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## HOMWORK 3

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# 1 Planar electromagnetic waves

## A Maxwell equations for the four-potential

The components of the contravariant four potential are  $A^\mu = (\varphi, \mathbf{A})$  ( $A_\mu = (-\varphi, \mathbf{A})$  for the covariant components) where  $\varphi$  is the electric potential and  $\mathbf{A}$  is the magnetic potential vector. The sources generating each component of  $A^\mu$  can be grouped in a current four vector  $j^\mu = (\rho, \mathbf{j})$  ( $j_\mu = (-\rho, \mathbf{j})$  for the covariant components) where  $\rho$  is the charge density and  $\mathbf{j}$  is the current observed in the reference frame where we solve for  $A^\mu$ . In the Lorentz gauge  $0 = \nabla_\mu A^\mu$ , the Maxwell equations for  $A^\mu$  with sources  $j^\mu$  read  $\square A^\mu = -4\pi j^\mu$  ( $\square A_\mu = -4\pi j_\mu$  for the covariant components).

## B Plane wave Ansatz

We now solve the Maxwell equations in the Lorentz gauge, by introducing the plane wave ansatz  $A_\mu(t, \mathbf{x}) = a_\mu \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu)$  where  $k^\mu = (\mu, \mathbf{k})$  is the four wave vector and  $a^\mu$  is the four amplitude. On one hand, substituting this ansatz in the Lorentz gauge condition, we get

$$0 = \nabla_\mu A^\mu = \nabla_\mu (a^\mu \exp(ik_\nu x^\nu)) = a^\mu i \delta_\mu^\nu k_\nu \exp(ik_\nu x^\nu) = (a^\mu k_\mu) \exp(ik_\nu x^\nu) \iff a^\mu k_\mu = 0.$$

On the other hand, substituting the ansatz in the vacuum Maxwell equations ( $j_\mu$ ) yields

$$0 = \nabla^\mu \nabla_\mu A_\nu = i \delta_\mu^\rho k_\rho \nabla^\mu (\exp(ik^\rho x_\rho)) = -k^\mu k_\mu \exp(ik^\rho x_\rho) \iff k^\mu k_\mu = 0$$

so the four wave vector is light-like in the vacuum.

## C Electric and Magnetic fields

In terms of  $A_\mu$ , the electric and magnetic fields  $\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$  can be written as

$$\mathbf{E} = \nabla_j A_0 - \nabla_0 \mathbf{A} = a_0 \nabla_j \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) - \mathbf{a} \nabla_0 \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) = (ia_0 \mathbf{k} - i\mathbf{a} k_0) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu),$$

$$\mathbf{B} = \varepsilon_i^{jk} \nabla_j A_k = i \varepsilon_i^{jk} k_j a_k \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) = i \mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{a} \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu)$$

with  $\mathbf{A}, \mathbf{a}$  and  $\mathbf{k}$  are respectively the spatial components of  $A_\mu, a_\mu$  and  $k_\mu$ . We consider the projection of  $\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$  along  $\mathbf{k}$ . We define  $\mathbf{n} := \mathbf{k}/k$  to write the projections

$$\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{E} = \mathbf{k}/k \cdot \mathbf{E} = (ia_0 k^2 - i\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{a} k_0) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) / k = (ia_0(k_0^2 - i(k_0 a_0)k_0) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) / k = 0,$$

$$\mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{k} \cdot (\mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{a} \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu)) / k = 0.$$

Furthermore, we can relate  $\mathbf{E}$  and  $\mathbf{B}$  in the following way:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{B} / k_0 &= i \mathbf{k} \times (\mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{a}) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) \\ &= i ((\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{a}) \mathbf{k} - (\mathbf{k} \cdot \mathbf{k}) \mathbf{a}) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) / k_0 \\ &= i ((k_0 a_0) \mathbf{k} - (k_0^2) \mathbf{a}) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) / k_0 \\ &= i (a_0 \mathbf{k} - k_0 \mathbf{a}) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu) = \mathbf{E}. \end{aligned}$$

Since  $k_0^2 - \mathbf{k}^2 = 0$  and  $\mathbf{n} = \mathbf{k} / \sqrt{\mathbf{k}^2}$ ,  $\mathbf{k} \times \mathbf{B} / k_0 = \mathbf{n} \times \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{E}$ . The conclusion of these calculations is that  $\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$  are orthogonal to each other and to the direction of propagation of the wave given by  $\mathbf{k}$ . To analyse the phase difference between  $\mathbf{E}$  and  $\mathbf{B}$ , we notice that the global phase in  $\mathbf{E}$  is the phase of the complex quantity  $a_0 \mathbf{k} - k_0 \mathbf{a}$  and that the global phase in  $\mathbf{B}$  is the phase in  $\mathbf{a}$ .

## D Linearly polarized waves

In what follows, we set  $A^0 = -\varphi = 0$ ,  $a^0 = 0$  which corresponds to having a 0 electric potential everywhere. The time derivative of the spatial components of four potential is

$$\dot{\mathbf{A}} = ik_0 \mathbf{a} \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu).$$

It can be used to express  $\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$  when the  $a^0 = 0$ . Indeed

$$\mathbf{E} = -\dot{\mathbf{A}} = (i(0) \mathbf{k} - i\mathbf{a} k_0) \exp(ik_\mu x^\mu), \quad \mathbf{B} = \mathbf{n} \times \dot{\mathbf{A}}$$

## E Poynting vector

The energy-momentum transport associated to the electromagnetic field is described by the Poynting vector  $\mathbf{S} = \mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B}$ . Here, we want to relate  $\mathbf{S}$  to the electromagnetic energy density  $\varepsilon = (\mathbf{E}^2 + \mathbf{B}^2)/2$ . To do so, we differentiate  $\varepsilon$  with respect to time to get

$$\frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial t} = \mathbf{E} \cdot \frac{\partial \mathbf{E}}{\partial t} + \mathbf{B} \cdot \frac{\partial \mathbf{B}}{\partial t} = \mathbf{E} \cdot (\nabla \times \mathbf{B}) - \mathbf{B} \cdot (\nabla \times \mathbf{E}) = -\nabla \cdot (\mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B}) \iff 0 = \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot \mathbf{S}$$

where we have used the Faraday and Vacuum Ampere laws to express the partial derivatives. A continuity equation is found and we interpret  $\mathbf{S}$  as the energy current density.

## F Asymptotic Power

Following the analogy with the charge continuity equation, we can write an integral form of the energy continuity equation. We choose a spherical volume  $V$  surrounded by a sphere surface  $\partial V$  at radius  $R$  with outgoing normal  $\mathbf{n}_p$ . Integrating the continuity equation for  $\varepsilon$  and  $\mathbf{S}$ , we get

$$0 = \int_V d^3r \left( \frac{\partial \varepsilon}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot \mathbf{S} \right) = \frac{\partial}{\partial t} \left( \int_V d^3r \varepsilon \right) + \int_V d^3r \nabla \cdot \mathbf{S} = \frac{dE}{dt} + R^2 \int_{\partial V} \sin(\theta) d\phi d\theta (\mathbf{n}_p \cdot \mathbf{S})$$

Where  $E$  represents the total electromagnetic energy in  $V$ . If  $R$  is big enough compared to the characteristic size of the emitting system, only radiation directed to infinity goes through it and  $\frac{dE}{dt}$  represents the total radiation power of the system.

## G Poynting vector for planar waves

For planar waves, we have the following Poynting vector:

$$\mathbf{S} = \mathbf{E} \times \mathbf{B} = -\mathbf{B} \times (\mathbf{n} \times \mathbf{B}) = -(\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{n})\mathbf{B} + (\mathbf{B} \cdot \mathbf{B})\mathbf{n} = \frac{\mathbf{B}^2 + \mathbf{E}^2}{2} \mathbf{n} = \varepsilon \mathbf{n}$$

where we used  $\mathbf{E} = \mathbf{n} \times \mathbf{B}$ ,  $0 = \mathbf{n} \cdot \mathbf{B}$  and  $\mathbf{B}^2 = (\mathbf{n} \times \mathbf{B})^2 = \mathbf{E}^2$ .

# 2 Radiation of an isolated system

## A Lienard-Wiechert potential with isolated sources

The Lienard-Wiechert potential provides an expression for the four-potential generated by a charge moving on a world line.

Supposing the charges are moving slowly compared to the speed of light, the three potential  $\mathbf{A}$  contribution at time  $t$  and position  $\mathbf{r}$  of a point charge  $q$  with three-velocity  $\mathbf{v}$  and three-position  $\mathbf{r}'$  at time  $t_R = t - |\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|$  reads:

$$\mathbf{A} = \frac{q\mathbf{v}(t_R)}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'| - \mathbf{v}(t_R) \cdot (\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}')} \approx \frac{q\mathbf{v}(t_R)}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|} + O(|\mathbf{v}|^2)$$

Here we are interested in the integrated potential generated by a continuum of charges described by charge density  $\rho(t, \mathbf{r})$  and a three-current  $\mathbf{j}(t, \mathbf{r})$  at time  $t$  and cartesian three-position  $\mathbf{r}$ . In the limit of small velocities, the previous expression can be formulated in the charge continuum by replacing  $q\mathbf{v}(t_R)$  by the integral expression of the magnetic potential is given by  $\mathbf{j}(t_R, \mathbf{r}')$  and integrating over a space-slice to combine the contribution of all sources. We have

$$\mathbf{A}(t, \mathbf{r}) = \int d^3r' \frac{\mathbf{j}(t_R, \mathbf{r}')}{|\mathbf{r} - \mathbf{r}'|}.$$



To compute the result of the double cross product, we set our spherical coordinate system to have  $z$  axis aligned with  $|\ddot{\mathbf{d}}|$  to get

$$\mathbf{s} = \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \ddot{\mathbf{d}} \times \left( \frac{\mathbf{r}}{|\mathbf{r}|} \times \ddot{\mathbf{d}} \right) + \left[ \sim \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^3} \right] = \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} (\ddot{\mathbf{d}} \cdot \ddot{\mathbf{d}}) \frac{\mathbf{r}}{|\mathbf{r}|} - \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \left( \ddot{\mathbf{d}} \cdot \frac{\mathbf{r}}{|\mathbf{r}|} \right) \ddot{\mathbf{d}} + \left[ \sim \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^3} \right] = \left( -\cos(\theta) \frac{\ddot{\mathbf{d}}}{|\ddot{\mathbf{d}}|} + \frac{\mathbf{r}}{|\mathbf{r}|} \right) \frac{|\ddot{\mathbf{d}}|^2}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} + \left[ \sim \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^3} \right],$$

$$\mathbf{n}_p \cdot \mathbf{s} = (1 - \cos(\theta)^2) \frac{|\ddot{\mathbf{d}}|^2}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} + \left[ \sim \frac{1}{|\mathbf{r}|^3} \right].$$

## D

### Discussion

- i. The power previously calculated does not depend on the radius  $R$  at which we collect the emitted radiation for sufficiently large  $R$ . This is because the power scales locally by an inverse square law in the radial distance. This is consistent with the fact that waves propagating towards infinity traverse spheres at all  $R$  with the same velocity. The conservation of the energy density they carry implies that the same amount of energy must flow through all spheres. Furthermore, the constance of their velocity in the vacuum implies the rate of the flow only depends on  $R$  through the retarded time  $t'$  (we can follow waves by looking at  $t, \mathbf{r}$  that make  $t'$  and see that the rate at which their energy traverse spheres is constant).
- ii. For a system of  $N$  point charges  $q_\alpha$  with trajectories  $\mathbf{r}'_\alpha(t')$ , the retarded dipole moment has the following expression

$$\mathbf{d}(t') = \sum_{\alpha=1}^N q_\alpha \mathbf{r}'_\alpha(t').$$

The radiated power at infinity found earlier only depends on the second retarded time derivative of  $\mathbf{d}$  which reads

$$\ddot{\mathbf{d}}(t') = \sum_{\alpha=1}^N q_\alpha \ddot{\mathbf{r}}'_\alpha(t').$$

and we see that the radiated power vanished if no charge is moving on an accelerated trajectory.

- iii. Suppose we have a system of point charges that all have the same charge  $q_\alpha$  to mass  $m_\alpha$  ratio  $s$ . Using Newton's second law we find that for this system:

$$\ddot{\mathbf{d}}(t') = \sum_{\alpha=1}^N q_\alpha \ddot{\mathbf{r}}'_\alpha(t') = \sum_{\alpha=1}^N \frac{q_\alpha}{m_\alpha} \mathbf{F}_\alpha(t') = s \sum_{\alpha=1}^N \mathbf{F}_\alpha(t') = 0.$$

The last sum vanished because no net external force is exerted on the system and the sum of internal forces must vanish by the action-reaction law.

- iv. A system with equal mass ratio is not physically relevant because it necessarily contains only positive (or negative) charges making it very unstable in nature.

## 3 Beyond radiation

### A

#### Three-vector Potential Refinement

We now work on the second term of the approximation of  $\mathbf{A}$  obtained in item A of the previous question. The goal of this section is to express this contribution to  $\mathbf{A}$  in terms of

$$\mathbf{Q}_{ij} = \int d^3 r' \rho(\mathbf{r}', t') (3\mathbf{r}'_i \mathbf{r}'_j - \delta_{ij} |\mathbf{r}'|^2), \quad \text{Quadrupole Moment}$$

$$\mathbf{m} = \frac{1}{2} \int d^3 r' \mathbf{r}' \times \mathbf{j}(\mathbf{r}', t'). \quad \text{Magnetic Moment}$$

Proceeding in an analogous way to item B of the previous question we find

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{A}_j^r &= \frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial t'} \int d^3 r' \mathbf{r}'_i \mathbf{j}_j(t', \mathbf{r}') \\ &= \frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial t'} \int d^3 r' \mathbf{r}'_i \nabla(\mathbf{r}'_j) \cdot \mathbf{j}(t', \mathbf{r}') = \frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial t'} \int d^3 r' [\nabla \cdot (\mathbf{r}'_j \mathbf{r}'_i \mathbf{j}) - \mathbf{r}'_j \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{r}'_i \mathbf{j}(t', \mathbf{r}'))] \\ &= -\frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \frac{\partial}{\partial t'} \int d^3 r' [\mathbf{r}'_j \nabla(\mathbf{r}'_i) \cdot \mathbf{j}(t', \mathbf{r}') + \mathbf{r}'_j \mathbf{r}'_i \nabla \cdot \mathbf{j}(t', \mathbf{r}')] \quad \text{Divergence theorem} \\ &= -\frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \int d^3 r' [\mathbf{r}'_j \dot{\mathbf{j}}_i(t', \mathbf{r}') - \mathbf{r}'_j \mathbf{r}'_i \dot{\rho}(t', \mathbf{r}')]. \quad \text{Continuity Equation} \end{aligned}$$

Then, adding the first line to the last one yields

$$A_j^r = \frac{\mathbf{r}_i}{2|\mathbf{r}|^2} \cdot \int d^3r' \left[ \mathbf{r}'_i \dot{\mathbf{j}}_j(t', \mathbf{r}') - \mathbf{r}'_j \dot{\mathbf{j}}_i(t', \mathbf{r}') + \mathbf{r}'_j \mathbf{r}'_i \dot{\rho}(t', \mathbf{r}') \right]$$

**B**

**C**

## **4 Acknowledgement**

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# References

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- [1] Aldo Riello. *Fourteen Lectures in CLASSICAL PHYSICS*. 2023.