several observations can be drawn from these results. First, the DE experiments outperform the CP experiments regardless of the use of rectangular or WURST pulses. The poorer CP performance is likely due to the short $T_1({}^{55}Mn) \approx 28$ ms (Figure S5, and correspondingly short $T_{1\rho}({}^{55}Mn)$), which prohibits the use of a longer contact time (which would likely be beneficial in the BRAIN-CP experiment, given the breadth

of the pattern). Nevertheless, to the best of our knowledge, this is the first report of CP across a bandwidth of 1 MHz at a single transmitter offset. It is noted that all ¹H-⁵⁵Mn CP experiments included FB pulses on the ¹H channel due to the long $T_1(^1\text{H})$ time constant $(T_1(^1\text{H}) \approx 225 \text{ s}, \text{ as estimated from}$ an optimized recycle delay of 45 s),^{81,82} serving to reduce experimental times by more than a factor of 2 (Figure S6).

Second, acquisition of an increasingly uniform powder pattern using BRAIN-CP is achieved by linearly ramping $\nu_{1,\nu}$



Figure 7. (a-d) ⁵⁹Co SSNMR spectra of $[Co(NH_3)_5Cl]Cl_2$ acquired at 14.1 T with the indicated pulse sequences. The RF powers for the excitation and refocusing pulses are displayed next to each DE spectrum. Experimentally optimized HH matching conditions and contact times are displayed for CP experiments. The simulated ideal powder pattern is shown as the trace in red above the spectrum acquired using WCPMG (c). All spectra are presented on the same relative intensity scale.

which serves to compensate for nonuniform amplitudes $\nu_{1,S}$ at offset frequencies far from the transmitter (Figures S8-S12). Spectra acquired using BRAIN-CP at different spin locking amplitudes, $\nu_{1,S}$, are displayed in Figure 6. If the ¹H spinlocking power is held constant at $\nu_{1,I}$ = 40 kHz (Figure 6a), optimal CP occurs at different amplitudes of $\nu_{1,S}$ (as indicated by the areas of highest intensity shown in blue and violet), inferring that obtaining a uniform power pattern is not possible at a single setting for $\nu_{1,S}$. For instance, the spectrum acquired using $\nu_{1,S} = 11.5$ kHz (indicated by the dashed line) is displayed above the contour plot, where the pattern intensity is amplified at the high-frequency edge. In Figure 6b, ν_{1J} was ramped from ca. 36 to 57 kHz, with all other conditions identical to those in Figure 6a. In this instance, the matching conditions occur at similar amplitudes, allowing for the acquisition of a spectrum with a powder pattern of improved uniformity (though not perfect), as evidenced by the spectrum also acquired by using $\nu_{1,S} = 11.5$ kHz displayed above the contour plot. The modulation of $\nu_{1,I}$ adds an additional time dependence to the HH matching conditions and thus reduces the reliability of eq 3 for an accurate prediction of the HH match. However, if ν_{11} is approximated as its average over the course of the total contact time (46.5 kHz), the match is predicted to occur at $\nu_{1,S}$ = 15.5 kHz, which is close to the experimentally determined value of $\nu_{1,S}$ = 11.5 kHz. We note that nonuniform amplitude profiles affect other BRAIN-CP experiments on UWNMR patterns in a similar manner (Figure S7). However, for patterns of lesser breadths, ¹H spin-locking pulses of constant RF amplitude are sufficient for providing CP enhancement across the entire powder pattern with minimal distortions. Explorations of other options for modulations of the ¹H and/or S RF amplitudes (and possibly phases) are beyond the scope of the current work, though this is something that our group is currently exploring.

Finally, for systems with small $T_1(S)$ and large $T_1(I)$ time constants, the BRAIN-CP experiment generally produces a spectrum with a lower SNR relative to that of DE WCPMG; however, there is still great value in the former for revealing connectivities between spin-1/2 and quadrupolar nuclei, and also for potential use in dynamic nuclear polarization (DNP) NMR experiments,^{83,84} which when conducted via transfer of spin polarization from e⁻ to ¹H to *S* nuclei, where the spectrum of the *S* nucleus features a broad pattern, would require efficient ¹H-*S* broadband CP.^{47,85}

3.5. ⁵⁹Co SSNMR Experiments. ⁵⁹Co (S = 7/2) static SSNMR spectra often feature CT patterns that are affected by both anisotropic chemical-shift and quadrupolar interactions.⁸⁶⁻⁸⁹ ⁵⁹Co static NMR spectra of [Co(NH₃)₅Cl]Cl₂ acquired at 14.1 T using CPMG, CP/CPMG, WCPMG, and BRAIN-CP are presented in Figure 7, along with the ideal simulation of the CT pattern, which spans ca. 300 kHz (again, ¹H FB pulses were used in the CP experiments). The moderate γ and high spin number of ⁵⁹Co, along with the moderate CSAs and C_O magnitudes, allow for acquisition of the complete powder pattern by using CPMG (Figure 7a). In the CP/ CPMG spectrum (Figure 7b), the powder pattern intensity is higher than that in the CPMG spectrum, though only over a reduced frequency range near the transmitter. The use of FS pulses in WCPMG and BRAIN-CP (Figure 7c,d) allows for acquisition of UW powder patterns of high SNR, with significant CP enhancement in the latter. Given a spin locking power of $\nu_{1,I}$ = 50 kHz, Eq 3 predicts the BRAIN-CP HH match to occur at $\nu_{1,S}$ = 12.5 kHz. Experimentally, the match is found to occur at $\nu_{1,S}$ = 9.1 kHz. All spectra feature CT patterns with a significant "dip" in intensity just to the lowfrequency side of their centers, which is a result of polarization transfer from CT to STs (vide supra). In comparison to the analogous set of ⁵⁵Mn spectra (Figure 5), the dips are more



Figure 8. ⁵⁹Co SSNMR spectra of $[Co(NH_3)_5Cl]Cl_2$ acquired at 14.1 T with CP/CPMG (top row) and BRAIN-CP (bottom row). The proton spin locking amplitude $\nu_{1,I}$ are (a) 50 kHz, (b) 25 kHz, and (c) 12.5 kHz, with the experimentally optimized S HH matching powers shown for each experiment. For all experiments, $\tau_{CT} = 10$ ms. All spectra are displayed on the same relative intensity scale.

pronounced here, which is due to the increased overlap of the CT pattern and multiple ST patterns resulting from both the higher nuclear spin quantum number and reduced $C_{\rm Q}$. Furthermore, the dip is more apparent in Figure 7d relative to that in Figure 7c, since CP to these isochromats is less efficient due to small or negligible dipolar interactions (N.B.: similar effects are observed in ¹H-⁵⁵Mn CP experiments).⁹⁰

⁵⁹Co SSNMR spectra acquired with CP and BRAIN-CP using different RF powers and the corresponding HH matching conditions are compared in Figure 8. The bandwidth over which conventional CP operates decreases with increasing nuclear spin quantum numbers. This comes as a direct result of the dependence of the HH match condition on the nuclear spin number (vide supra). Typically, the maximum allowable ν_{1I} (due to probe limitations) is in the tens of kHz regime, meaning that ν_{1S} can be as low as several kHz for nuclei with high spin quantum numbers. The CP bandwidth in conventional CP depends directly on $\nu_{1,S'}$ and thus, the bandwidth diminishes significantly with decreasing amplitudes (Figure 8, top row). By contrast, the CP bandwidth in BRAIN-CP experiments covers the entire breadth of the pattern, even at low RF amplitudes (Figure 8, bottom row). The diminished intensity in the spectrum acquired with the lowest RF amplitudes (Figure 8c, bottom row) is likely the result of diminished adiabatic spin-locking on both channels (i.e., small \mathbf{B}_{eff} fields). Of great importance here is that experiments with low RF amplitudes ($\nu_{1,S}$) may permit increased contact times, thereby being of great value for low- γ nuclei while also minimizing damage and wear to probes resulting from the continuous application of high-power pulses.

3.6. ⁹³Nb **SSNMR Experiments.** As a final test of the applicability of these pulse sequences to HIQN, ⁹³Nb static SSNMR experiments were conducted on a sample of CpNbCl₄, which has a CT pattern that spans ca. 200 kHz at 14.1 T.⁹¹ As for the ⁵⁹Co case above, a spectrum displaying a uniform powder pattern is acquired at one transmitter offset using CPMG (Figure 9a), only a fraction of the pattern is



Figure 9. (a-d) ⁹³Nb SSNMR spectra of CpNbCl₄ acquired at 14.1 T with the indicated pulse sequences. The RF powers for the excitation and refocusing pulses are displayed next to each DE spectrum. Experimentally optimized HH matching conditions and contact times are displayed for CP experiments. All spectra are plotted on the same intensity scale. The simulated ideal powder pattern of the STs appearing within the displayed spectral window is shown in blue above (c). The simulated ideal powder pattern for the CT is shown as the trace in red above the spectrum acquired using BRAIN-CP (d).

observed using CP/CPMG (Figure 9b), and both WCPMG (Figure 9c) and BRAIN-CP (Figure 9d) allow for acquisition of spectra with high-quality powder patterns using pulses with low RF amplitudes. Equation 3 predicts the HH match to occur at $\nu_{1,S} = 10$ kHz, whereas the experimentally determined match is $\nu_{1,S} = 8$ kHz. Due to the high spin number (S = 9/2) and high η_Q value of 0.83, both spectra acquired using DE methods display some signal intensity at both edges of the CT patterns which originates from the STs (Figure 9a,c), as indicated by the ideal pattern of the STs which fall within the

experimental spectral window displayed above Figure 9c. The spectrum acquired using BRAIN-CP does not share these features, resulting in a CT powder pattern that cleanly terminated at high frequency discontinuity. This is attributed

features, resulting in a CT powder pattern that cleanly terminates at high-frequency discontinuity. This is attributed to the different matching conditions between the CT and the other STs based on their respective nutation frequencies. This feature exemplifies a form of spectral editing as it can aid in the precise extraction of the quadrupolar tensor parameters in cases where DE methods fail in the selective acquisition of the CT. As in the case of ⁵⁵Mn, the lower intensity of the spectrum acquired with BRAIN-CP relative to the other spectra is attributed to a short $T_1(^{93}Nb)$ (Figure S5) and therefore short $T_{1\varrho}(^{93}Nb)$.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In this work, it is shown how the BRAIN-CP pulse sequence can be used for the acquisition of UWNMR spectra of HIQN in stationary samples, yielding spectra with high SNRs and uniform CT patterns. The spin dynamics describing CP between the spin-1/2 nuclei and HIQN are explained by using a combination of analytical and numerical simulations.

4.1. General Recommendations for Pulse Sequence Parameters. The HH match for BRAIN-CP to HIQN can be approximated as $\omega_{1,I} \approx (S + 1/2)\omega_{1,S}$, so long as the sweep width of the contact pulse is greater than the pattern breadththis tenet makes facile the setup and optimization of the experiment. Optimal sweep widths are between 1.5 and 2.0 times the breadth of the target powder pattern. Contact times of 10 ms or less are generally sufficient for the CP enhancement of wideline patterns of nuclei with moderate to high values of γ . Low- γ nuclei or nuclei exhibiting UW powder patterns necessitate the use of longer contact times in order to achieve optimal CP enhancement. While most patterns feature noticeable distortions due to polarization loss from the CT, these effects are understood, can be accurately modeled (i.e., simulated), and in most cases do not interfere with the extraction of accurate EFG (and CS) tensor parameters. The inclusion of ¹H FB and ramped contact pulses can aid in the reduction of experimental length and the improvement of pattern uniformity in the acquisition of UWNMR powder patterns, respectively, though we will continue to explore other options for making these improvements via amplitude and/or phase modulations and the I and S channels. The samples investigated herein feature nuclei of different spin quantum numbers, quadrupolar interactions with varying magnitudes, and a range of different gyromagnetic ratios; hence, the successful acquisition of their respective ¹H-S BRAIN-CP spectra demonstrates the robustness of this sequence. We expect that these methods will positively impact UWNMR investigations of very unreceptive HIQN, and perhaps find future use with modern DNP methods to aid in the routine study of heretofore under-investigated nuclei.

ASSOCIATED CONTENT

Supporting Information

The Supporting Information is available free of charge at https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.jpca.3c05447.

Schematic of pulse sequences; experimental parameters; use of CPMG for RF power calibrations; derivation of the HH matching conditions; polarization transfer contour plots; numerical simulations; WCPMG-IR; ¹H

SSNMR spectra; ¹H-⁵⁹Co BRAIN-CP static SSNMR spectra; and oscilloscope images (PDF)

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Notes

The authors declare no competing financial interest.

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