Theoretical study of $e^{-}$ - He scattering using the Schwinger variational principle with plane waves as a trial basis set

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Recibido el 11 de diciembre de 2002; aceptado el 19 de febrero de 2004

We report an application of the Schwinger variational principle with plane waves as a trial basis set. Differential cross sections are obtained for $e^{-}$ - He from 15 to 100 eV. Our differential cross is found to be in reasonable agreement with experimental data.

Keywords: Schwinger; electron.

1. Introduction

In the last few years, there have been several theoretical activities concerning the electron-atom at low, intermediate and high impact energies [1–3]. As we know, with the increase of the kinetic energy, the penetration power of the incident electron into the atom will too increase. Therefore, the convergence of the partial-wave expansion for continuum scattering wavefunction will become more difficult to achieve. Although several alternative theoretical approaches have been proposed for studying electron-atom scattering at several energies, available experimental data of differential cross sections (DCS) do not provide a definitive test capable of judging the efficiency of the theoretical methods for several targets. For example, obtaining an accurate differential cross sections for $e^{-}$ - He collisions still remains an important test for several new formalisms. As a step toward addressing this need, we have recently described the Schwinger variational principle with plane waves (SVP-PW) as a trial basis set [4–6].

The main purpose of the present work is to study the elastic electron-He scattering at several energies using the SVP-PW, where the exchange effects are treated by a Born-Ochkur approximation [7–10] and polarization effects by Buckingham polarization potential [11] using a "c" cut-off parameter and polarizability $\alpha$ of the atom. The present study has several goals: first, to our knowledge, no theoretical study using the Schwinger variational principle with plane waves as a trial basis set has yet been published for $e^{-}$ - He over the present energy range; second, to test the relevance of Born-Ochkur plus Buckingham polarization potential combined with the SVP-PW; and third, the present work also serves in addition as a necessary prelude to new studies using the SVP-PW.

The organization of this paper is the following: in Sec. 2 the theory is briefly described. Our calculated results and discussions are presented in Sec. 3. Section 4 summarizes our conclusions.
Inclusion of these definitions in Eq. (1), and application of a stationarity condition [4] with respect to the coefficients, gives the working form of the scattering amplitude
\[
[f(\vec{k}_f, \vec{k}_i)]= \frac{1}{2\pi} \times \left( \sum_{mn} \langle S_{k_f} | V | \Phi_0 \bar{k}_m \rangle (d^{-1})_{nm} \langle \bar{k}_n \Phi_0 | V | S_{k_i} \rangle \right)
\] (5)
where
\[
d_{mn} = \langle \Phi_0 \bar{k}_m | V - V G_0^{(+)} V | \Phi_0 \bar{k}_n \rangle
\] (6)

We have implemented a set of computational programs to evaluate all matrix elements of Eq. (5). The Green’s function given in Eq. (2), and its associated discontinuities have been examined and treated in a similar way as in the subtraction method [4]. Our discrete representation of the scattering wave function [given by Eqs. (3) and (4)] is made only in two dimensional space (spherical coordinates, using Gaussian quadratures for \(\theta\) and \(\phi\) and the on-shell \(k\) value for the radial coordinate). When exchange effects are to be considered in electron scattering the first Born approximation used in the SVP-PW is replaced by
\[
f^{\text{Born-Ochkur}} = f^\text{Born} + g
\] (7)
where “\(g\)” is the exchange amplitude in the Born-Ochkur approximation (we will refer to this formalism as SVP-PW(BO)). The long-range effects can also be represented by a polarization potential
\[
V_{\text{pol}}(\vec{r}) = -\alpha / [(r^2 + r_c^2)^{2}]
\] (8)
where \(r_c\) represents an adjustable cut-off parameter [11]. The Born scattering amplitude used is now formed by two parts, namely:
\[
f^{\text{Born-Closure}} = f^{\text{Born-Ochkur}} + f^{\text{Born-pol}}
\] (9)
where \(f^{\text{Born-pol}}\) is the polarization part of the scattering amplitude and, in the body frame, is calculated as follows:
\[
f^{\text{Born-pol}} = -2/\bar{q}^2 \int e^{\bar{q} \cdot \vec{r}} V_{\text{pol}}(\vec{r}) d\vec{r}
\] (10)
where \(\bar{q}\) is the elastic momentum transfer vector. If the atomic wavefunction is expressed in a Cartesian Gaussian basis function, the \(f^{\text{Born-Closure}}\) scattering amplitude can be obtained analytically and evaluated in closed form [12]. By combining Eqs. (9), (10), and (5) we obtain the differential cross sections for \(e^-\)-He scattering.

3. Results

We have calculated elastic differential cross sections at a number of energies for \(e^-\)-He. We present representative results, emphasising cases where experimental data is available for comparison. Other theoretical cross sections using static-exchange plus polarization level of approximation are also compared. For the ground state of He we have used a self-consistent-field (SCF) wave function obtained with Cartesian basis [13]. With this basis we obtain a SCF energy of -2.8616 a.u. to be compared with -2.8615 a.u. [13]. In all figures we have used \(r_c=1.460\) as in Ref. [11]. In Figs. 1-5 we show differential cross sections at 15 eV, 20 eV, 30 eV, 50 eV, and 100 eV, respectively. We have compared our SVP-PW using Born-Ochkur plus polarization effects, with the Schwinger variational principle using Born-Ochkur only (we will refer to this second case as SVP-PW(BO)), the R-matrix method [14], the static-exchange simplified second Born approximation [15], and experimental data [16–20]. In Fig. 1 we show elastic differential cross sections (DCS) for \(e^-\)-He scattering at 15 eV. Our results using the SVP-PW are compared with experimental data of Shyn [19]. For comparison we have also included in Fig. 1 the SVP-PW without polarization (SVP-PW(BO)). As noted, our SVP-PW describes correctly the shape of the experimental data with some discrepancies at intermediate angle. Our polarization model is the so-called Buckingham polarization potential and has been widely used in the description of elastic scattering of electron by atoms [1]. The discrepancy between our results and experimental data at intermediate angle can possibly be attributed to the inadequacy of the cut-off parameter \(r_c\) in the polarization formalism. The DCS for electron-atom scattering at the low-energy (\(\leq 40\) eV) is very sensitive to this cut-off parameter [11] (the authors in Ref. 11 have tested the sensitivity of \(r_c\) for some energies. Their studies show that the best value of \(r_c\) was found at 1.460, and although not shown here, our results using different values of \(r_c\) were little affected at intermediate energies). Another important consideration may be the use of effects as multichannel and/or correlation of the target, which are not included in our calculations (for comparison we have included in Fig. 2 theoretical studies of Saha [2] using 35 states coupled and correlation of the target).

![Figure 1](Image)

**Figure 1.** Elastic DCS for \(e^-\)-He scattering at 15 eV. Present results SVP-PW: solid line; dashed-line; SVP-PW(BO): Experimental results of Ref. 19: open circle.
In Fig. 2 we show elastic differential cross sections (DCS) for $e^-$ - He scattering at 20 eV. Our results using the SVP-PW are compared with experimental data of Shyn [19], the experimental data of Register et al (we have not included the error bars of Register because these results are very close to those of Shyn) [20], and theoretical studies of Saha [2]. The theoretical results of Saha [2] include 35 states coupled, correlation, and a dynamical polarization of the target [2]. For comparison we have also included in Fig. 2 the SVP-PW without polarization (SVP-PW(BO)). As observed, our SVP-PW also describes correctly the shape of the experimental data with some discrepancies at intermediate angle (see text in Fig. 1).

In Fig. 3 we show elastic differential cross sections (DCS) for $e^-$ - He scattering at 30 eV. Our results using the SVP-PW are compared with experimental data of Shyn [19], the experimental data of Register et al [20], and theoretical studies of Saha [2]. Theoretical results of Saha [2] include 35 states coupled, correlation, and a dynamical polarization of the target [2]. For comparison we have also included in Fig. 3 the SVP-PW without polarization (SVP-PW(BO)). As observed, our SVP-PW also describes correctly the shape of the experimental data with some discrepancies at intermediate angle (see text in Fig. 1).

In Fig. 4 we show elastic differential cross sections (DCS) for $e^-$ - He scattering at 50 eV. Our results using the SVP-PW are compared with experimental data of Shyn [19], the experimental data of Bromberg [16], and theoretical studies using the R-Matrix method [14], the static-exchange simplified second Born approximation [15], and the static-exchange studies by Walters [15]. For comparison we have...
also included in Fig. 5 the SVP-PW without polarization (SVP-PW(BO)). As noted, at 100 eV our DCS are reasonably close to the experimental and theoretical results (the difference at intermediate angle is less significant, which confirms the expectation cited in Fig. 1).

4. Conclusions

We have presented the Schwinger variational principle with plane waves as a trial basis set (SVP-PW) to electron-atom scattering. Our formulation can be used to calculate elastic cross section and the exchange and polarization effects have seen evaluated via Born amplitude. We have noted that the SVP-PW can be an efficient tool for the study of $e^-$ - He collisions processes.

Acknowledgments

The author JLSL wants to express his gratitude for fruitful scientific interaction and collaboration with Dr M. A. P. Lima. The authors would like to thank Dr. A. Eiras for insightful discussions. Part of these calculations were performed at Centro Nacional de Processamento de Alto Desempenho de Sao Paulo (CENAPAD-SP) e do Nordeste (CENAPADNE). Financial support by the UBC contract APEO (matematica)/2001/02 is also gratefully acknowledged.
