

Review of: "Can the electromagnetic fields form tensors if $\mathbf{D} = \epsilon \mathbf{E}$ and $\mathbf{H} = \mathbf{B}/\mu$?"

Fabrice Pardo¹

¹ University of Paris-Saclay

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The author consider a material where, in its frame of reference, $\mathbf{E} = \mathbf{D}/\epsilon$ and $\mathbf{B} = \mu \mathbf{H}$.

The author makes the mistake of imagining that there is a material for which this relationship is valid in any frame of reference.

If such a material existed, it would not be possible to have both $-\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$ components of a tensor and $\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{D}$ components of a tensor, and then his conclusion would be valid.

Now, since $-\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{B}$ and $\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{D}$ are tensors - and this is, in my opinion, the most fundamental assumption of electromagnetism - we must, by contraposition deduce that there is no material for which $\mathbf{E} = \mathbf{D}/\epsilon$ and $\mathbf{B} = \mu \mathbf{H}$ in any reference frame.

If, for simplicity's sake, we take only reference frames whose metric tensor is $(+1, -1, -1, -1)$, we have, in the linear regime of matter $F_{ij} = (1/2)a_{ij}{}^{kl}G_{kl}$

with

$$F_{01} = -F_{10} = -E_x$$

$$F_{02} = -F_{20} = -E_y$$

$$F_{03} = -F_{30} = -E_z$$

$$F_{12} = -F_{21} = B_x$$

$$F_{31} = -F_{13} = B_y$$

$$F_{12} = -F_{21} = B_z$$

$$G_{01} = -G_{10} = H_x$$

$$G_{02} = -G_{20} = H_y$$

$$G_{03} = -G_{30} = H_z$$

$$G_{12} = -G_{21} = D_x$$

$$G_{31} = -G_{13} = D_y$$

$$G_{12} = -G_{21} = D_z$$

In a vacuum, non-zero terms are

$$a^{0123} = 1$$

$$a^{0132} = -1$$

$$a^{0231} = 1$$

$$a^{0213} = -1$$

$$a^{0312} = 1$$

$$a^{0321} = -1$$

$$a^{1023} = 1$$

$$a^{1032} = -1$$

$$a^{2031} = 1$$

$$a^{2013} = -1$$

$$a^{3012} = 1$$

$$a^{3021} = -1$$

$$a^{2301} = 1$$

$$a^{3201} = -1$$

$$a^{3102} = 1$$

$$a^{1302} = -1$$

$$a^{1203} = 1$$

$$a^{2103} = -1$$

$$a^{2310} = 1$$

$$a^{3210} = -1$$

$$a^{3120} = 1$$

$$a^{1320} = -1$$

$$a^{1230} = 1$$

$$a^{2130} = -1$$

$$\begin{aligned}a_{01}^{23} &= -1 \\a_{01}^{32} &= 1 \\a_{02}^{31} &= -1 \\a_{02}^{13} &= 1 \\a_{03}^{12} &= -1 \\a_{03}^{21} &= 1 \\a_{10}^{23} &= -1 \\a_{10}^{32} &= 1 \\a_{20}^{31} &= -1 \\a_{20}^{13} &= 1 \\a_{30}^{12} &= -1 \\a_{30}^{21} &= 1 \\a_{23}^{01} &= 1 \\a_{32}^{01} &= -1 \\a_{31}^{02} &= 1 \\a_{13}^{02} &= -1 \\a_{12}^{03} &= 1 \\a_{21}^{03} &= -1 \\a_{23}^{10} &= 1 \\a_{32}^{10} &= -1 \\a_{31}^{20} &= 1 \\a_{13}^{20} &= -1 \\a_{12}^{30} &= 1 \\a_{21}^{30} &= -1\end{aligned}$$

In the frame of reference of the material considered by the author, the constitutive tensor components are

$$\begin{aligned}
a_{01}^{23} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{01}^{32} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{02}^{31} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{02}^{13} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{03}^{12} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{03}^{21} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{10}^{23} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{10}^{32} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{20}^{31} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{20}^{13} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{30}^{12} &= -\varepsilon \\
a_{30}^{21} &= \varepsilon \\
a_{23}^{01} &= \mu \\
a_{32}^{01} &= -\mu \\
a_{31}^{02} &= \mu \\
a_{13}^{02} &= -\mu \\
a_{12}^{03} &= \mu \\
a_{21}^{03} &= -\mu \\
a_{23}^{10} &= \mu \\
a_{32}^{10} &= -\mu \\
a_{31}^{20} &= \mu \\
a_{13}^{20} &= -\mu \\
a_{12}^{30} &= \mu \\
a_{21}^{30} &= -\mu
\end{aligned}$$

Lorentz transform with a speed along z axis are

$$\begin{aligned}
a'^0 &= \alpha a^0 - \beta a^3 \\
a'^3 &= -\beta a^0 + \alpha a^3 \\
a'_0 &= \alpha a_0 + \beta a_3 \\
a'_3 &= \beta a_0 + \alpha a_3
\end{aligned}$$

with

$$\begin{aligned}
\alpha &= 1/\sqrt{1-v^2} \\
\beta &= v/\sqrt{1-v^2} \\
\alpha^2 - \beta^2 &= 1
\end{aligned}$$

It is easy to obtain the constitutive equations of the material at a speed v along z axis:

$$E'_x = (1/\epsilon')D'_x + \xi' H'_y$$

$$E'_y = (1/\epsilon')D'_y - \xi' H'_x$$

$$E'_z = (1/\epsilon')D'_z$$

$$B'_x = \mu' H'_x + \xi' D'_y$$

$$B'_y = \mu' H'_y - \xi' D'_x$$

$$B'_z = \mu' H'_z$$

with

$$1/\epsilon' = \alpha^2/\epsilon - \beta^2\mu$$

$$\mu' = \alpha^2\mu - \beta^2/\epsilon$$

$$\xi' = \alpha\beta(1/\epsilon - \mu)$$

These expressions can be obtained either from field component transformations or from tensor components transformation.