2.4. Brillouin scattering

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2.4.1. Introduction

Brillouin scattering originates from the interaction of an incident radiation with thermal acoustic vibrations in matter. The phenomenon was predicted by Brillouin in 1922 (Brillouin, 1922) and first observed in light scattering by Gross (Gross, 1930*a*,*b*). However, owing to specific spectrometric difficulties, precise experimental studies of Brillouin lines in crystals were not performed until the 1960s (Cecchi, 1964; Benedek & Fritsch, 1966; Gornall & Stoicheff, 1970) and Brillouin scattering became commonly used for the investigation of elastic properties of condensed matter with the advent of laser sources and multipass Fabry–Perot interferometers (Hariharan & Sen, 1961; Sandercock, 1971). More recently, Brillouin scattering of neutrons (Egelstaff *et al.*, 1989) and X-rays (Sette *et al.*, 1998) has been observed.

Brillouin scattering of light probes long-wavelength acoustic phonons. Thus, the detailed atomic structure is irrelevant and the vibrations of the scattering medium are determined by macroscopic parameters, in particular the density ρ and the elastic coefficients $c_{ijk\ell}$. For this reason, Brillouin scattering is observed in gases, in liquids and in crystals as well as in disordered solids.

Vacher & Boyer (1972) and Cummins & Schoen (1972) have performed a detailed investigation of the selection rules for Brillouin scattering in materials of various symmetries. In this chapter, calculations of the sound velocities and scattered intensities for the most commonly investigated vibrational modes in bulk condensed matter are presented. Brillouin scattering from surfaces will not be discussed. The current state of the art for Brillouin spectroscopy is also briefly summarized.

2.4.2. Elastic waves

2.4.2.1. *Non-piezoelectric media*

The fundamental equation of dynamics (see Section 1.3.4.2), applied to the displacement $\mathbf{u}$ of an elementary volume at $\mathbf{r}$ in a homogeneous material is

$$\rho \ddot{u}_i = \frac{\partial T_{ij}}{\partial x_j}. \qquad (2.4.2.1)$$

Summation over repeated indices will always be implied, and $\mathbf{T}$ is the stress tensor. In non-piezoelectric media, the constitutive equation for small strains $\mathbf{S}$ is simply

$$T_{ij} = c_{ijk\ell} S_{k\ell}. \qquad (2.4.2.2)$$

The strain being the symmetrized spatial derivative of $\mathbf{u}$, and $\mathbf{c}$ being symmetric upon interchange of k and ℓ, the introduction of (2.4.2.2) in (2.4.2.1) gives (see also Section 1.3.4.2)

$$\rho \ddot{u}_i = c_{ijk\ell} \frac{\partial^2 u_k}{\partial x_j \partial x_\ell}. \qquad (2.4.2.3)$$

One considers harmonic plane-wave solutions of wavevector $\mathbf{Q}$ and frequency ω,

$$\mathbf{u}(\mathbf{r}, t) = \mathbf{u}_0 \exp i(\mathbf{Q} \cdot \mathbf{r} - \omega t). \qquad (2.4.2.4)$$

For $\mathbf{u}_0$ small compared with the wavelength $2\pi/Q$, the total derivative $\ddot{u}$ can be replaced by the partial $\partial^2 u/\partial t^2$ in (2.4.2.3). Introducing (2.4.2.4) into (2.4.2.3), one obtains

$$c_{ijk\ell} \hat{Q}_j \hat{Q}_\ell u_{0k} = C \delta_{ik} u_{0k}, \qquad (2.4.2.5)$$

where $\hat{\mathbf{Q}} = \mathbf{Q}/|\mathbf{Q}|$ is the unit vector in the propagation direction, δ_{ik} is the unit tensor and $C \equiv \rho V^2$, where $V = \omega/|\mathbf{Q}|$ is the phase velocity of the wave. This shows that u_0 is an eigenvector of the tensor $c_{ijk\ell} \hat{Q}_j \hat{Q}_\ell$. For a given propagation direction $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$, the three eigenvalues $C^{(s)}$ are obtained by solving

$$\left| c_{ijk\ell} \hat{Q}_j \hat{Q}_\ell - C \delta_{ik} \right| = 0. \qquad (2.4.2.6)$$

To each $C^{(s)}$ there is an eigenvector $\mathbf{u}^{(s)}$ given by (2.4.2.5) and an associated phase velocity

$$V^{(s)} = \sqrt{C^{(s)}/\rho}. \qquad (2.4.2.7)$$

The tensor $c_{ijk\ell} \hat{Q}_j \hat{Q}_\ell$ is symmetric upon interchange of the indices (i, k) because $c_{ijk\ell} = c_{k\ell ij}$. Its eigenvalues are real positive, and the three directions of vibration $\hat{\mathbf{u}}^{(s)}$ are mutually perpendicular. The notation $\hat{\mathbf{u}}^{(s)}$ indicates a unit vector. The tensor $c_{ijk\ell} \hat{Q}_j \hat{Q}_\ell$ is also invariant upon a change of sign of the propagation direction. This implies that the solution of (2.4.2.5) is the same for all symmetry classes belonging to the same Laue class.

For a general direction $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$, and for a symmetry lower than isotropic, $\hat{\mathbf{u}}^{(s)}$ is neither parallel nor perpendicular to $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$, so that the modes are neither purely longitudinal nor purely transverse. In this case (2.4.2.6) is also difficult to solve. The situation is much simpler when $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$ is parallel to a symmetry axis of the Laue class. Then, one of the vibrations is purely longitudinal (LA), while the other two are purely transverse (TA). A pure mode also exists when $\hat{\mathbf{Q}}$ belongs to a symmetry plane of the Laue class, in which case there is a transverse vibration with $\hat{\mathbf{u}}$ perpendicular to the symmetry plane. For all these *pure mode directions*, (2.4.2.6) can be factorized to obtain simple analytical solutions. In this chapter, only pure mode directions are considered.

2.4.2.2. *Piezoelectric media*

In piezoelectric crystals, a stress component is also produced by the internal electric field $\mathbf{E}$, so that the constitutive equation (2.4.2.2) has an additional term (see Section 1.1.5.2),

$$T_{ij} = c_{ijk\ell} S_{k\ell} - e_{mij} E_m, \qquad (2.4.2.8)$$

where $\mathbf{e}$ is the piezoelectric tensor at constant strain.

The electrical displacement vector $\mathbf{D}$, related to $\mathbf{E}$ by the dielectric tensor $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}$, also contains a contribution from the strain,

$$D_m = \varepsilon_{mn} E_n + e_{mk\ell} S_{k\ell}, \qquad (2.4.2.9)$$

where $\boldsymbol{\varepsilon}$ is at the frequency of the elastic wave.

In the absence of free charges, $\operatorname{div} \mathbf{D} = 0$, and (2.4.2.9) provides a relation between $\mathbf{E}$ and $\mathbf{S}$,

$$\varepsilon_{mn} Q_n E_m + e_{mk\ell} Q_m S_{k\ell} = 0. \qquad (2.4.2.10)$$

For long waves, it can be shown that $\mathbf{E}$ and $\mathbf{Q}$ are parallel. (2.4.2.10) can then be solved for $\mathbf{E}$, and this value is replaced in (2.4.2.8) to give

$$T_{ij} = \left[c_{ijk\ell} + \frac{e_{mij} e_{nk\ell} \hat{Q}_m \hat{Q}_n}{\varepsilon_{gh} \hat{Q}_g \hat{Q}_h} \right] S_{k\ell} \equiv c^{(e)}_{ijk\ell} S_{k\ell}. \qquad (2.4.2.11)$$

references