

Relativistic theory of inverse beta-decay of polarized neutron in strong magnetic field

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Outline

- ✓ Solution of Dirac equation in magnetic field
- ✓ Lagrangian and matrix element of the process
- ✓ Law of energy conservation and critical magnetic fields
- ✓ General expression for cross-section of the inverse beta-decay
- Cross-section in super-strong, strong and weak magnetic field
- ✓ Effects of anomalous magnetic moments of nucleons

Introduction

The inverse beta-decay of neutron in magnetic field

$$\nu_e + n \xrightarrow{B} p + e^-$$

1. Incoming neutrino is supposed to be relativistic and effects of neutrino non-zero mass are neglected.

2. The four-fermion weak interaction theory is relevant in our case.
3. We suppose that *Z* and *W* bosons are not affected by the magnetic field.



Four-fermion Lagrangian:

$$\mathcal{L} = \frac{G}{\sqrt{2}} \left[\bar{\psi}_p \gamma_\mu (1 + \alpha \gamma_5) \psi_n \right] \left[\bar{\psi}_e \gamma^\mu (1 + \gamma_5) \psi_\nu \right], \qquad \alpha = \frac{g_A}{g_V} = 1.26$$

E.Fermi, 1934

Dirac equation in magnetic field

$$\{\gamma^{\mu}(p_{\mu} + eA_{\mu}^{ext}) - m\}\Psi(\vec{r},t) = 0$$

Solution for $A_{\mu}^{ext} = (0, 0, xB, 0)$ A. Sokolov, J. Phys. USSR, 1945

$$\psi_{e} = \frac{1}{L} \begin{pmatrix} C_{1}U_{n-1}(\eta) \\ iC_{2}U_{n}(\eta) \\ C_{3}U_{n-1}(\eta) \\ iC_{4}U_{n}(\eta) \end{pmatrix} e^{-i(p_{0}t-p_{2}y-p_{3}z)}.$$

where U_n are Hermite functions of order n

$$\begin{split} U_n(\eta) &= \sqrt{\frac{eB}{2^n n! \pi^{1/2}}} \ e^{-\eta^2/2} H_n(\eta) & \eta = x \sqrt{\gamma} + \frac{p_2}{\sqrt{\gamma}}, \quad \gamma = eB, \\ H_n(\eta) &= (-1)^n e^{\eta^2} \frac{d^n}{d\eta^n} e^{-\eta^2} & \text{-Hermite polynomials} \end{split}$$

Energy spectrum:

$$p_{0} = \sqrt{m^{2} + p_{3}^{2} + 2eBn}, \quad n = 0, 1, 2, ...$$
Non relativistic case
$$p_{0} \approx m + \frac{p_{3}^{2}}{2m} + n\omega, \quad \omega = \frac{eB}{m}$$

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$$\bigvee C_{1,3} = \frac{1}{2}\sqrt{1+s\frac{m}{\tilde{p}_{\perp}}} \sqrt{1\pm s\frac{\tilde{p}_{\perp}}{p_0}}, \qquad C_{2,4} = \pm \frac{1}{2}s\sqrt{1-s\frac{m}{\tilde{p}_{\perp}}} \sqrt{1\pm s\frac{\tilde{p}_{\perp}}{p_0}},$$

 $s = \pm 1$ is electron spin projection value (s = 1 corresponds to spin orientation parallel to direction of magnetic field **B**).

Matrix element

Total cross-section

$$\sigma = \frac{L^3}{T} \sum_{\text{phase space}} |M|^2,$$

Matrix element of process

$$M = \frac{G}{\sqrt{2}} \int \left[\bar{\psi}_p \gamma_\mu (1 + \alpha \gamma_5) \psi_n \right] \left[\bar{\psi}_e \gamma^\mu (1 + \gamma_5) \psi_\nu \right] \mathrm{d}x \,\mathrm{d}y \,\mathrm{d}z \,\mathrm{d}t$$

where Ψ_p and Ψ_e are exact solution of Dirac equation in magnetic field, $G = G_F \cos \theta_c, \ \theta_c$ is Cabibbo angle, $\alpha = \frac{g_A}{g_V} = 1.26$.

Relativistic theory of inverse beta-decay of polarized neutron

Effects of *proton momentum quantization* and *proton recoil motion* are accounted.

Neutrino and neutron are not affected by magnetic field

$$\psi_{n} = \frac{1}{2L^{3/2}} \begin{pmatrix} N_{1} \\ N_{2} \\ N_{3} \\ N_{4} \end{pmatrix} e^{-i(p_{0}^{n}t - \vec{p_{n}}\vec{r})}, \quad \begin{cases} N_{1,3} = s_{n}\sqrt{1 \pm \frac{m_{n}}{p_{0}^{n}}} \cdot \sqrt{1 \pm s_{n}\cos\theta_{n}} \cdot e^{\mp i\varphi_{n}/2}, \\ N_{2,4} = \sqrt{1 \mp \frac{m_{n}}{p_{0}^{n}}} \cdot \sqrt{1 \mp s_{n}\cos\theta_{n}} \cdot e^{\pm i\varphi_{n}/2}. \end{cases}$$

 $s_n = \pm 1$ is neutron spin projection value ($s_n = 1$ corresponds to spin orientation parallel to direction of magnetic field *B*).

Neutrino wave function

$$\psi_{\nu} = \frac{1}{2L^{3/2}} \begin{pmatrix} f_1 \\ f_2 \\ -f_1 \\ -f_2 \end{pmatrix} e^{-i(\varkappa t - \vec{\varkappa} \vec{r})}, \qquad f_1 = -e^{-i\varphi_{\nu}} \sqrt{1 - \cos \theta_{\nu}}, \\ f_2 = \sqrt{1 + \cos \theta_{\nu}}, \end{cases}$$

where θ_{v} , φ_{v} are polar and azimuthal neutrino momentum angles.

Neutrino energy

$$\varkappa = |\vec{\varkappa}|, \qquad (m_{\nu} \ll \varkappa)$$

Proton wave function

$$\psi_p = \frac{1}{L} \begin{pmatrix} C'_1 U_{n'}(\eta') \\ -iC'_2 U_{n'-1}(\eta') \\ C'_3 U_{n'}(\eta') \\ -iC'_4 U_{n'-1}(\eta') \end{pmatrix} e^{-i(p'_0 t - p'_2 y - p'_3 z)},$$

where dashed quantities correspond to proton mass, number of Landau state, energy and momentum components.

Cross section of process

After integration over space-time and proton and electron momenta

$$\sigma = \frac{eB}{32\pi} \sum_{s,s'} \sum_{n,n'} \int_{\infty}^{\infty} |M|^2 \delta_0 (p'_0 + p_0 - m_n - \varkappa) \Big|_{p_3 = \varkappa_3 - p'_3} \mathrm{d}p'_3,$$

where squared matrix element

$$|M|^{2} = AI_{n',n-1}^{2}(\rho) + BI_{n',n}^{2}(\rho) + CI_{n'-1,n-1}^{2}(\rho) + DI_{n',n}(\rho)I_{n'-1,n-1}(\rho),$$

 $A, B, C, D \sim f_i^2, N_j^2, C_k^2, C'_l^2$ are function of (*s*, *s*', *s*_n, *p*₃, *p*'₃, *κ*, cosθ).

General expression for cross-section

Integration over p'_3

$$\delta(\varphi(p'_3)) = \sum_{i} \frac{\delta(p'_3 - p'^{(i)}_3)}{|\varphi'(p'^{(i)}_3)|}, \ \varphi(p'_3) = \sqrt{\tilde{p}_{\perp}'^2 + p'^2_3} + \sqrt{\tilde{p}_{\perp}^2 + (\varkappa_3 - p'_3)^2} - m_n - \varkappa,$$

number of simple roots eq.: $\varphi(p'_{3}^{(i)})=0$

Finally

$$\sigma = \frac{eB}{32\pi} \sum_{s,s'} \sum_{n,n'} \sum_{i=1,2} \frac{|M^{(i)}|^2}{\left|\frac{p_3^{(i)}}{p_0^{(i)}} - \frac{p_3'^{(i)}}{p_0'^{(i)}}\right|},$$

Where used substitution $p_3^\prime \rightarrow p_3^{\prime (i)} \, . \label{eq:p3}$

where $p'_{3}^{(i)}$ are simple roots equation $\varphi(p'_{3}^{(i)})=0$.

Cross section of inverse beta-decay of polarized neutron in magnetic field, effects of *Landau quantization of proton momentum* and *proton recoil motion are accounted for exactly* for arbitrary magnetic field **B** and neutrino energy.

Energy conservation law

$$m_n + \varkappa = \sqrt{m^2 + 2\gamma n + (\varkappa_3 - p'_3)^2} + \sqrt{m'^2 + 2\gamma n' + p'^2_3}$$

Critical magnetics fields: *B_{cr}*, *B'_{cr}*

1. Maximal number of electron Landau level

$$n_{\rm max} = {\rm int} \left[\frac{(\Delta + \varkappa_{\rm max})^2 - m^2}{2eB} \right], \qquad \Delta = m_n - m',$$

 n_{max} < 1 (i.e.=0) if $B \ge B_{cr}$ - electron critical field strength

$$B_{\rm cr} = \frac{(\Delta + \varkappa_{\rm max})^2 - m^2}{2e}$$

If $B \ge B_{cr}$ then n = 0 (electron at lowest Landau level).

for different neutrino energies

$$\begin{split} B_{\rm cr} &\approx 8.3 \times 10^{16} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} = 30 \ {\rm MeV}, \\ B_{\rm cr} &\approx 1.1 \times 10^{16} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} = 10 \ {\rm MeV}, \\ B_{\rm cr} &\approx 1.2 \times 10^{14} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} \ll \ m. \end{split}$$

2. Maximal number of proton Landau level

$$n'_{\max} = \operatorname{int}\left[\frac{(\varkappa_{\max} + m_n - m)^2 - m'^2}{2eB}\right],$$

proton critical field strength

$$B'_{\rm cr} = \frac{(\varkappa_{\rm max} + m_n - m)^2 - m'^2}{2e}$$

for different neutrino energies

$$\begin{split} B_{\rm cr}' &\approx 5 \times 10^{18} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} = 30 \ {\rm MeV} \\ B_{\rm cr}' &\approx 1.7 \times 10^{18} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} = 10 \ {\rm MeV} \\ B_{\rm cr}' &\approx 1.3 \times 10^{17} \ {\rm G}, \quad \varkappa_{\rm max} \ll \ m. \end{split}$$

If $B \ge B'_{cr}$, then n' = 0 (proton at lowest Landau level).

Three ranges of magnetic field strength

- 1. weak field $(B < B_{cr})$
- **2.** strong field $(B_{cr} \leq B < B'_{cr})$
- **3.** super-strong field $(B \ge B'_{cr})$



Super-strong magnetic field ($B \ge B'_{cr}$)

Landau Level for electron and proton:

$$n' = 0 \qquad \longrightarrow \qquad \begin{array}{c} s' = +1, \\ \vec{s_p} \uparrow \uparrow \vec{B} \end{array} \qquad n = 0 \qquad \longrightarrow \qquad \begin{array}{c} s = -1, \\ \vec{s_e} \uparrow \downarrow \vec{B} \end{array}$$

Cross section

$$\sigma_{n=n'=0} = \frac{eBG^2}{8\pi} e^{-\varkappa_{\perp}^2/2\gamma} \sum_{i=1,2} \frac{\left(1 + \frac{p_3^{(i)}}{p_0^{(i)}}\right)}{\left|\frac{p_3^{(i)}}{p_0^{(i)}} - \frac{p_3'^{(i)}}{p_0'^{(i)}}\right|} \{a^{(i)} + b^{(i)}\cos\theta + s_n(b^{(i)} + a^{(i)}\cos\theta)\},\$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} a^{(i)} &= 3 + 2\alpha + 3\alpha^2 - 2(1 - \alpha^2) \frac{m'}{p_0'^{(i)}} - (1 + 6\alpha + \alpha^2) \frac{p_3'^{(i)}}{p_0'^{(i)}}, \\ b^{(i)} &= -1 + 2\alpha - \alpha^2 + 2(1 - \alpha^2) \frac{m'}{p_0'^{(i)}} - (1 - \alpha)^2 \frac{p_3'^{(i)}}{p_0'^{(i)}}. \end{aligned}$$

If we neglect proton momentum $(p'_3 << m')$

$$\sigma_{n=n'=0}\Big|_{p'_0=m'} = \frac{eBG^2}{4\pi} e^{-\varkappa_{\perp}^2/2\gamma} \{a+b\cos\theta + s_n(b+a\cos\theta)\} \frac{\Delta+\varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta+\varkappa)^2 - m^2}},$$

where



Polarized neutron matter

Neutrons polarization:

$$S = \frac{N_+ - N_-}{N_+ + N_-}$$
, N_{\pm} – numbers of neutrons with $s_n = \pm 1$.

Cross section for polarized neutron matter:

 σ = 0, if S = -1

$$\sigma_{n=n'=0}\Big|_{p'_0=m',\cos\theta=1} = \frac{eBG^2}{2\pi} e^{-\varkappa_{\perp}^2/2\gamma} (1+\alpha^2)(1+S) \frac{\Delta+\varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta+\varkappa)^2 - m^2}}$$

 σ = 0, if S = +1

$$\sigma_{n=n'=0}\Big|_{p'_0=m',\cos\theta=-1} = \frac{eBG^2}{\pi} e^{-\varkappa_{\perp}^2/2\gamma} 2\alpha^2 (1-S) \frac{\Delta+\varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta+\varkappa)^2-m^2}}$$

Neutrino asymmetry:

Totally polarized neutron matter is transparent for neutrino moving antiparallel to neutron polarization in super-strong field: $S \cos \theta = -1$.

Strong magnetic field $(B_{cr} \le B \le B'_{cr})$

Available Landau level for electron and proton:

$$n = 0, \ n'_{\max} = \operatorname{int}\left[\frac{(m_n + \varkappa - m)^2 - m'^2}{2eB}\right] \approx \operatorname{int}\left[\frac{m'(\Delta + \varkappa - m)}{eB}\right].$$

Cross section

$$\begin{split} \sigma_{n=0} &= \frac{eBG^2}{8\pi} \sum_{n'=0}^{n'_{\max}} \sum_{i=1,2} \frac{\left(1 + \frac{p_3^{(i)}}{p_0^{(i)}}\right)}{\left|\frac{p_3^{(i)}}{p_0^{(i)}} - \frac{p_3^{'(i)}}{p_0^{'(i)}}\right|} \left\{ \left[(1+\alpha)^2 \left(1 - \frac{p_3^{'(i)}}{p_0^{'(i)}}\right) (1+S) (1+\cos\theta) \right. \right. \\ &\left. + 2 \left[1 + \alpha^2 - (1-\alpha^2) \frac{m'}{p_0^{'(i)}} - 2\alpha \frac{p_3^{'(i)}}{p_0^{'(i)}} \right] (1-S) (1-\cos\theta) \right] I_{n',0}^2(\rho) \\ &\left. + (1-\alpha)^2 \left(1 - \frac{p_3^{'(i)}}{p_0^{'(i)}} \right) (1-S) (1+\cos\theta) (1-\delta_{n',0}) I_{n'-1,0}^2(\rho) \right\}, \end{split}$$

where $\delta_{n',0}$ is the Kronecker delta $(1 - \delta_{n',0} = 0 \text{ for } n' = 0)$.

Proton momentum quantization and recoil motion are accounted for *exactly*.

Cross section for the case p'₀=m' (proton motion is neglected)

$$\begin{split} \sigma_{n=0}\big|_{p'_0=m'} &= \frac{eBG^2}{2\pi} \{1+3\alpha^2+(1-\alpha^2)\cos\theta & \begin{array}{c} \text{Bhattacharya, Pal,} \\ Pramana \ J. \ Phys., \ 2004 \\ +2\alpha S[1-\alpha+(1+\alpha)\cos\theta]\} \frac{\Delta+\varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta+\varkappa)^2-m^2}}. \end{split}$$

If $\cos \theta = -1$ then cross section is

$$\sigma_{n=0}\Big|_{p'_0=m',\cos\theta=-1} = \frac{eBG^2}{\pi} 2\alpha^2 (1-S) \frac{\Delta+\varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta+\varkappa)^2 - m^2}}.$$

$$\sigma = 0, \text{ if } S=+1$$

For neutron matter totally polarized parallel to magnetic field vector, S = +1, cross-section vanishes.

If $\cos \theta = 1, S = -1$ then

$$\sigma \sim (1 - \alpha)^2 < 0.1, \ \alpha = 1.26.$$

Neutron matter is transparent for neutrino if $S \cos\theta = -1$ in strong magnetic field.



Weak magnetic field ($B < B_{cr}$)

Many Landau levels are available for electron and proton

$$n_{\max} = \operatorname{int}\left[\frac{(\Delta + \varkappa_{\max})^2 - m^2}{2eB}\right], \ n'_{\max} \to \infty.$$

Cross section

 $\sigma \Big|_{p'_0 = m'} = \frac{eBG^2}{2\pi} \sum_{n=0}^{n_{\max}} \{g_n [1 + 3\alpha^2 + 2S\alpha(1 + \alpha)\cos\theta] \begin{array}{l} \text{Bhattacharya, Pal,} \\ \text{Pramana J. Phys., 2004} \\ + \delta_{n,0} [(1 - \alpha^2)\cos\theta + 2S\alpha(1 - \alpha)]\} \frac{\Delta + \varkappa}{\sqrt{(\Delta + \varkappa)^2 - m^2 - 2\gamma n}}. \end{array}$

Cross-section has resonance structure when

$$p_0 = \varkappa + \Delta = \sqrt{m^2 + 2\gamma n}, \qquad n \le n_{\max}.$$
 allowed Landau energies

 \checkmark N_{res} increases with neutrino energy for B = const,

 \checkmark infinity high spikes smooth out if proton motion is accounted for.

Magnetic field-free limit

When the field is switching off, the maximum number of Landau level n_{max} is increasing to infinity, however

$$\lim_{B \to 0, n \to \infty} eBn = \frac{(\Delta + \varkappa)^2 - m^2}{2}, \quad n'_{max} \to \infty.$$

Cross section

Kerimov, *Izv. Ak. Nauk USSR*, 1961

$$\sigma_0 = \frac{G^2}{\pi} \left[1 + 3\alpha^2 + 2\alpha S_n (1+\alpha) \cos \theta \right] (\Delta + \varkappa) \sqrt{(\Delta + \varkappa)^2 - m^2}$$

Effects of anomalous magnetic moments

Proton energy in magnetic field

$$p'_{0} = \sqrt{\left(\sqrt{m'^{2} + 2eBn'} - s'k_{p}B\right)^{2} + {p'_{3}}^{2}}, \quad k_{p} = \frac{e}{2m'}\left(\frac{g_{p}}{2} - 1\right),$$

where proton's Lande factor: $g_p = 5.58$

Neutron energy in magnetic field

$$p_0^n = m_n - s_n k_n B, \qquad k_n = \frac{e}{2m_n} \frac{g_n}{2}.$$

where neutron's Lande factor: $g_n = -3.82$.

Taking into account these modifed expressions for proton and neutron energies, we can repeat all calculations applying substitutions:

$$m' \rightarrow m'^* = m' - k_p B, \quad m_n \rightarrow m_n^* = m_n - s_n k_n B.$$

In super-strong magnetic field there is range of neutron matter polarization *S* for which the matter becomes transparent for neutrinos:

$$m_n - s_n k_n B + \varkappa \ge m + m' - k_p B.$$

Conclusions

1. We have developed relativistic theory of inverse beta-decay of polarized neutron in magnetic field, accounting for proton momentum quantization and recoil motion.

2. Closed general expression obtained for cross-section of process in magnetic field.

3. For three ranges of background magnetic field $(B > B'_{cr}, B_{cr} \le B \le B'_{cr}, B < B_{cr})$ we have calculated the cross-section and discussed its dependence on neutrino energy, angle θ and neutron polarization *S*. Proper treatment of super-strong field:

$$\sum_{n'=0}^{\infty} \sigma(n,n') \big|_{p'_0=m'} \neq \sigma(n,n') \big|_{n'=0}$$

4. Cross-section asymmetry.

We have shown that polarized neutron matter is transparent for neutrino and super-strong field if $S \cos \theta = -1$ and in strong field if S=1 and $\cos \theta = -1$.

5. Developed relativistic treatment of cross-section can be applied to other URCA processes in magnetic field with two particles in initial and final states

$$p + \bar{\nu}_e \leftrightarrows n + e^+,$$
$$e + p \longrightarrow n + \nu_e,$$

that are important for star cooling and also producing asymmetry in neutrino distribution.

 \checkmark Crossing symmetry makes it possible, that squared matrix elements are the same.

✓ What remains to be done is to change appropriately phase volume of the process.

Weak reaction rates in magnetic field

Inter-conversion between *n* and *p* in magnetic field through

$$\begin{array}{l}
\nu_e + n \rightleftharpoons e + p, \\
p + \bar{\nu}_e \leftrightarrows n + e^+, \quad \text{Inverse beta-decay} \\
n \to p + e + \bar{\nu}_e,
\end{array}$$

n/p ratio in various astropartical processes such as

- I. Big-Bang Nucleosynthesis
 - Greenstein, 1969;
 - Matese, O'Connel, 1969, 1970;
- Cheng, Schram, Truran, 1993;
- Grasso, Rubinstein, 1995,1996, 2001.
- II. Neutron Star Cooling and Kick Velosities
 - Chugai, 1984;

- Loskutov, Zakharov, 1985;
- Dorofeev, Radionov, Ternov, 1984; Studenikin, 1988.

+ H.Duan, Y.-Z. Qian, astro-ph/0401634, January 30, 2004

Neutrino processes

$$\nu_e + n \rightleftharpoons e + p, \quad p + \bar{\nu}_e \leftrightarrows n + e^+,$$

in magnetic field $B \le 10^{16}$ G

(non-relativistic approach to neutron and proton motion)

✓ Neutrino asymmetry and reduction of supernova cooling rate.

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Relativistic theory of inverse beta-decay of polarized neutron

$$\nu_e + n \to p + e^-$$

in strong and super-strong magnetic field

✓ Effects of proton momentum quantization and proton recoil motion are included.

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