

Probability Density and current density ①

Let us check whether the Dirac equation leads to the correct probability density

The Dirac equation for a free particle.

$$[E - c\vec{\alpha} \cdot \mathbf{P} - \beta mc^2] \psi = 0$$

where E and P are operators.

$$E \rightarrow i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t}$$

$$P \rightarrow -i\hbar \nabla$$

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} + i\hbar c \vec{\alpha} \cdot \nabla \psi - \beta mc^2 \psi = 0 \quad \text{--- (1)}$$

A Hermitian conjugate equation given as.

$$-i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi^\dagger}{\partial t} - i\hbar c \nabla \psi^\dagger \cdot \vec{\alpha} - \psi^\dagger \beta mc^2 = 0 \quad \text{--- (2)}$$

$\vec{\alpha}$ and β are Hermitian multiply (1) on the left by ψ^\dagger and (2) on the right by ψ

$$i\hbar \psi^\dagger \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} + i\hbar c \psi^\dagger \alpha \cdot \nabla \psi - mc^2 \psi^\dagger \beta \psi = 0$$

$$-i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi^\dagger}{\partial t} \psi - i\hbar c \nabla \psi^\dagger \cdot \alpha \psi - mc^2 \psi^\dagger \beta \psi = 0$$

after subtracting

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial}{\partial t} (\psi^\dagger \psi) + i\hbar c \nabla \cdot (\psi^\dagger \vec{\alpha} \psi) = 0$$

We can thus identify the probability density and current density

$$P(r, t) = \psi^\dagger \psi$$

$$S(r, t) = c \psi^\dagger \alpha \psi$$

The probability density is similar, if we note that $c\vec{\alpha}$ is the velocity of the particle.

$$i\hbar \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} = [\psi, H] = [\psi, c\vec{\alpha} \cdot \mathbf{p} + \beta mc^2] = i\hbar c\vec{\alpha}$$

$$\frac{\partial \psi}{\partial t} = c\vec{\alpha}$$

It is quite correct because the position operator and the velocity operator have to define properly

The eigen values of the velocity operator are $c\vec{\alpha}$ this result is often attributed to Zitterbewegung and interpreted by uncertainty principle.