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**THE NOVEL IMPROVEMENTS TO FINITE
DIFFERENCE TIME DOMAIN MODELING:
APPLICATIONS IN NANOOPTICS AND
NANOPHOTONICS**

By

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IN THE NAME OF GOD

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MODELING: APPLICATIONS IN NANOOPTICS AND NANOPHOTONICS**

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AHMAD MOHAMMADI

THESIS

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*This dissertation is dedicated to my family
and*

The memory of my parents and my brother

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Abstract

The Novel Improvements to Finite Difference Time Domain Modeling: Applications in NanoOptics and NanoPhotonics

The Finite Difference Time Domain (FDTD) method is a robust computational technique that can be applied to a wide range of applications in optics. However, due to the staircasing problem, very fine meshes, and consequently high computing resources are required to model curved interfaces, especially for metals. This thesis deals with the development of a systematic framework for modeling dielectric and dispersive materials' boundaries so that one can obtain accurate results from FDTD simulation using personal computers. Effective permittivities for the two-dimensional FDTD method are derived using a contour path approach that accounts for the boundary conditions of the electromagnetic fields at dielectric interfaces. Our schemes are validated using Mie theory for the light scattering from a dielectric cylinder. Significant improvements in terms of accuracy and error fluctuations are observed, especially in the calculation of resonances. To deal with dispersive materials, we combine a contour-path approach with Z transform to handle both the electromagnetic boundary conditions at the interface and the negative dispersive dielectric function of the material. We compare the accuracy of the standard two-dimensional FDTD method in modelling Surface Plasmon Polaritons (SPPs). The results show a considerable reduction of relative error by an order of magnitude. Finally, we investigate the accuracy of these approaches by applying them to some common problems in Nano-Optics and Nano-Photonics. This set of systematic tests demonstrates the accuracy and efficiency of our methods.

Table of Contents

TITLE	PAGE
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THESIS.....	1
1.1 TOWARDS NANOSCALE OPTICS.....	1
1.2 NANOOPTICS: THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS	4
1.3 COMPUTATIONAL ELECTRODYNAMICS	6
1.4 OBJECTIVE AND OUTLINE	11
CHAPTER TWO FINITE DIFFERENCE TIME DOMAIN METHOD	13
2.1 INTRODUCTION	13
2.2 MAXWELL EQUATIONS	14
2.3 THE YEE ALGORITHM.....	15
2.4 NUMERICAL STABILITY AND DISPERSION	19
2.5 SOURCES	20
2.6 TRUNCATION CONDITIONS.....	22
2.7 DATA EXTRACTION AND POST PROCESSING.....	27
2.8 ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE	27
2.9 MATERIAL MODELING	31
2.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY	37
CHAPTER THREE EFFECTIVE PERMITTIVITIES.....	38
3.1 INTRODUCTION	38
3.2 ALTERNATIVES FOR STAIRCASE MODELLING	39
3.3 CONTOUR-PATH EFFECTIVE PERMITTIVITY	41
3.4 VOLUME-AVERAGE POLARIZED EFFECTIVE PERMITTIVITY (VP-EP).....	49
3.5 NUMERICAL TESTS AND DISCUSSION.....	50
3.6 CHAPTER SUMMARY.....	58
CHAPTER FOUR MODELING DISPERSIVE MATERIALS.....	60
4.1 INTRODUCTION	60
4.2 FORMULATION	61
4.3 SURFACE PLASMON POLARITON	64
4.4 NUMERICAL TESTS AND DISCUSSION.....	64

TITLE	PAGE
4.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY	66
CHAPTER FIVE APPLICATIONS IN NANO-OPTICS AND NANO-PHOTONICS	68
5.1 INTRODUCTION	68
5.2 PHOTONIC CRYSTALS.....	69
5.3 LONG-RANGE SURFACE PLASMON POLARITON	73
5.4 LOCALIZED SURFACE PLASMON	76
5.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY	82
CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK	84
REFERENCES.....	87
APPENDIX A MIE THEORY	99
A.1. FORMULATION	99
A.2. EXTENSIONS OF MIE THEORY	100
APPENDIX B THE Z TRANSFORM.....	101
B.1. Z TRANSFORM DEFINITION	101
B.2. FUNDAMENTAL PROPERTIES OF Z TRANSFORM.....	102
B.3. COMMON FUNCTIONS IN Z DOMAIN	102
B.4. DRUDE MODEL IN Z DOMAIN	103
APPENDIX C GENETIC ALGORITHM	104
C.1. OBJECTIVE	104
C.2. TERMINOLOGY	105
C.3. ALGORITHM	106

List of Figures and Illustrations

TITLE	PAGE
FIGURE 2-1 DISCRETIZATION OF THE SPACE INTO CUBES, AND THE POSITIONS OF THE ELECTRIC AND MAGNETIC FIELD VECTOR COMPONENTS IN A UNIT YEE CELL.	15
FIGURE 2-2 TWO DIMENSIONAL FDTD LAYOUT AND THE POSITIONS OF FIELD COMPONENTS ON THE 2D-YEE CELL FOR TE AND TM MODES.	20
FIGURE 2-3 TOTAL FIELD AND SCATTERED FIELD REGIONS AND THE CORRESPONDING BOUNDARY.	22
FIGURE 2-4 CONSEQUENT SNAPSHOTS OF SIMULATION OF LIGHT SCATTERING BY A PERFECT ELECTRIC CONDUCTOR WHICH SHOW THE FIELDS IN THE TOTAL FIELD AND SCATTERED FIELD REGIONS.	23
FIGURE 2-5 SIMULATION OF A RADIATING DIPOLE LOCATED IN THE CENTER OF COMPUTATIONAL SPACE: A) WITHOUT TRUNCATION CONDITIONS, B) WITH CPML ABSORBING BOUNDARY CONDITIONS.	27
FIGURE 2-6 LAYOUT OF THE FDTD CALCULATION INCLUDING: PML LAYERS, CYLINDRICAL SCATTERER, THE TOTAL FIELD / SCATTERED FIELD BORDER, AND THE INTEGRATION LINE FOR THE CALCULATION OF THE TOTAL SCS.	29
FIGURE 2-7 A SNAPSHOT OF THE SIMULATION ILLUSTRATES THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF COMPUTATIONAL SPACE. TOTAL FIELD REGION AND SCATTERED FIELD REGION ARE CLEARLY OBSERVED. ONE CAN ALSO SEE THAT THE FIELDS IN THE PML REGION VANISH AS THEY APPROACH TO THE BOUNDARY.	30
FIGURE 2-9 A) THE RELATIVE ERROR ON THE SCS AS A FUNCTION OF WAVELENGTH, B) THE TOTAL ERROR ON THE SCS AS A FUNCTION OF 1/N.	32
FIGURE 3-1. (A) FDTD MESH SHOWING THE STAIRCASING EFFECT FOR A CURVED INTERFACE (BLUE LINE); (B) LOCATION OF THE FIELD COMPONENTS FOR TE-MODES AND INTEGRATION LINES FOR AMPERE LAW (BLUE SEGMENT) AND FARADAY LAW (RED SEGMENT) FOR $E_x \Big _{i,j-1/2} \cdot \Delta x$ AND Δy ARE THE CELL DIMENSIONS (MESH'S PITCH); (i, j) REFERS TO THE POSITION OF H_z , WHILE E_x AND E_y ARE AT $(i, j-1/2)$ AND $(i-1/2, j)$, RESPECTIVELY. NOTICE THAT THE CELLS ASSOCIATED TO THE DIFFERENT FIELD COMPONENTS PARTIALLY OVERLAP.	39
FIGURE 3-2. STRAIGHT INTERFACE PARTIALLY FILLED CELLS: (A) INTERFACE PARALLEL TO THE FIELD COMPONENT, (B) INTERFACE ORTHOGONAL TO THE FIELD COMPONENT, (C) INCLUSION WITHOUT CROSSING THE INTEGRATION LINES, (D) INCLUSION CROSSING BOTH INTEGRATION LINES, (E) INCLUSION CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF AMPERE LAW, (F)	

TITLE PAGE

INCLUSION CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF FARADAY LAW. D, F REPRESENT THE LINE FILLING FACTORS, 1 AND 2 MEAN MEDIA WITH ϵ_1 AND ϵ_2 RESPECTIVELY.45

FIGURE 3-3. PARTIALLY FILLED CELLS WITH TILTED INTERFACES: (A) TILTED INTERFACE CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF AMPERE LAW, (B) TILTED INTERFACE CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF FARADAY LAW, (C) TILTED INTERFACE CROSSING BOTH INTEGRATION LINES, (D) CURVED INTERFACE CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF AMPERE LAW, (E) CURVED INTERFACE CROSSING ONLY THE INTEGRATION LINE OF FARADAY LAW, (F) CURVED INTERFACE CROSSING BOTH INTEGRATION LINES. N, M REPRESENT UNIT VECTORS NORMAL TO THE INTERFACE, D, F REPRESENT THE LINE FILLING FACTORS, 1 AND 2 MEAN MEDIA WITH ϵ_1 AND ϵ_2 , RESPECTIVELY.50

FIGURE 3-4. LAYOUT OF THE FDTD CALCULATION: CPML LAYERS (GRAY), CYLINDRICAL SCATTERER (ORANGE), THE H-POLARIZED INCIDENT PLANE WAVE IS EXCITED USING THE TOTAL FIELD / SCATTERED FIELD METHOD, THE INTEGRATION LINE IS FOR THE CALCULATION OF THE TOTAL SCS 52

FIGURE 3-5. ACCURACY ON THE TOTAL SCS: (A) TOTAL SCS FOR $N_\lambda = 25$, (B) RELATIVE ERROR ON THE TOTAL SCS FOR $N_\lambda = 25$, (C) AVERAGE RELATIVE ERROR ON THE TOTAL SCS. N_λ IS THE NUMBER OF DIVISIONS FOR THE SHORTEST WAVELENGTH IN THE CYLINDER; I.E. $N_\lambda = (400nm/\Delta)/\sqrt{\epsilon}$. THE PHASE VELOCITY ERROR IN (C) IS COMPUTED FOR N_λ . PARAMETERS: $\epsilon = 3, r = 400nm$ AND $\Delta\lambda = 1nm$ 54

FIGURE 3-6. ACCURACY ON THE TOTAL SCS AND THE RESONANT WAVELENGTHS: (A) TOTAL SCS FOR $N_\lambda = 25$, (B) AVERAGE RELATIVE ERROR ON THE TOTAL SCS, (C) RELATIVE ERROR ON THE WAVELENGTH OF THE RESONANCE $\lambda_1 = 675.8nm$, (D) RELATIVE ERROR ON THE WAVELENGTH OF THE RESONANCE $\lambda_2 = 532.3nm$. N_λ IS THE NUMBER OF DIVISIONS FOR λ_2 IN THE CYLINDER; I. E. $N_\lambda = (\lambda_2/\Delta)/\sqrt{\epsilon}$. THE PHASE VELOCITY ERROR IN (B)-(D) IS COMPUTED FOR N_λ . PARAMETERS: $\epsilon = 12, r = 150nm$ AND $\Delta\lambda = 0.25nm$ 55

FIGURE 3-7. ACCURACY ON RESONANT WAVELENGTHS: (A) RESONANT PEAK FOR $N_\lambda = 11$ AND (B) $N_\lambda = 19$, (C) RELATIVE ERROR ON THE WAVELENGTH OF THE RESONANCE $\lambda_0 = 679.4nm$. N_λ IS THE NUMBER OF DIVISIONS FOR λ_0 IN THE CYLINDER; I. E. $N_\lambda = (\lambda_0/\Delta)/\sqrt{\epsilon}$. THE PHASE-VELOCITY ERROR IN (C) IS COMPUTED FOR N_λ . PARAMETERS: $\epsilon = 20, r = 120nm$ AND $\Delta\lambda = 0.2nm$ 57

FIGURE 3-8. COLOR MAPS OF THE EPS: (A) STAIRCASE, (B) V-EP, (C) VP-EP, (D) CP-EP 58

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
FIGURE 4-1 LAYOUT OF THE FDTD MESH ON THE METAL-DIELECTRIC INTERFACE (METAL AT THE LEFT). THE INTEGRATION PATHS FOR E_y AND E_x ARE MARKED BY THICK LINES.....	61
FIGURE 4-2 DISPERSION RELATION FOR A SPP AT A GLASS/COPPER INTERFACE. FREQUENCY AND WAVEVECTORS ARE EXPRESSED IN UNITS OF $\omega_s = \omega_p / (\epsilon_d + \epsilon_\infty)^{1/2}$. THE DISCRETIZATION CORRESPONDS TO $k_s = \omega_s \sqrt{\epsilon_d} / c$ ($\lambda_s = 2\pi/k_s \approx 450nm$). INSET: SIMULATION SCHEME, SEE TEXT FOR DETAILS.....	66
FIGURE 4-3 RELATIVE ERROR AS A FUNCTION OF DISCRETIZATION N_λ . WE TAKE AS REFERENCE THE LONGEST WAVELENGTH USED IN THE ERROR FORMULA, CORRESPONDING TO k SAME LEGEND AS IN FIG.FIGURE 4-2. THE FREQUENCY RELATIVE ERROR IN THE FOURIER TRANSFORM IS KEPT BELOW 0.2%. LOWER INSET: ZOOMED ERROR FOR THE CP METHOD. UPPER INSET: RELATIVE ERROR FOR THE CP METHOD AS A FUNCTION OF THE CELL CUT f USING $N_\lambda = 50$ ($\Delta = 6nm$).....	67
FIGURE 5-1 THE FIELD DISTRIBUTION.....	71
FIGURE 5-2 A) COMPARISON OF STAIRCASE AND V-EP METHODS WITH A REFERENCE CURVE B) COMPARISON OF CPEP METHOD WITH THE SAME REFERENCE.....	72
FIGURE 5-3 DISPERSION RELATION FOR SYMMETRIC (ω^-) AND ANTISYMMETRIC (ω^+) SPP AT A GLASS/COPPER/GLASS THIN FILM (THICKNESS D = 50NM). FREQUENCES AND WAVEVECTORS ARE EXPRESSED IN THE SAME UNITS OF FIG. 2. THE DISCRETIZATION CORRESPONDS TO D = 5NM. INSET: SIMULATION SCHEME, SEE TEXT FOR DETAILS.	74
FIGURE 5-4. RELATIVE ERROR AS A FUNCTION OF DISCRETIZATION D. THE FREQUENCY RELATIVE ERROR IN THE FOURIER TRANSFORM IS KEPT BELOW 0.2%. INSET: ZOOMED ERROR FOR THE CP METHOD.....	75
FIGURE 5-5 REAL AND IMAGINARY PARTS OF THE DIELECTRIC FUNCTION OF GOLD VERSUS WAVELENGTH.....	77
FIGURE 5-6 SCS FOR A 50 NM CYLINDER ILLUMINATED NORMALLY TO ITS MAIN AXIS.....	77
FIGURE 5-7. THE EFFECT OF SIZE AND BACKGROUND REFRACTIVE INDEX ON THE SCS	79
FIGURE 5-8 THE EFFECT OF ILLUMINATION DIRECTION AND ASPECT RATIO.....	80
FIGURE 5-9 THE EFFECT OF CROSS SECTION SHAPE ON SCS.....	81

List of Symbols, Abbreviations and Nomenclature

ABC	Absorbing Boundary Condition
ADE	Auxiliary Differential Equation
CDA	Coupled Dipole Approximation
CFL	Courant-Freidrichs-Lewy
CFS	Complex Frequency Shift
CP	Contour Path
CPEP	Contour Path Effective Permittivities
CPML	Convolutional Perfectly Matched Layer
DDA	Dipole Dipole Approximation
DFT	Discrete Fourier Transform
EP	Effective Permittivities
FD	Finite Difference or Frequency Domain
FDTD	Finite Difference Time Domain
FE	Finite-Element
FEM	Finite-Element Method
FITD	Finite Integral Time Domain
FWHM	Full Width Half Maximum
GA	Genetic Algorithm
GMT	Generalized Multipole Technique
LR-SPP	Long Range Surface Plasmon Polariton
LSP	Localized Surface Plasmon
MAS	Method of Auxiliary Sources
MMP	Multiple Multipole Program
MoM	Method of Moment
PBG	Photonic Band Gap
PC	Photonic Crystal
PEC	Perfect Electric Conductor
PLRC	Piecewise Linear Recursive Convolution
PML	Perfectly Matched Layer
PWE	Plane Wave Expansion
RC	Recursive Convolution

SCS	Scattering Cross Section
SERS	Surface Enhanced Raman Scattering
SNOM	Scanning Near-Field Optical Microscopy
SPP	Surface Plasmon Polariton
TD	Time Domain
TE	Transverse Electric
TF/SF	Total Filed/Scattered Field
TLM	Transmission Line Matrix
TM	Transverse Magnetic
V-EP	Volume Average Effective Permittivity
VP-EP	Volume Average Polarized Effective Permittivity

Chapter One

Introduction and Overview of Thesis

1.1 Towards Nanoscale Optics

In recent years, there have been increasing efforts to replace traditional electron-based devices by the photon-based counterparts. The existing electronic devices are very slow devices compared to photonic ones. Moreover, there is a fundamental limit on the miniaturization of electronic devices, leading to a bound on the maximum data transportation and data processing speed. Several photonic devices have already been realized and employed in real-world technology to overcome limitations of the traditional devices. In particular, one can name photonic devices exploiting optical fibers with applications in signal transmission, amplification, routing, filtering, etc. Extraordinary optical properties of materials such as nonlinearity, electro-optics properties, and types of anisotropies allow us to try alternatives for nearly all active and passive electronic devices. Although these photonic devices will solve the problem of slow operation, they are too large to allow the fabrication of all-optical chips analogous to their electronic counterparts, i.e. electronic integrated circuits. Scaling down photonic devices to nanometric dimensions is a major goal of current researches in Photonics, leading to a new emerging field called *NanoPhotonics*. Controlling light at the nanoscale is the major subject in NanoPhotonics. Recent advances in nanotechnology, in particular, fabricating nanoscale structures allow the realization of novel photonic devices which can confine and guide electromagnetic energy in sub-wavelength scales. In this context, perhaps, Photonic Crystals (PCs) are

paid most widely attentions. Yablonovitch [1] and John [2] independently introduced the concept of PCs as means which offer the possibility of inhibition of spontaneous light emission and strong photon localization by modifying the mode structure and the density of states. They exhibit a photonic band-gap, i.e., a region with vanishing density of states and prohibited propagation. Therefore, an emitter with a transition frequency within the band-gap is not able to emit photons. Very soon, it was revealed that controlling the spontaneous emission is just one of many exciting possibilities which PCs can offer. The subsequent ideas were mainly based on the purely classical propagation properties of photonic crystals. By controlled inclusion of point or line defects into an otherwise perfect PC, various novel photonic devices have been realized. A point-like defect results in a very high quality factor cavity with very small mode volumes [3] and line defects provide a possibility to manipulate the propagation of light. The PC waveguides have several advantageous compared to the conventional optical waveguides based on the principle of total internal reflection. The guiding in PC waveguides can happen in low index materials or even in air providing very low absorption losses and material dispersion. Moreover, very high intensities can be guided without unwanted nonlinear interaction. They can guide light through very sharp bend (even of 90 degree) with extremely low transmission losses for a wide range of frequencies [4, 5]. Therefore PCs can provide efficient interconnection between elements of photonic circuits such as filters, waveguides, nanocavities, etc. In addition, the possible integration of active devices, such as defect mode lasers into photonic crystals [6] has triggered intensified research activities for the development of highly integrated optical circuits. It is beyond the scope of this introduction to cite all possible applications and devices proposed in recent years.

The diffraction limit for the guiding of electromagnetic energy imposes a lower limit of a few hundred nanometers for the size on these optical devices. However, to realize the optical analogy of highly integrated electronic devices with lateral dimensions of a few tens of nanometers, we must reduce the size of photonic devices beyond the diffraction limit. One

approach to overcome the diffraction limit is based on the so-called Surface Plasmon Polariton (SPP) optics which offers the possibility of achieving a strong spatial confinement of electromagnetic fields. SPPs are collective electron oscillations coupled to a light field which are propagating along a dielectric-metal interface and decay exponentially perpendicular to the interface into both neighboring media [7]. The guided electromagnetic energy is trapped on the surface of the metal and confined to dimensions below the diffraction limit. Furthermore, SPPs offer a way of reducing optics to two dimensions. Due to their particular near-field characters and huge field enhancement effects, SPPs are being explored for their potential applications in sub-wavelength Optics, data storage, light generation, quantum information, microscopy and bio-photonics, etc [8, 9]. Two-dimensional surface plasmon (SP) photonic crystals exhibiting a plasmonic band-gap have also been reported [10-12]. Moreover, SP waveguiding in SP crystals, enhanced optical transmission through nanosize holes, as well as light-controlled optical switching have been demonstrated [11-14]. It is now widely expected that SPs will play an important role in future integrated NanoPhotonics.

Another approach to light guiding beyond diffraction limit is to exploit metal nanoparticles which sustain the so-called Localized Surface Plasmons (LSPs). LSPs are collective oscillations of charge density in bounded metallic nanostructures which are resonantly excited by an electromagnetic field with appropriate frequency and polarization [15-17]. The extremely large and localized electromagnetic fields associated with the plasmon resonances together with the large scattering cross sections (SCSs) at specific wavelengths have stimulated research in recent years. For instance, Plasmon coupling along a chain of particles can lead to the coherent propagation of electromagnetic energy below the diffraction limit [18-21].

Parallel to the development in the confinement and guiding light in nanostructures, the studies of optical phenomena at the nanometer scale has triggered remarkable progress in other fields like Spectroscopy, Biology, Medicine, etc. In this context, one can name Scanning Near Field Optical

Microscopy, NanoAntenna, Biological labeling and tracking, Tumor therapy, Laser spectroscopy of a single molecule, studying the influence of a single gold nanoparticle on a single molecule, controlled coupling of a nano-emitter to a single mode of a microcavity, study of single organic molecules as quantum optical systems, and many other emerging and exciting fields. All these subtopics are treated within the scope of NanoOptics [8, 22-26], which, in general, studies the interaction of light and matter at the nanometer scale.

1.2 NanoOptics: Theoretical Considerations

Since optical phenomena are straightforward to observe, from ancient times people have investigated the nature of light and developed theories to explain the light behavior. The invention of novel optical instruments initiated breakthrough in optical theories. In 1621, Willebrord Snell (1591-1626) found the law of refraction from which the theory of geometrical optics was developed. Robert Hooke (1635-1703) formulated the wave theory of light. Christiaan Huygens (1629-1695) developed the well-known Huygens principle. The wave theory was improved further by Augustin Jean Fresnel (1788-1827), Joseph Fraunhofer (1787-1826), and Gustav Robert Kirchhoff (1824-1887) who completed the theory of diffraction. Based on the experiments by Heinrich Rudolf Hertz (1857-1894) in 1888, the nature of light was understood to be a transverse electromagnetic wave and Optics was introduced as a branch of Electrodynamics. James Clerk Maxwell (1831-1879) derived the fundamental equations of Electrodynamics. Very soon after the wave theory of light was completely formulated, Max Planck (1858-1947) introduced the concept of quantum theory and showed that Maxwell's equations are not accurate in describing the nature and the properties of light.

Although we are aware that Quantum Theory is nowadays the most complete theory, we still use and study the old and incomplete theories: We use geometrical optics to calculate the refraction, Huygens principle to

explain the interference, Kirchhoff's diffraction theory to compute the diffraction of light by macroscopic objects and finally Maxwell's equation to describe the light-matter interaction. The reason is that the more developed theories are more complicated and we prefer to work with the simpler one as long as it is valid to describe the optical phenomena under investigation.

Now, the question is: "Which theory can be properly adopted for NanoOptics?" To answer this question, we should investigate the validity scope of each theory regarding the light wavelength and the size of interacting object. When wavelength is much smaller than the object size, Geometrical Optics is a first approximation which ignores the wave behavior of light. A better but more complicated option would be Kirchhoff's diffraction theory which allows for the wave nature of light. Kirchhoff's theory attributes ideal properties to the object such as perfect conductivity or real refractive index and assumes a scalar approximation. When the wavelength and the object size are comparable, or the vector properties of the fields are important, we should switch to Classical Electrodynamics. At atomic level, however, the only possibility is Quantum Theory. As the term "NanoOptics" implies, we are dealing with objects smaller than one micron which are comparable to the wavelength of light in optical region of electromagnetic spectrum. Therefore, we are not allowed to take advantage of simplifications offered by Geometrical Theory or Diffraction Theory and we have to live with Classical Electrodynamics or Quantum Theory of light. Fortunately, most optical phenomena at the nanoscale can be well described by Classical Electrodynamics. However, when the precise formulation of the emission or absorption of photons is important or when photon-particle interactions are essential, the classical solutions become inaccurate and we have to replace the Maxwell description of light by a pure quantum description or by semiclassical theories.

1.3 Computational Electrodynamics

Having adopted the Classical Electrodynamics, one has to find the solutions to the Maxwell's equations. Although, these equations look simple, there are only a few rare electromagnetic cases where they can be solved exactly. Therefore, approximate mathematical methods have been developed. When computers became available, a new class of methods began to evolve; *Computational Electrodynamics*. Computer techniques have revolutionized the way in which electromagnetic problems are analyzed. Besides, they are widely utilized in technology as powerful design tools which offer a relatively inexpensive way of designing safe and reliable modern devices by testing a large number of different constructions without actually building them. A pure heuristic try and error approach without supporting simulation would be waste of time and resources.

Development and analysis of computational methods for solving the Maxwell's equations are today very active fields of research and varieties of numerical techniques have been proposed. Each technique has its advantages and disadvantages, no unique method covers all applications. One may choose a suitable method regarding the required accuracy, the total simulation time, the type of results required, the frequency region, and so on. There are different classifications for computational techniques, and each technique may be categorized in more than one group. Instead of discussing the individual methods, we present a brief description of these classifications, together with the advantages and drawbacks of each category which apply as well to its members. Then, we briefly review most commonly computational techniques currently applied to NanoOptics problems.

a) Analytical Techniques versus Numerical Techniques. As emphasized earlier, there are a few cases where Maxwell's equations can be solved in a closed-form. Therefore, for almost all real world problems we need to exploit numerical techniques which solve fundamental field equations directly, subject to the boundary constraints posed by the geometry.