The Particle-Like Properties of Electromagnetic Waves

Michael Brodskiy
Professor: Q. Yan

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1 Review of Electromagnetic Waves

- Reviewing the nature of light (or electromagnetic waves)
  - A plane wave
    - A plane wave traveling in the positive x direction:

$$\begin{cases} \vec{E} = \vec{E}_o \sin(kx - \omega t) \\ \vec{B} = \vec{B}_o \sin(kx - \omega t) \end{cases}$$

    - The direction of energy transport would be $\vec{E} \times \vec{B}$
    - $|\vec{E}|$ and $|\vec{B}|$ are constant at a given t
    - The power, P, of the wave:

$$P = \frac{E}{\Delta t} = \frac{1}{\mu_o c} E_o^2 A \sin^2(kx - \omega t)$$

    - Two important features:
      1. Intensity (average power per unit area) is proportional to E_o^2

$$P_{avg} = \int_0^T P(t)\, dt$$

      2. The intensity of the system fluctuates with time

$$\frac{P_{avg}}{A}$$

  - A spherical wave
    - Spreads out uniformly along the three axis

2 The Photoelectric Effect

- Experiment performed by Heinrich Hertz (1887)
- When a metal surface is illuminated, light electrons can be emitted from the surface
- The Experiment:
  - Connect emitter and collector to an external circuit
  - Apply a negative potential to the circuit collector
  - Increase the potential difference $((-V) - (+V))$ to be more negative
  - At some point, even the most energetic electrons do not have enough kinetic energy to reach the collector

– The maximum kinetic energy to reach the collector with the stopping voltage, V_s, is:

$$K_{max} = eV_s$$

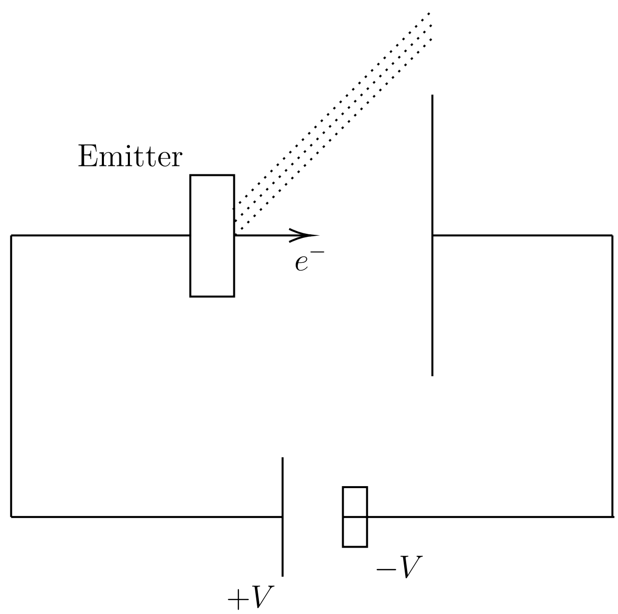

Figure 1: Set up of the Photoelectric Effect Experiment

– The classical picture: The energy of light with intensity I is absorbed by electrons, $E_{light} > E_{binding}$, e is released

– What does the classical wave theory predict?

1. The maximum kinetic energy of the electrons, K_{max}, is proportional to the intensity of light
2. The effect occurs for light with any frequency or wavelength
3. e^- are released after a finite Δt

- Experimental Results

1. For a fixed f or λ, K_{max} is independent of the intensity of light
2. The effect occurs only if $f > f_{\text{cutoff}}$
3. The first electrons are emitted almost instantaneously ($< 10^{-9}$[s])

– This means everything that classical wave theory predicted was essentially incorrect

- The Quantum Theory of the Photoelectric Effect
  - Developed by Albert Einstein (in 1905), based on Max Planck's idea explaining thermal radiation
  - Assumptions:
    * The energy of electromagnetic waves is not continuously distributed
    * The energy is concentrated in localized bands or "quanta"
    * This quanta is called "photon"
  - The energy of a photon is $\boxed{E = hf}$, where h is Planck's constant, and f is the frequency

$$\boxed{f = \frac{c}{\lambda} \Rightarrow E = \frac{hc}{\lambda}}$$

  - Photons travel at speed c, and are technically massless, so:

$$\boxed{p = \frac{E}{c} = \frac{h}{\lambda}}$$

  - If $E = hf > \phi$, then photoelectrons are released; E is the photon energy, and ϕ is the work function
  - The kinetic energy of the electron is:

$$\boxed{K_{max} = hf - \phi}$$

  - Evidently, the intensity is not relevant; a larger intensity would mean more photons in a unit area, which means more electrons released; this means there is more current.

- In 1915, Robert Millikan performed an experiment (won 1923 Nobel Prize)
  - Determined Planck's constant ($h = 6.57 \cdot 10^{-34}\,\mathrm{J\,s}$)
  - Fairly accurate, modern calculations found $h = 6.626 \cdot 10^{-34}\,\mathrm{J\,s}$

- The Photoelectric Effect Formula:

$$\boxed{\lambda_c = \frac{hc}{\phi}}$$

  - Where λ_c is the cutoff wavelength, h is Planck's constant, and ϕ is the work function

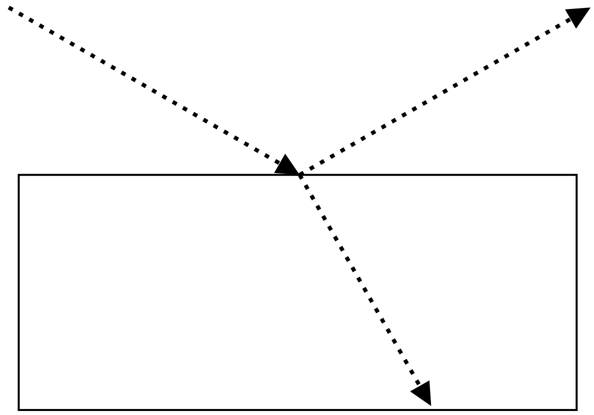

Figure 2: Classical Reflection of a Light Beam

3 Compton Effect

- From classical physics (optics), $\lambda_1 = \lambda_2$
- There will be a scattering process (Figure 3)
  - An incident photon (E, p) collides with a stationary electron
  - The photon (E', p') is scattered with angle θ
  - The electron (E_e, p_e) is scattered with angle ϕ

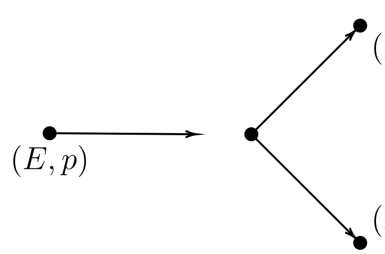

Figure 3: Collision of Photon and Electron

- Conservation of Energy and Momentum
  - $E_i = E_f \Rightarrow E + m_e c^2 = E' + E_e$
  - Momentum
    * $p_{xi} = p_{xf} \Rightarrow p = p' \cos(\theta) + p_e \cos(\phi)$

    - $p_{yi} = p_{yf} \Rightarrow 0 = p' \sin(\theta) + p_e \sin(\phi)$
- Conservation Laws:

$$\boxed{E - E' = E_e - m_e c^2 = K_e}$$

- After a lot of algebra and formula manipulations, we get:

$$\boxed{\lambda' - \lambda = \frac{h}{m_e c}(1 - \cos(\theta))}$$

- λ' is the wavelength of the scattered photon, λ is the wavelength of the incident photon, and $\dfrac{h}{m_e c}$ is the Compton wavelength (approximately .002426[nm])
- Thus, after scattering, we know $\lambda' \geq \lambda$

$$\lambda' - \lambda = \begin{cases} 0, & \text{when } \theta = 0 \\ \dfrac{2h}{m_e c}, & \text{when } \theta = 180 \end{cases}$$

- Electron has maximum energy when θ is closer to 180, and minimum energy when θ is closer to 0
- The experiment was done by Arthur Compton in 1923
    - A beam of x-rays of wavelength λ is incident on carbon ("nearly free" electrons); measured the scattered x-ray intensity as a function of θ

4 Thermal Radiation

- The total intensity $\left(\int I(\lambda)\, d\lambda\right)$ increases as T is increased
- Stefan's Law: $I = \sigma T^4$
- λ_{max} decreases as T increases
- Wien's Displacement: $\lambda_{\text{max}} T = 2.9 \cdot 10^{-3}[\text{m K}]$
- Classical theory outline of $I(\lambda)$ vs. λ:
    - A box is filled with an EM standing wave (black body)
    - The number of standing waves with a wavelength between λ and $\lambda + d\lambda$ is:

$$N(\lambda)\, d\lambda = \frac{8\pi V}{\lambda^4}\, d\lambda$$

- Each standing wave carries E_{avg}

$$E_{avg} = k_B T$$

- Energy Density (# of standing waves per volume):

$$u(\lambda)\,d\lambda = \frac{8\pi}{\lambda^4} k_B T\,d\lambda$$

$$I(\lambda) = \frac{c}{4} u(\lambda)$$

$$\boxed{I(\lambda) = \frac{2\pi c}{\lambda^4} k_B T}$$

- This is known as the Rayleigh-Jones formula
  * It approaches the correct intensity at large wavelengths
  * Fails at small wavelengths
  * Known as the ultraviolet catastrophe

- Quantum Theory of Thermal Radiation
  - The theory was proposed by Max Planck in 1900
  - What was needed? $u(\lambda) \to 0$ when $\lambda \to 0$
  - An oscillating can absorb or emit energy only in discrete bundles