Radiative corrections to the electron $g$-factor in H-like ions

Hans Persson, Sten Salomonson, Per Sunnergren, and Ingvar Lindgren
Department of Physics, Chalmers University of Technology and Göteborg University, S-412 96 Göteborg, Sweden
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In view of the current interest of QED in strong fields, a complete set of one-photon radiative corrections to the bound-electron $g$ factor is evaluated for several hydrogenlike ions. The calculations are performed to all orders in the nuclear potential and compared to earlier results, based on the $(Z\alpha)$ expansion, which includes the Schwinger and the Grotch terms. For low $Z$ our all-order result approaches the $(Z\alpha)$ expansion, but for high $Z$ there is a substantial deviation. Furthermore, for high $Z$ our calculations show that the uncertainty due to nuclear structure is small and thus strongly motivate the bound $g$-factor experiment in progress.

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Several different types of experiments on highly charged ions are currently carried out in order to test the validity of quantum electrodynamics (QED) in strong nuclear fields [1–4]. The critical point is to find systems where uncertainties in the nuclear description do not restrict the testing ground. A good candidate, which fulfills the above requirement, is the bound-electron $g$ factor in H-like ions. A Penning-trap experiment is presently being prepared by a Mainz-GSI collaboration to perform such measurements [5]. In the first stage of the experiment, ions in the range $Z=6–20$ will be measured. At a later stage this will be extended to heavier ions up to H-like uranium. The expected relative uncertainty of the measurements is of the order of $10^{-7}$ and this stimulates theoretical efforts to reach a comparable accuracy.

In Dirac quantum theory the $g$ factor of a free electron is exactly $g=2$. Due to self-interactions with the radiation field, the free electron possesses an anomalous magnetic moment $g_e$. The investigations of $g_e$ have reached very far, and give at present the outstanding agreement at the level of one part in $10^{11}$ between theory and experiment [6].

The corrections to the $g$ factor of an atomic electron originate not only from the interactions with the radiation field, but also from the interaction with the nuclear field. Beyond the relativistic Breit correction [7], Grotch and Hegstrom [8–10] did pioneering work in deriving the leading bound radiative correction of order $a(Z\alpha)^2$ and the leading recoil corrections of order $(Z\alpha)^2 m/M$, $a(Z\alpha)^2 m^2 M$ and $(Z\alpha)^2 (m/M)^2$, where $m/M$ is the electron-nucleus mass ratio. However, to obtain accurate theoretical results for heavy ions, one has to go beyond the $(Z\alpha)$ expansion and include the nuclear interaction nonperturbatively.

In this paper we present a calculation of the nonrecoil radiative part [Figs. 1(b)–1(e)] to all orders in $(Z\alpha)$. Selected results for various H-like ions are presented in Tables I and II. As seen from Fig. 2, our self-energy result approaches the Grotch prediction for low $Z$, but for higher $Z$ there is a substantial deviation. This deviation is due to uncalculated higher-order terms in $(Z\alpha)$ that are significant for medium and high $Z$. A similar calculation of the self-energy effects has recently been performed by Blundell, Cheng, and Sapirstein [11]. In the high-$Z$ region we agree well with their calculation, but for low $Z$ our results are slightly larger. Furthermore, for high $Z$ our calculations show that the uncertainty due to nuclear structure is small and thus strongly motivates the bound $g$-factor experiment being set up in Mainz.

The magnetic dipole moment of a bound electron is conventionally expressed in terms of the $g$ factor as

$$\mu = -g_j \frac{e}{2m} \mathbf{j} = -g_j \mu_B \frac{\mathbf{j}}{\hbar},$$

and the energy in an external magnetic field is given by the scalar product between the dipole moment and the magnetic field. Throughout this paper we will consider a bound electron in a $1s$ state with $m_j=1/2$ ($|\mu|=|1s^{1/2}\rangle$) interacting with a static homogeneous magnetic field aligned in the $z$ direction. The various $g$-factor corrections can then be extracted from different energy contributions via the relation (in units where $\hbar = \epsilon_0 = c = 1$)

$$\Delta E = -\langle a | \mu \cdot \mathbf{B} | a \rangle = g_j \mu_B \langle a | m_z | a \rangle \mathbf{B}_z = \frac{1}{2} g_j \mu_B B_z.$$

By introducing the minimal coupling in the Dirac equation for an electron in an external homogeneous magnetic field, described by the vector potential $\mathbf{A} = - (\mathbf{r} \times \mathbf{B})/2$, the first-order contribution to the $g$ factor [see Fig. 1(a)] can, in the point nucleus case, be evaluated analytically,

$$g_j^{\text{Breit}} = \frac{2}{\mu_B B_z} \langle a | \mathbf{\alpha} \cdot \mathbf{e} \mathbf{A} | a \rangle = \frac{2}{3} \left[ 1 + 2 \sqrt{1-(Z\alpha)^2} \right].$$

FIG. 1. Feynman diagrams representing the first-order interaction (a) and the one-photon radiative corrections (b)–(e) to the bound-electron $g$ factor. The triangle represents the external magnetic field.
Here, the second term represents products of disconnected diagrams in Eq. 2500. The potential $C_e$ can be divided into vacuum polarization and self-energy parts. The singular reference-state contribution $0.100 \pm 0.765 \pm 0.664$ can be written as $0.001 \pm 0.002$. The polarization function behaves as $0.000 \pm 0.109 \pm 0.502$. This diagram is readily evaluated using the techniques described in [15]. This diagram can also be divided into a Uehling part and a Wichmann-Kroll part. In momentum space, the $r$ operator in the vector potential transforms into the gradient of a $\delta$ function:

$$r \rightarrow i \nabla(k).$$

The Uehling contribution of diagram 1(c) is thus proportional to the integral

$$\int \frac{d^3k}{(2\pi)^3} \Psi_d(k) \{V_{\delta}(k)\} I^{\mathrm{ren}}(k^2) \Psi_d(k),$$

where $I^{\mathrm{ren}}(k^2)$ is the renormalized free-electron polarization function. By means of partial integration and utilizing that the polarization function behaves as $k^2$ for small momenta, this contribution can be seen to vanish. The Wichmann-Kroll part, however, is nonvanishing and has been evaluated in the same way as in previous work [13].

More care has to be taken when considering the self-energy contributions. The nondegenerate part of diagram 1(d), the self-energy wave-function correction, can be written as

<table>
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<tr>
<th>$Z$</th>
<th>$R_{\delta}(\text{fm})$</th>
<th>Nuc. size</th>
<th>Nuc. recoil</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>2 283 853</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>1 0 340 79</td>
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</table>
RADIATIVE CORRECTIONS TO THE ELECTRON $g \ldots$

... can be identified and cancelled. The finite remainder was evaluated in momentum space.

A difference from earlier elaborations of a similar type [13,14] is that the momentum space expression involves the gradient of a $\delta$ function [see Eq. (4)]. We have chosen to represent this highly singular function numerically by introducing a Gaussian cutoff function in coordinate space that yields the gradient of a Gaussian $\delta$ function in the Fourier transform

$$re^{-(\rho r/2)^2} = i\hbar \frac{1}{\pi^{3/2}r^3}e^{-(k/r)^2} = -i\hbar \frac{2}{3\pi^{3/2}r^5}e^{-(k/r)^2}.$$ 

Eventually, the limit $\rho \to 0$ should be taken, but in practice it is enough to have a small finite value of $\rho$ so that the introduced inhomogeneity in the magnetic field is negligible over the extension of the ion.

To discuss the results, it is convenient to expand the $g$ factor into zero-, one-, etc. photon contributions. Specifically, for an electron bound to an infinitely heavy point nucleus, the expansion is given by (the power of $\alpha/\pi$ indicates the number of virtual photons)

$$g_j = 2 \left[ \frac{1}{3} [1 + 2\sqrt{1-(Z\alpha)^2}] + \frac{\alpha}{\pi} \frac{1}{2} \frac{(Z\alpha)^2}{12} + \cdots \right]$$

$$+ \left[ \frac{\alpha}{\pi} \right]^2 (A^{(4)} + \cdots) + \left[ \frac{\alpha}{\pi} \right]^3 (A^{(6)} + \cdots) + \cdots,$$

where $A^{(4)} = -0.328 478 \ldots$ and $A^{(6)} = 1.18 \ldots$ are the known free-electron contributions [6]. Focus now on the one-photon contributions in Eq. (7) described by the function $C^{(2)}(Z\alpha) = 1/2 + (Z\alpha)^2/12 + \cdots$, where the first term is the Schwinger correction and $(Z\alpha)^2/12$ is the Grotch term [9]. For low $Z$, $1/2$ strongly dominates (for $Z=1$ by five orders of magnitude). Thus, to achieve the QED corrections beyond the Schwinger term, one needs a very high numerical accuracy in the calculations for low $Z$. To reach this accuracy for $Z=1$ in the one-potential vertex part, one has to go well beyond 100 partial waves. The results are given in Table I and the self-energy contributions beyond Schwinger divided by Grotch are displayed in Fig. 2. For the self-energy terms we agree well with the results of [11] except for $Z=10$, 15, and 20, where there is minor deviation.

From a $(Z\alpha)$ expansion consideration, beyond the Schwinger and Grotch term, one would expect terms of order $\alpha(Z\alpha)^4$ [20]. For $Z \leq 30$ we have performed different fittings of our numerical values, beyond the Schwinger correction, to formulas of the type

$$A \alpha(Z\alpha)^2 + A \alpha(Z\alpha)^4 [B + C\ln(Z\alpha) + D(Z\alpha)]$$

and obtained the Grotch coefficient $A$ with an accuracy better than 1%. Since the displayed ratio in Fig. 2 becomes very sensitive for $Z=1$ we get a safer prediction by using different fittings of the results from higher $Z$. Our fitted result of this ratio for $Z=1$ is 1.007(2), where the uncertainty comes from excluding the log term in the fitting function. This

![FIG. 2. The one-photon self-energy contributions after subtracting the Schwinger term and dividing with the Grotch term. The dots (a) show our numerical values and the line (c) is a fit to these values. As a comparison the values of Blundell et al., crosses (b), are also shown.]

$$\Delta E_{SE}^{WF} = \sum \langle a | (\Sigma - \delta m)|i \rangle \langle i | eA|a \rangle,$$

where $\epsilon_i \neq \epsilon_a$. Here $\Sigma$ denotes the unrenormalized bound self-energy operator and $\delta m$ the mass counter term. The divergences in this expression are isolated and subtracted by means of a potential expansion of the self-energy operator into a free self-energy operator, a one-potential term, and a finite many-potential part. The many-potential part is treated in coordinate space in a similar way as in previous works [13,14,16,17]. The divergent zero- and one-potential terms are grouped together with the mass counter term, and by the use of dimensional regularization the finite parts can be extracted and calculated in momentum space [18].

The degenerate part of diagram 1(d) is singular and one has to subtract products of disconnected lower-order diagrams to cancel the reference-state singularity [see Eq. (3)]. After the subtraction, the remainder is given by

$$\Delta E_{SE}^{ref} = \langle a | eA|a \rangle \times \left( \langle a | \frac{\partial}{\partial \epsilon} \Sigma(\epsilon) \bigg|_{\epsilon = \epsilon_a} \rangle a \rangle. \right.

The contribution due to the vertex diagram $1e$ is

$$\Delta E_{SE}^{ver} = \langle a | A \cdot eA|a \rangle,$$

where $A$ is the vector vertex function [18]. The two expressions in Eqs. (5) and (6) are both infrared and ultraviolet divergent, but the divergences cancel between the two terms. To formulate an unambiguous regularization, we expand the intermediate bound electron propagators in Eqs. (5) and (6) into free-electron propagators interacting zero, one, or several times with the nuclear potential. After separating out and cancelling the infrared divergences [13], the one-potential and many-potential terms are finite and can readily be calculated in coordinate space using basis-set procedures [19]. The zero-potential terms can be grouped together, and by the use of dimensional regularization the ultraviolet divergences...
value is also consistent with our numerical value for $Z = 1$

To make a comparison with experiment one has to include
the effects of nuclear recoil, finite nuclear size, and
QED corrections from diagrams involving two and more virtual
photons. Additionally, for very high $Z$ also effects from
nuclear polarization might come in at the $10^{-7}$ level.

The nuclear recoil correction can be obtained from the
formulas derived by Grotch and Hegstrom [10], and is to the
demanded accuracy given by the leading term
\[ g_{j}^\text{recoil} = (Z\alpha)^2 m c / M. \]
For high $Z$ this can only be considered as a reliable order-of-magnitude estimation [21]. However, in this region this is sufficient since the recoil effect is small compared to the bound-state QED corrections.

Furthermore, a careful investigation of the nuclear size
effect on the dominating first-order correction has been
performed. A two-parameter Fermi distribution was used for
the nuclear description. For all nuclei the default $a$-parameter
\[ a = 0.524 \]
was used, except for uranium where
\[ a = 0.6023 \]
was taken to simulate a deformed Fermi model [22]. The
uncertainty assigned to the nuclear-size effect in Table II
corresponds to the experimental uncertainty in the $R_{\text{rms}}$
values [23].

Concerning the QED effects involving two and more virtual
photons, the free-electron part is significant. The corre-
sponding bound-state corrections, which are still uncalcu-
lated, should be a factor $(a/\pi)$ smaller than the calculated
one-photon bound-state corrections.

In the last column of Table II we have added all different
contributions, i.e., the one-photon bound-state correction, the
nuclear-size effect (column 3), the nuclear recoil (column 4),
the $(g_j-2)$ from the Breit term [Eq. (2)], and the free-
electron $(g_e-2)$ value.

The uncertainty in the theoretical values are small com-
pared to the bound-state QED effects for all $Z$. With an antici-
pated experimental uncertainty of $10^{-7}$, this implies that
the bound-state $g$-factor measurements will constitute a good
test of bound-state QED for all $Z \approx 10$.

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