Homework 2

Professor: Dr. Alfonso Isaac Jaimes Nájera

Francisco Javier Vázquez Tavares A00827546

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1 Problem 4.25

If the electron were a classical solid sphere, with radius,

$$r_c = \frac{e^2}{4\pi\epsilon_o mc^2}$$

(the so-called classical electron radius, obtained by assuming the electron's mass is attributable to energy sotred in its electric field, via the Einstein formula $E = mc^2$), and its angular momentum is $\hbar/2$, then how fast (in m/s) would a point on the "equator" be moving? Does this model make sense? (Actually, the radius of the electrin is known experimentally to be much less than r_c but this only makes matters worse.)

Solution 1: Classical spinning

From the classical framework the angular momentum is modeled with the following relation,

$$L = I\omega,$$

where I is the moment of interia, which in this case is $I = 2/5mr^2$ and w is the angular frequency, that can be express as $\omega = v/r$. Replacing this equivalences into the angular momentum equation we can get the following expression for v,

$$v = \frac{5}{2}\frac{L}{mr_c},$$

substituting the values of L and r_c,

$$v = \frac{5\pi\hbar\epsilon_o}{e^2}c^2.$$

Recalling the order of magnitud of the constants, $e \approx 10^{-19}$, $\hbar \approx 10^{-34}$, $\epsilon_o \approx 10^{-12}$ and $c \approx 10^8$, we get that,

$$\frac{5\pi\hbar\epsilon_o}{e^2}c \approx 90,$$

which tells us that the velocity at the ecuator is 90 times the velocity of light, which does not make sense.

$$\boxed{v \approx 90c.}$$

2 Problem 4.26

- Check that the spin matrices(1) obey the fundamental commutation relations for angular momentum(2).

$$\hat{S}_x = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \hat{S}_y = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \hat{S}_z = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \tag{1}$$

$$\left[\hat{S}_x, \hat{S}_y\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_z, \quad \left[\hat{S}_y, \hat{S}_z\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_x, \quad \left[\hat{S}_z, \hat{S}_x\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_y \tag{2}$$

- Show that the Pauli spin matrices(3) satisfy the product rule(4), where the indices stand for x, y, z and ϵ_{jkl} is the Levi-Civita symbol.

$$\sigma_x = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \sigma_y = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \sigma_z = \frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \tag{3}$$

$$\sigma_j\sigma_k = \delta_{jk} + i\sum_l \epsilon_{jkl}\sigma_l. \tag{4}$$

Solution 2: Commutation relations

We start computing $\left[\hat{S}_x, \hat{S}_y\right]$,

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[\hat{S}_x, \hat{S}_y\right] &= \frac{\hbar^2}{4}\left[\begin{pmatrix} i & 0 \\ 0 & -i \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} -i & 0 \\ 0 & i \end{pmatrix}\right] \\
&= i\hbar\frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \\
&= i\hbar\hat{S}_z.
\end{aligned}$$

Now $\left[\hat{S}_y, \hat{S}_z\right]$,

$$\begin{aligned}
\left[\hat{S}_y, \hat{S}_z\right] &= \frac{\hbar^2}{4}\left[\begin{pmatrix} 0 & i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ -i & 0 \end{pmatrix}\right] \\
&= i\hbar\frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\
&= i\hbar\hat{S}_x.
\end{aligned}$$

Finally $\left[\hat{S}_z, \hat{S}_x\right]$,

$$\begin{aligned}\left[\hat{S}_z, \hat{S}_x\right] &= \frac{\hbar^2}{4}\left[\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} - \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\right] \\ &= (-ii)\frac{\hbar}{2}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ &= i\hbar\hat{S}_y.\end{aligned}$$

Hence, it is proof that,

$$\boxed{\left[\hat{S}_x, \hat{S}_y\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_z, \quad \left[\hat{S}_y, \hat{S}_z\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_x, \quad \left[\hat{S}_z, \hat{S}_x\right] = i\hbar\hat{S}_y}$$

Solution 3: Pauli spin matrices properties

To proof that the product rule is satified by the Pauli matrices, we compute all the products. Strating with $\sigma_x\sigma_x$, $\sigma_y\sigma_y$, $\sigma_z\sigma_z$,

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_x\sigma_x &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \\ \sigma_y\sigma_y &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \\ \sigma_z\sigma_z &= \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.\end{aligned}$$

Now, for the cross terms,

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_x\sigma_y &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \\ \sigma_y\sigma_z &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \\ \sigma_x\sigma_z &= \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.\end{aligned}$$

$\boxed{\text{Yes, it worked}}$

3 Problem 4.27

An electron is in the spin state,

$$\chi = A \begin{pmatrix} 3i \\ 4 \end{pmatrix}$$

- Determine the normalization constant A.
- Find the expectation values of S_x, S_y and S_z.
- Find the "uncertanties" $\sigma_{S_x}, \sigma_{S_y}$ and σ_{S_z}. (Note: These sigmas are standard deviations, not Pauli matrices!)
- Confirm that your results are consistent with all three uncertanty principles 4.100 and its cyclic permutations-only with S in place of L, of course.

Solution 4: Practice spin state

Sol

4 Problem 4.32 a

If you measure the component of spin angular momentum along the x direction, at time t, what is the probability that you would get $+\hbar/2$?

Solution 5: Practice spin state

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