

Trapped modes in electromagnetic waveguides

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Introduction

- For Ω a Lipschitz domain of $\mathbb{R}^d$, $d = 2, 3$, consider the **scalar** spectral pb

$$\left| \begin{array}{lll} -\Delta u & = & \lambda u \quad \text{in } \Omega \\ u & = & 0 \quad \text{on } \partial\Omega. \end{array} \right.$$

Can we have eigenvalues $\lambda > 0$ with eigenfunctions $u \in H^1(\Omega)$?

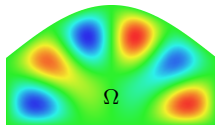
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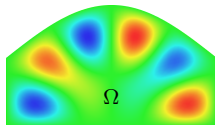
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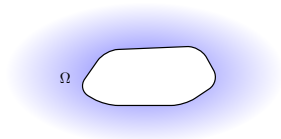
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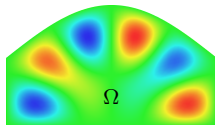
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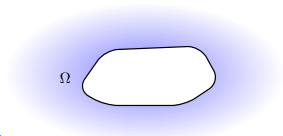
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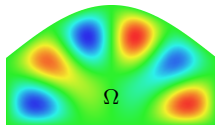
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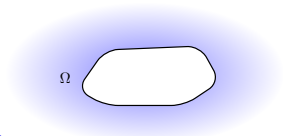
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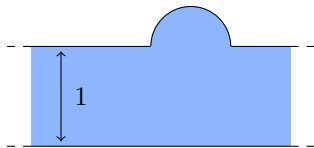


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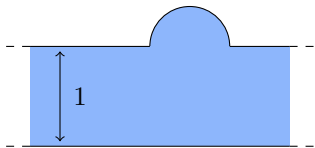
Corresponding eigenfunctions are called **trapped modes**.

- Assume Ω coincides with the strip $\mathbb{R} \times (0; 1)$ outside of a bounded region



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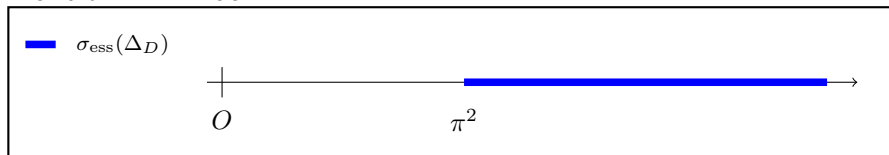
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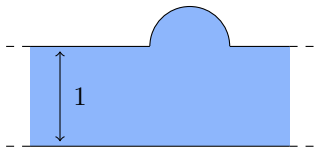
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PICTURE IN THE COMPLEX PLANE:



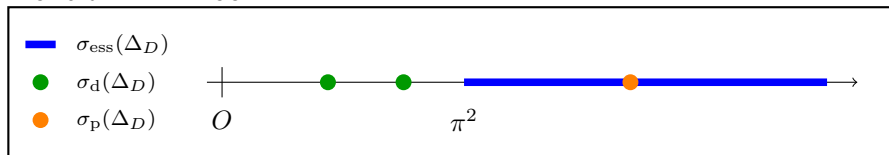
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- Depending on Ω , Δ_D may have **discrete spectrum** or **punctual spectrum**.

PICTURE IN THE COMPLEX PLANE:



- From the **min-max principle**, existence of trapped modes associated with **discrete spectrum** is guaranteed if there is $u \in H_0^1(\Omega) \setminus \{0\}$ such that

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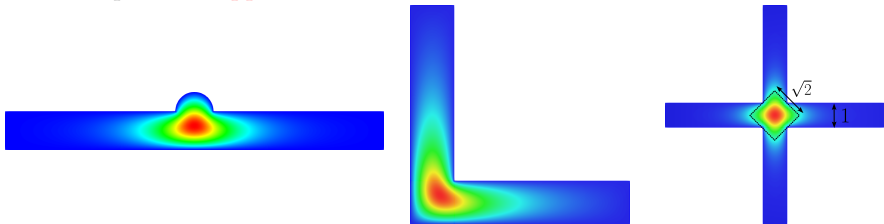
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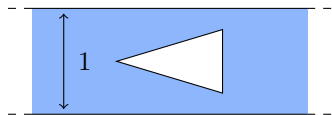
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- Examples of **trapped modes**:

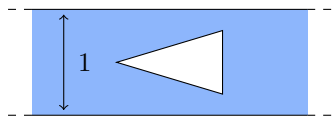


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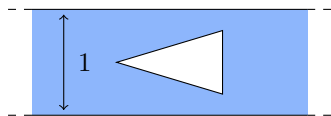
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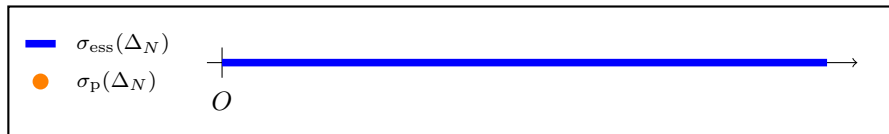
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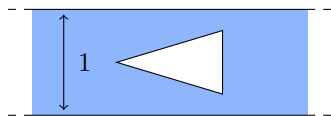
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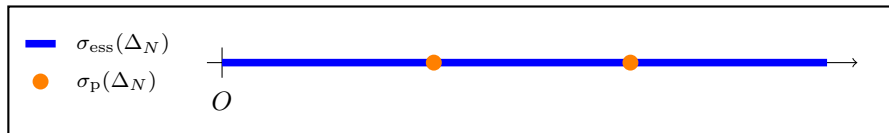
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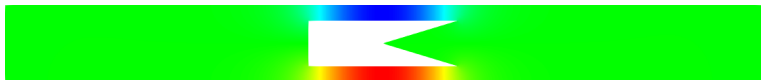
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- Δ_N cannot have **discrete spectrum** but may have **punctual spectrum**.
 $\Rightarrow$ If trapped modes exist, eigenvalues are **embedded** in $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(\Delta_N)$.

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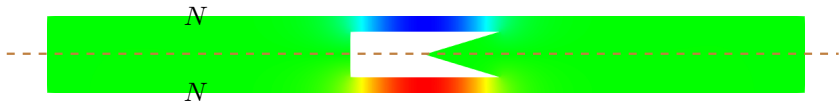
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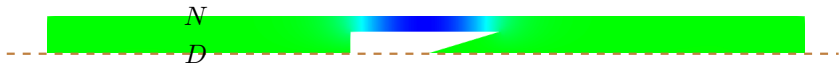
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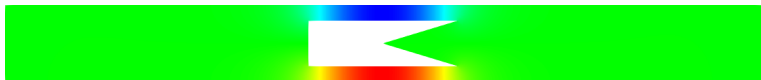
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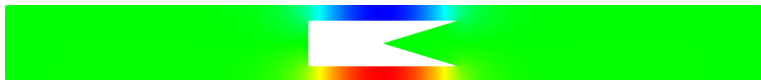
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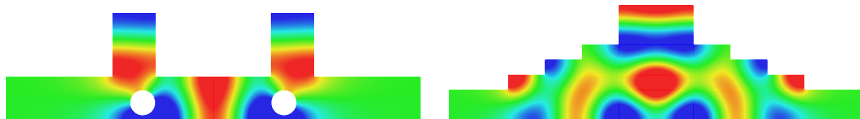
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La vie, c'est comme une dent...

- ▶ Other examples of trapped modes:

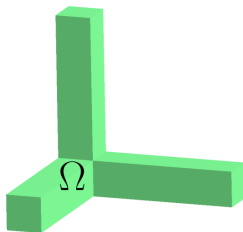
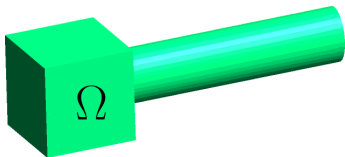


Chesnel, Evans, Koch, Kuznetsov, Levitin, Linton, McIver, Nazarov, Pagneux, Parnowski, Ursell, Vassiliev,...

- ▶ Note that symmetry is **not necessary** to get trapped modes.

Today

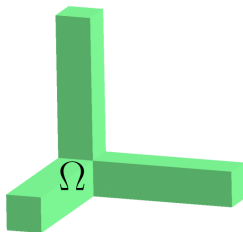
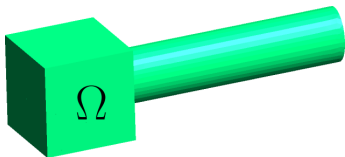
Do they exist **trapped modes** in **electromagnetic waveguides** ?



- The connected waveguide $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ is the union of a **bounded resonator** and **one or several semi-infinite branches**, with **bounded** cross-sections.
- The boundary $\partial\Omega$ is Lipschitz and we impose **perfect conductor** boundary conditions.
- We work with **homogeneous** materials ($\varepsilon = \mu \equiv 1$).

Today

Do they exist **trapped modes** in **electromagnetic waveguides** ?



- While the literature is rich for **scalar** problems (acoustic, water waves, quantum mechanic, Maxwell independant of one variable)

Bonnet-Ben Dhia, Chesnel, Craster, Davies, Dauge, Duclos, Evans, Exner, Goldstone, Hein, Jaffe, Jones, Koch, Krejcirik, Kuznetsov, Levitin, Linton, Mercier, McIver, Nazarov, Pagneux, Parnowski, Raymond, Seba, Ursell, Vassiliev, Witsch,...

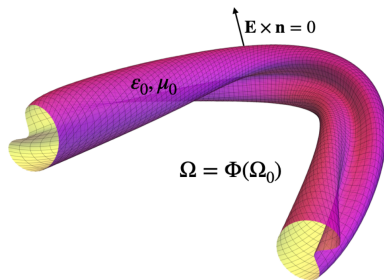
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The effect of **bending** and **twisting** is studied in

 P. Briet, M. Cassier, T. Ourmières-Bonafos and M. Zaccaron. Geometric spectral properties of electromagnetic waveguides. arXiv:2508.13591, 2025.



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- 1 The Maxwell's operator
- 2 Trapped modes: complete separation of variables
- 3 Trapped modes: separation of variables in the resonator
- 4 Trapped modes: absence of separation of variables

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The Maxwell's operator

- We consider the formulation for the **electric field**

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- Without the constraint $\operatorname{div} \mathbf{E} = 0$ in Ω , the problem would have a kernel of **infinite dimension** containing $\{\nabla\varphi, \varphi \in H_0^1(\Omega)\}$.

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- Set $\mathbf{L}^2(\Omega) := (\mathbf{L}^2(\Omega))^3$ and work in

$$\mathbf{H}(\operatorname{div}; 0) := \{\mathbf{E} \in \mathbf{L}^2(\Omega) \mid \operatorname{div} \mathbf{E} = 0 \text{ in } \Omega\}$$

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- ▶ Define the unbounded operator A such that

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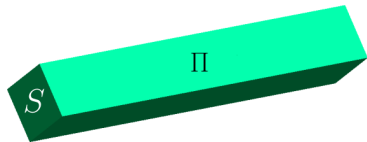
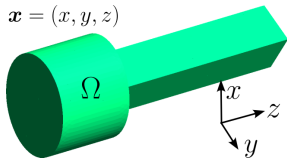
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PROPOSITION. A is a **positive selfadjoint** operator and

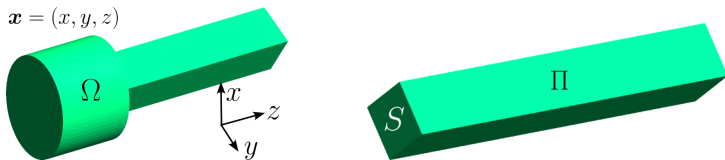
$$(A\mathbf{E}, \mathbf{E}')_{\mathbf{L}^2(\Omega)} = \int_{\Omega} \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E} \cdot \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}' \, d\mathbf{x}, \quad \forall \mathbf{E}, \mathbf{E}' \in D(A).$$

$$\mathbf{x} = (x, y, z)$$



► Essential spectrum for A in Ω is due to **propagating modes**, *i.e.* solutions of the form $\mathbf{E}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathcal{E}(x, y)e^{i\beta z}$, with $\beta \in \mathbb{R}$, to

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1 Propagating **Transverse Electric** modes (TE, $E_z = 0$)

$$\mathbf{E}_{\pm}^{\text{TE}}(\mathbf{x}) = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{curl}_{2\text{D}} \varphi_N(x, y) \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} e^{\pm i\sqrt{\lambda - \lambda_N}z},$$

exist for $\lambda > \lambda_N$. Here $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \lambda_N \text{ is the first positive eigenvalue of } \Delta_N(S) \\ \varphi_N \text{ is a corresponding eigenfunction.} \end{array} \right.$

2 Propagating **Transverse Magnetic** modes (TM, $H_z = 0$)

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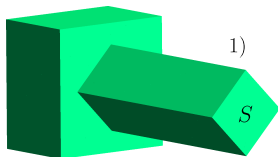
exist for all $\lambda > 0$ iff S is not simply connected. Here $\left| \begin{array}{lll} \Delta \varphi & = & 0 \quad \text{in } S \\ \varphi & = & 1 \quad \text{on } \Gamma \\ \varphi & = & 0 \quad \text{on } \partial S \setminus \Gamma. \end{array} \right.$

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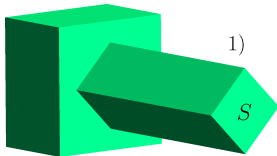


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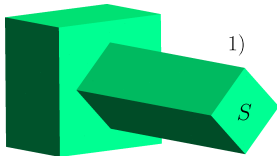
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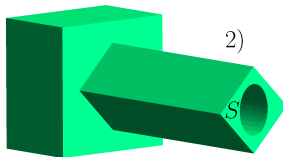
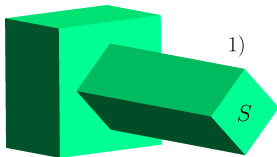
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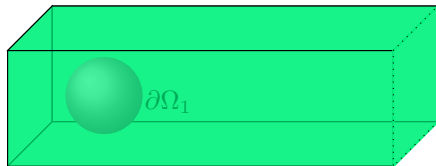
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Remark

- Assume that $\partial\Omega$ is not connected and has one **bounded component** $\partial\Omega_1$.



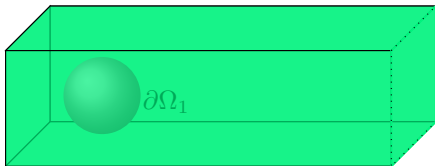
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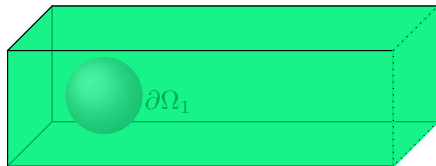
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👉 We wish to show existence of other trapped modes for A associated with **positive eigenvalues**.

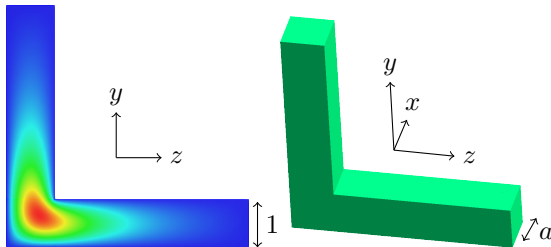
Outline of the talk

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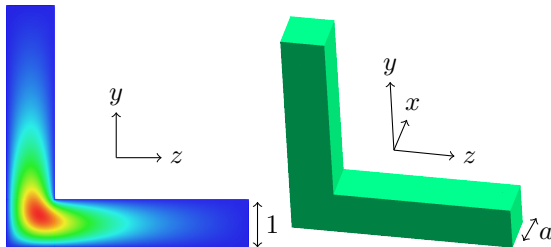
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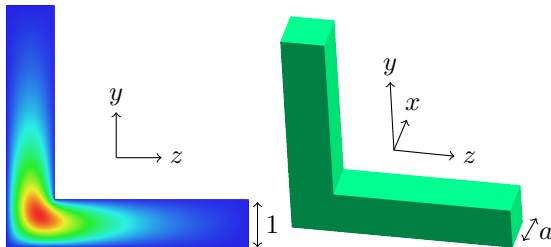
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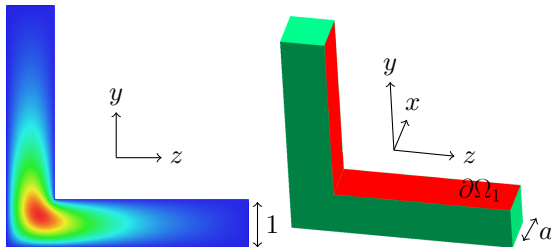
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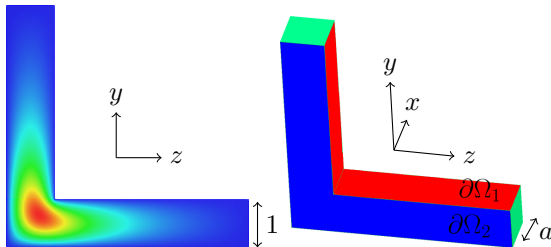
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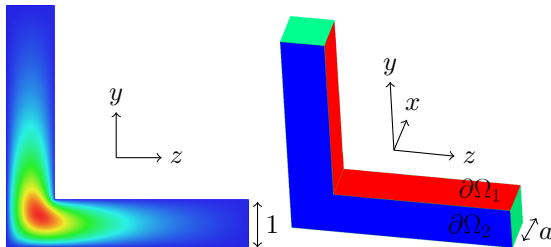
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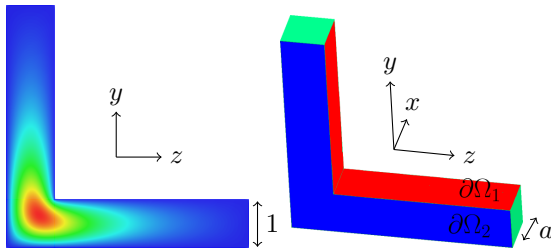
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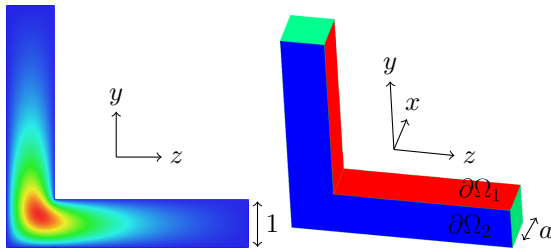
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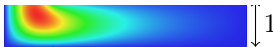
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 y

 y
 $\uparrow$
 x


There is an **unbounded** sequence of **embedded** eigenvalues.

$\mathbf{E} = (\mathbf{E} \cdot \nu)\nu$ on $\partial\Omega_2$.


 $\uparrow$
1

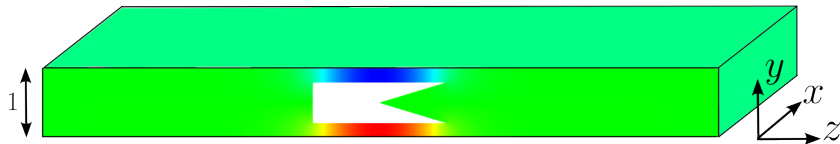
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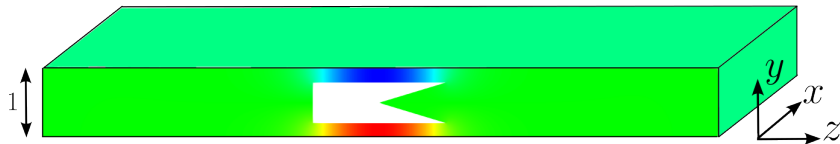


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► This is similar to the results obtained in **bounded** domains in **Costabel**, **Dauge** 19.

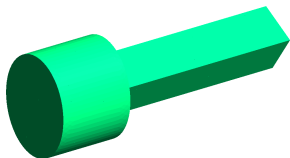
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With **complete separation of variables**, we were able to construct **exactly** eigenpairs for A . How to proceed without this assumption?

- 4 Trapped modes: absence of separation of variables

The min-max principle

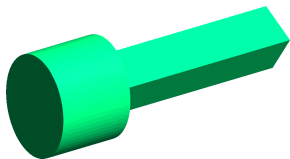


- Assume that S is **simply connected**. Then we saw that

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According to the **min-max principle**, if there is $\mathbf{E}_p \neq 0$ in

$$\mathbf{X}_N(\Omega) = \{\mathbf{E} \in \mathbf{L}^2(\Omega) \mid \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E} \in \mathbf{L}^2(\Omega), \operatorname{div} \mathbf{E} = 0 \text{ in } \Omega, \mathbf{E} \times \boldsymbol{\nu} = 0 \text{ on } \partial\Omega\}$$

such that

$$\frac{\int_{\Omega} |\mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_p|^2 dx}{\int_{\Omega} |\mathbf{E}_p|^2 dx} < \lambda_N,$$

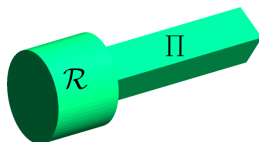
then A has an **eigenvalue below** $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(A)$.



Building test fields

► Assume that $\Omega = \mathcal{R} \cup \Pi$

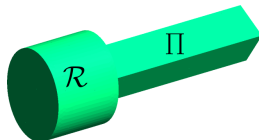
where $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \mathcal{R} \text{ is a bounded resonator} \\ \Pi = S \times [0; +\infty). \end{array} \right.$



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- To construct test fields, a natural idea is to take

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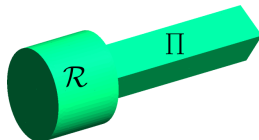
where $\mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}$ is an eigenfunction of the resonator problem

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \operatorname{curl} \operatorname{curl} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} & = \lambda_{\mathcal{R}} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} \quad \text{in } \mathcal{R} \\ \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} \times \boldsymbol{\nu} & = 0 \quad \text{on } \partial \mathcal{R}. \end{array} \right.$$

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where $\mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}$ is an eigenfunction of the **resonator problem**

$$\left| \begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} & = \lambda_{\mathcal{R}} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} & \text{in } \mathcal{R} \\ \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} \times \nu & = 0 & \text{on } \partial \mathcal{R}. \end{array} \right.$$

- Then we would obtain

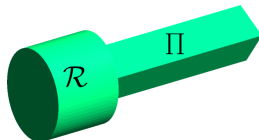
$$\frac{\int_{\Omega} |\mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_p|^2 dx}{\int_{\Omega} |\mathbf{E}_p|^2 dx} = \frac{\int_{\mathcal{R}} |\mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}|^2 dx}{\int_{\mathcal{R}} |\mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}|^2 dx} = \lambda_{\mathcal{R}},$$

and if $\lambda_{\mathcal{R}} < \lambda_N$, this would prove that A has an **eigenvalue below** $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(A)$.

Building test fields

- Assume that $\Omega = \mathcal{R} \cup \Pi$

where $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \mathcal{R} \text{ is a bounded resonator} \\ \Pi = S \times [0; +\infty). \end{array} \right.$



- To construct test fields, a natural idea is to take

$$\mathbf{E}_p = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} & \text{in } \mathcal{R} \\ 0 & \text{in } \Pi \end{array} \right.$$

where $\mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}$ is an eigenfunction of the **resonator problem**

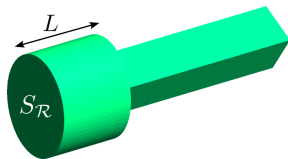
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- We have $\mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_p \in \mathbf{L}^2(\Omega)$ but to get $\mathbf{div} \mathbf{E}_p = 0$ in Ω , we must have

$$\mathbf{E}_p \cdot \nu = 0 \quad \text{on } \partial \mathcal{R} \cap \partial \Pi,$$

which **does not hold in general...**

- Assume that $\mathcal{R} = S_{\mathcal{R}} \times (-L; 0)$.



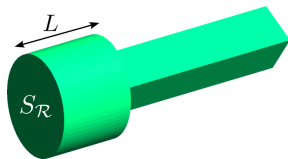
- Using **TE modes** in $\mathcal{R}$, we can create the eigenfunction

$$\mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}}(\mathbf{x}) = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{curl}_{2D} \varphi_N(x, y) \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \sin(\pi z/L)$$

such that

$$\left| \begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{curl} \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} &= \left(\lambda_N(S_{\mathcal{R}}) + \frac{\pi^2}{L^2} \right) \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} & \text{in } \mathcal{R} \\ \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} \times \nu &= 0 & \text{on } \partial \mathcal{R} \\ \mathbf{E}_{\mathcal{R}} \cdot \nu &= 0 & \text{on } \partial \mathcal{R} \cap \partial \Pi. \end{array} \right.$$

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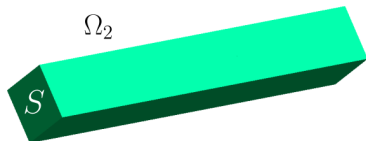
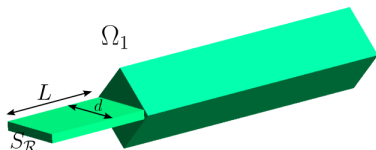
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- From the previous analysis, we obtain the following statement:

THEOREM. For $\mathcal{R} = S_{\mathcal{R}} \times (-L; 0)$, there are **trapped modes** as soon as

$$\lambda_N(S_{\mathcal{R}}) + \frac{\pi^2}{L^2} < \lambda_N(S).$$

- This can be used to show the **absence of monotonicity** of the spectrum of A wrt to the geometry:



Since $\lambda_N(S_{\mathcal{R}}) = \pi^2/d^2 < \pi^2$, one has
 $\sigma_d(A) \neq \emptyset$ for L large enough.

$\lambda_N(S) = \pi^2$ and $\sigma_d(A) = \emptyset$

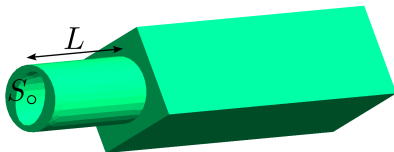


Though $\Omega_1 \subset \Omega_2$, we have $\inf \sigma(A(\Omega_1)) < \inf \sigma(A(\Omega_2))$.

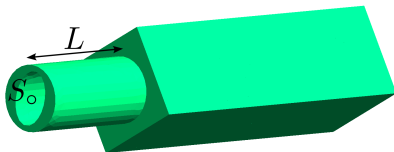
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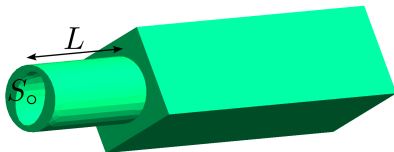
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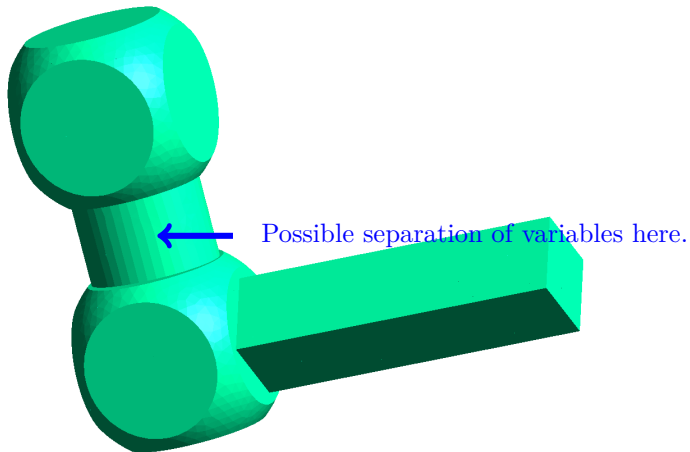
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REMARK. Since we use extension by zero, it is sufficient to have separation of variables only in a **part of the resonator**.



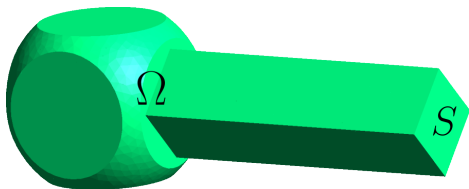
Outline of the talk

- 1 The Maxwell's operator
- 2 Trapped modes: complete separation of variables
- 3 Trapped modes: separation of variables in the resonator
- 4 Trapped modes: absence of separation of variables

Resonators large enough

► Assume that $S \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ is **simply connected** so that $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(A) = [\lambda_N(S); +\infty)$. Denote by $\Delta_D(\Omega)$ the Dirichlet Laplacian in $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^3$.

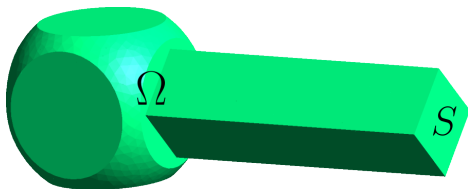
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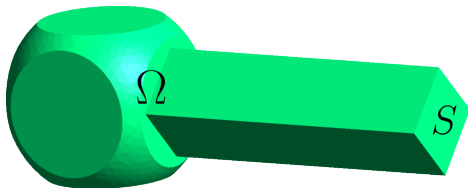
We wish to prove a similar result for A by adapting **Rohleder 25**:

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Let us compare the eigenvalues of $\Delta_D(\Omega)$ and A .

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Finally the **min-max principle** ensures that **A** has an eigenvalue below $\lambda_N(S)$. $\square$

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There is an eigenvalue of the **Maxwell operator** below an eigenvalue of the **Dirichlet Laplacian** in Ω .

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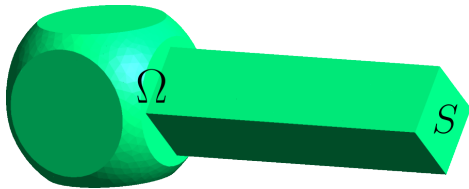
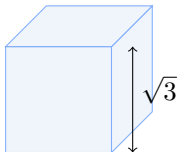
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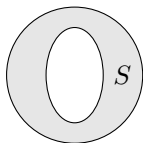
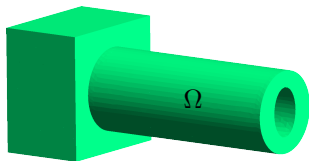
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APPLICATION. Assume that $S = (0; 1)^2$. Then trapped modes exist for A as soon as Ω contains a **cube of side $\sqrt{3}$** .

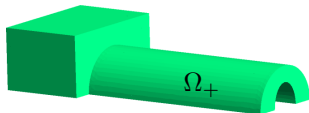


From discrete to embedded eigenvalues

- Maxwell's equations offer an original way of playing with **symmetries** and topology to exhibit **embedded eigenvalues**.



$$\sigma_{\text{ess}}(A(\Omega)) = [0; +\infty)$$

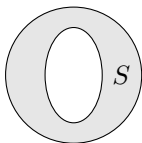
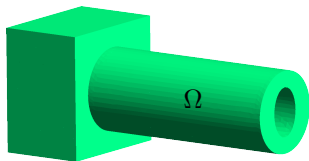


$$\sigma_{\text{ess}}(A(\Omega_+)) = [\lambda_N(S_+); +\infty)$$

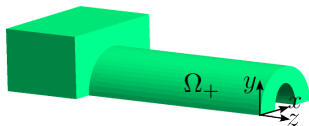
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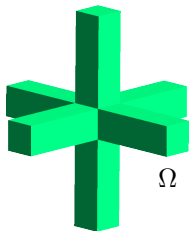
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PROOF. If $\mathbf{E}^+ \in \mathbf{X}_N(\Omega_+)$ is an eigenfunction of $A(\Omega_+)$, define $\mathbf{E}$ such that

$$\mathbf{E} = \mathbf{E}^+ \text{ in } \Omega_+, \quad \mathbf{E}(x, y, z) = \begin{cases} -\mathbf{E}_x^+(x, -y, z) \\ \mathbf{E}_y^+(x, -y, z) \\ -\mathbf{E}_z^+(x, -y, z) \end{cases} \text{ in } \Omega \setminus \Omega_+.$$

Then $\mathbf{E} \in \mathbf{X}_N(\Omega)$ is an eigenfunction of $A(\Omega)$.

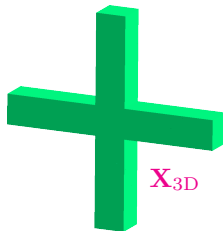
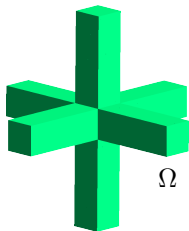
Does this Ω support trapped modes ?



- ▶ The section S of the branches of Ω is a **square of size 1** so that

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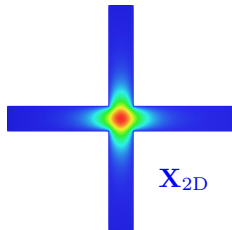
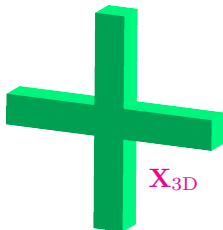
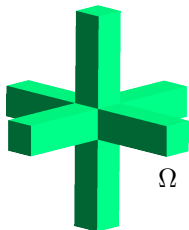
- ▶ The section S of the branches of Ω is a **square of size 1** so that

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- ▶ The above results ensures that A in $\mathbf{X}_{3\text{D}}$ admits a trapped mode with

$$\lambda_{\bullet} \approx 0.6605\pi^2 \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{E}(x, y, z) = \begin{pmatrix} \varphi(y, z) \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

Does this Ω support trapped modes ?



- ▶ The section S of the branches of Ω is a **square of size 1** so that

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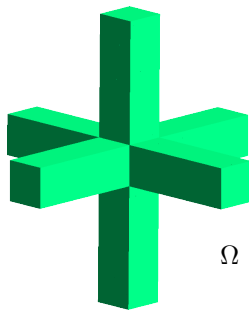
$$\lambda_{\bullet} \approx 0.6605\pi^2 \quad \text{and} \quad \mathbf{E}(x, y, z) = \begin{pmatrix} \varphi(y, z) \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

where $(\lambda_{\bullet}, \varphi)$ is a trapped mode of the **Dirichlet Laplacian** in $\mathbf{X}_{2D}$.

THEOREM. The 6 legs geometry supports **trapped modes**.

PROOF.

► Set $\tilde{\mathbf{E}} := \begin{cases} \mathbf{E}_p & \text{in } \mathbf{X}_{3D} \\ 0 & \text{elsewhere.} \end{cases}$



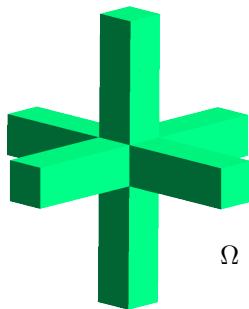
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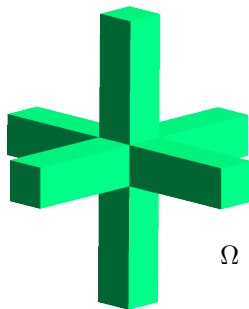
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► With **sharp estimates**, one establishes

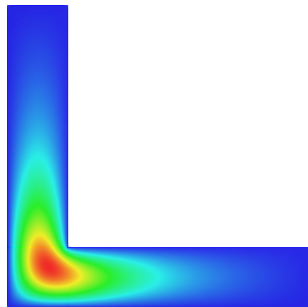
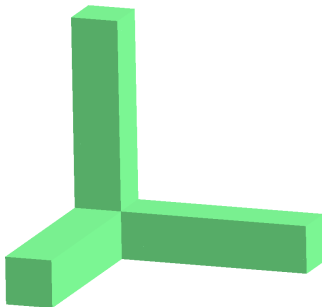
$$\int_{\Omega} |\operatorname{curl} \mathbf{E}|^2 d\mathbf{x} < \pi^2 \int_{\Omega} |\mathbf{E}|^2 d\mathbf{x}.$$

Finally, we conclude with the **min-max** principle.



The 3 legs animal

THEOREM. The 3 legs geometry supports **trapped modes**.



- ▶ The proof uses the trapped mode of the **Dirichlet Laplacian** in the 2D L-shaped domain.
- ▶ Estimates are surprisingly **more difficult** than for the 6 legs geometry....

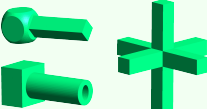
Outline of the talk

- 1 The Maxwell's operator
- 2 Trapped modes: complete separation of variables
- 3 Trapped modes: separation of variables in the resonator
- 4 Trapped modes: absence of separation of variables

Conclusion

What we did

- ♠ We presented examples of waveguides where the **Maxwell's operator** has **eigenvalues**.

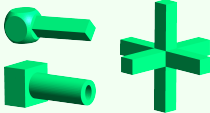
		
Complete separation of variables	Separation of variables in $\mathcal{R}$	No separation of variables
Exact eigenv. of the scalar pb.	Min-max principle + <i>ad hoc</i> test field	

- ♠ Eigenvalues can be **embedded** or **not** in the essential spectrum.

Conclusion

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Future work

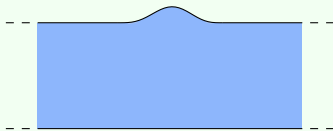
- 1) Below an eigenvalue of Δ_D , there is an eigenvalue of A . Is there anything to do with an (embedded) eigenvalue of Δ_N ?
- 2) Can one show **absence** of eigenvalues in certain Ω ?



Conclusion

Future work

3) In geometries with **exterior bumps**, Δ_D has discrete spectrum.



Can one prove an equivalent for **A** with the **Piola** transform?

Can one exploit the results we have concerning **variable** ε, μ ?

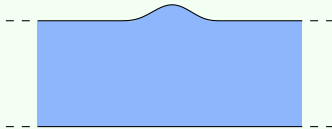
THEOREM. If S is simply connected, $\Omega = S \times \mathbb{R}$, $\varepsilon, \mu \geq 1$ with $\varepsilon > 1$ or $\mu > 1$ in a non-empty set, then $\sigma_d(A^{\varepsilon, \mu}) \neq \emptyset$.

→ post-doc of **Michele Zaccaron**.

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- 4) Can one exploit **embedded eigenvalues** via the **Fano** resonance mechanism to achieve **invisibility** (zero reflection, perfect transmission,...)?

The Fano resonance phenomenon

- ▶ Generically, slight perturbations of a geometry supporting **embedded eigenvalues** give rise to **complex resonances** with small imaginary parts.
- ▶ Close to the complex resonances, one observes **versatile scattering phenomena** (the **Fano resonance**), which can be used to reach **zero reflection**.

The Fano resonance phenomenon

Sym. geom.

|

Slightly non sym. geom.

- ▶ $\omega \mapsto \Re u(\omega)$ with $\omega = \sqrt{\lambda}$.
- ▶ **Complex spectrum** computed with **PMLs** (we zoom at the real axis).
 - Trapped mode
 - Complex resonance

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Thank you for your attention!

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