

4-vectors and the Doppler effect

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One Minute Paper 0.1. *Before: The frequency would increase when the truck drives towards me.
After: Moving away*

Definition 0.2. *When choosing $c = 1$, v must be within the range of $[0, 1]$*

To recap, a vector in Newtonian Mechanics transforms the same way as coordinates under rotations. That is, the components of the vector must be conserved when taking the dot-product with itself.

Then, a 4-vector in special relativity is a vector that transforms the same way as coordinates under the Lorentz transformations. That is:

$$x'^{\mu} = \Lambda_{\nu}^{\mu} x^{\nu} \iff v'^{\mu} = \Lambda_{\nu}^{\mu} v^{\nu} \quad (1)$$

That is, the components of this transformed vector must be conserved with respect to the relativistic dot-product. Then to take the time-derivative of the 4-vector displacement, we must take the time-derivative with respect to something more absolute. This is the proper time, or expressed by this equation:

$$(d\tau)^2 = dx_{\mu} dx^{\mu} \iff (dt)^2 - (dx)^2 - (dy)^2 - (dz)^2 \quad (2)$$

There is an implied metric tensor that is operating this relativistic dot-product. This is Lorentz invariant under any Lorentz transformation frame. Then taking the time-derivative of the spatial 4-vector yields the following result:

$$V^{\mu} = (\gamma, \gamma v) \quad (3)$$

Where v is the velocity vector, not the 4-vector. Then, 4-momentum is the following:

$$P^{\mu} = (\gamma m, \gamma m v) \quad (4)$$

In general, the energy of a particle can be reduced to mc^2 in a respective frame. Thus taking the relativistic dot-product, we have that

$$\gamma^2 m^2 c^4 - p^2 = m^2 c^4 \quad (5)$$

Thus, we are able to Lorentz transform the 4-momentum vector because this relativistic dot-product is conserved. This is something that we've already proved in class. Then, since momentum is a 4-vector, we can transform it using a Lorentz transformation, that is:

$$P^{\mu} = \Lambda_{\nu}^{\mu} P^{\nu} \quad (6)$$

Thus, we see that

$$F^{\mu} = \frac{dP^{\mu}}{d\tau} \iff m A^{\mu} \quad (7)$$

Similarly, the Doppler effect states that the energy of a photon is transformed as the following:

$$E' = E\gamma(1 + \beta) \iff E\sqrt{\frac{1 + \beta}{1 - \beta}} \quad (8)$$

Such that $\beta \in [0, 1]$.