Finite Element Beam Propagation Method
with Perfectly Matched Layer Boundary Conditions

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Abstract — The perfectly matched layer boundary condition is incorporated into the beam propagation method based on a finite element scheme. To show the validity and usefulness of this approach, numerical results are shown for a double U-bend and linear tapers with different index contrast and opening angle.

Index terms — beam propagation method, finite element method, perfectly matched layer, wide-angle beam propagation, optical waveguide analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

The beam propagation method (BPM) is at the present the most widely used for the study of light propagation in longitudinally varying waveguides. Especially a recently developed finite element BPM (FE-BPM) using the Padé approximation [1, 2] can give very accurate results without increasing computational effort even if the wide-angle propagation is treated.

One of the key issues in implementing FE-BPM to study light propagation in finite spatial domain is the boundary condition at the computational window (CW) edges. Berenger [3] has recently introduced the concept of a perfectly matched layer (PML) for reflectionless absorption of electromagnetic waves which is successfully applied to the finite difference BPM (FD-BPM) [4]. Unfortunately, since Berenger’s PML technique involves a modification of Maxwell’s equations based on the splitting of the fields components into two subcomponents, these non-Maxwellian equations do not have a desirable form for finite element (FE) formulations. More recently, Pekel and Mittra [5] have presented a new version of PML which does not involve the field splitting and is suitable for FE formulations.

In this paper the revised PML is, for the first time, incorporated into FE-BPM. To show the validity and usefulness of this approach, numerical results are shown for a double U-bend and linear tapers with different index contrast and opening angle.

II. BASIC EQUATION

We consider a planar (two-dimensional) optical waveguide, where \( y \) and \( z \) are the transverse and propagation directions, respectively, and there is no variation in the \( x \) direction \( (\partial/\partial x \equiv 0) \). With these assumptions and the transversely-scaled version of PML [5] we get the following basic equation:

\[
\frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left( \frac{p}{s} \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial y} \right) + s \frac{\partial}{\partial z} \left( \frac{p}{s} \frac{\partial \Phi}{\partial z} \right) + \frac{1}{\mu_0} k_0^2 \Phi = 0 \tag{1}
\]

with

\[
\Phi = E_x, \quad p = 1, \quad q = n^2 \quad \text{for TE modes} \tag{2}
\]

\[
\Phi = H_x, \quad p = 1/n^2, \quad q = 1 \quad \text{for TM modes} \tag{3}
\]

\[
s = 1 - j \frac{\sigma_e}{\omega \varepsilon_0 n^2} = 1 - j \frac{\sigma_m}{\omega \mu_0} \tag{4}
\]

where \( E_x \) and \( H_x \) are the \( x \) components of the electric and magnetic fields, respectively, \( \omega \) is the angular frequency, \( \varepsilon_0 \) and \( \mu_0 \) are the permittivity and permeability of free space, respectively, \( n \) is the refractive index, \( k_0 \) is the free-space wavenumber, and \( \sigma_e \) and \( \sigma_m \) are the electric and magnetic conductivities of PML, respectively.

The relation (4) is required to satisfy the PML impedance matching condition

\[
\frac{\sigma_e}{\varepsilon_0 n^2} = \frac{\sigma_m}{\mu_0} \tag{5}
\]

which means that the wave impedance of a PML medium exactly equals that of the adjacent medium with refractive index \( n \) in the CW, \( \sqrt{\mu_0/(\varepsilon_0 n^2)} \), regardless of the angle of propagation or frequency. In the PML medium, a parabolic profile is usually assumed for the conductivities, and thus, the parameter \( s \) is written as

\[
s = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll}
1 - j \frac{3 \lambda}{4 \pi n d} \left( \frac{\rho}{d} \right)^2 \ln \frac{1}{R_t} & \text{in PML region} \\
1 & \text{in non-PML region}
\end{array} \right. \tag{6}
\]

where \( \lambda \) is the free-space wavelength, \( d \) is the PML thickness, \( \rho \) is the distance from the beginning of PML, and \( R_t \) is called the theoretical reflection coefficient [3].

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### III. Finite Element Discretization

Substituting a solution of the form
\[ \Phi(y, z) = \phi(y, z) \exp(-jk_0n_0z) \]  
into (1), we obtain the following equation for the slowly varying complex amplitude \( \phi \):

\[ p^2 \frac{\partial^2 \phi}{\partial z^2} - 2jk_0n_0p_s \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left( \frac{p}{s} \frac{\partial \phi}{\partial y} \right) + k_0^2 s(q - n_0^2 p) \phi = 0 \]  

(8)

where \( n_0 \) is the reference refractive index, and the term \( \partial p/\partial z \) is neglected for TM modes.

Dividing the waveguide cross-section into quadratic (second-order) line elements and applying the standard FE technique to (8), we obtain

\[ [M] \frac{d^2 \{\phi\}}{dz^2} - 2jk_0n_0[M] \frac{d\{\phi\}}{dz} + ((K) - k_0^2 n_0^2[M]) \{\phi\} = \{0\} \]  

(9)

where \( \{\phi\} \) is the global electric or magnetic field vector, \( \{0\} \) is a null vector, and the FE matrices \([K]\) and \([M]\) are given by

\[ [K] = \sum_e \int_e [k_0^2n_0(N)\{N\}^T - \frac{p}{s} \frac{d\{N\}}{dy} \frac{d\{N\}^T}{dy}] dy \]  

(10)

\[ [M] = \sum_e \int_e ps\{N\}\{N\}'T dy \]  

(11)

Here, \( \{N\} \) is the shape function vector, \( T \) denotes a transpose, and \( \sum_e \) extends over all different elements.

Utilizing the Padé approximation \([1],[2],[6]\), (9) is reduced to

\[ -2jk_0n_0[M] \frac{d\{\phi\}}{dz} + ((K) - k_0^2 n_0^2[M]) \{\phi\} = \{0\} \]  

(12)

with \( \{\phi\} = [M] + \frac{1}{4k_0^2n_0^2}((K) - k_0^2 n_0^2[M]) \).

(13)

Applying the Crank-Nicholson algorithm for the propagation direction \( z \) to (12) yields

\[ [A]_i \{\phi_{\Delta z}\} = [B]_i \{\phi\}_i \]  

(14)

with

\[ [A]_i = -2jk_0n_0[M]_i + 0.5\Delta z([K]_i - k_0^2 n_0^2[M]_i) \]  

(15)

\[ [B]_i = -2jk_0n_0[M]_i + 0.5\Delta z([K]_i - k_0^2 n_0^2[M]_i) \]  

(16)

where \( \Delta z \) is the propagation step size, \( \{\phi\}_i \) and \( \{\phi_{\Delta z}\} \) are the input and output field vectors at the \( i \)th propagation step, respectively, and the reference refractive index \( n_0,i \) and the FE mesh are adaptively renewed at each propagation step [2].

A temporary input field vector on the next \((i + 1)\)th mesh, \( \{\phi'\}_{i+1} \), is easily obtained by quadratic interpolation using the values of \( \{\phi_{\Delta z}\}_i \). Noting that the transmitted power \( P \) is given by

\[ P = \frac{1}{2} \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} p|\phi|^2 dy \]  

(17)

an actual input field vector on the \((i + 1)\)th mesh, \( \{\phi\}_{i+1} \), is derived as

\[ \{\phi\}_{i+1} = \{\phi\}_i + \frac{1}{2} \int_{CW} p_i|\phi_i(y, z = i\Delta z)|^2 dy \]  

(18)

\[ \sum_e \{\phi_{\Delta z}\}_i \int_{CW} p_i|\phi_i(y, z = i\Delta z)|^2 dy \]  

\[ \{\phi\}'_{i+1} = \{\phi\}'_{i+1} \]  

\[ \sum_e \{\phi_{\Delta z}\}'_{i+1} \int_{CW} p_{i+1}|\phi_{i+1}(y, z = (i+1)\Delta z)|^2 dy \]  

where \( \{\phi_{\Delta z}\}_i \) and \( \{\phi\}'_{i+1} \) are the elemental field vectors, \( \dagger \) denote complex conjugate and transpose, and \( \sum_e \) extends over the elements within CW except PML regions.

### IV. Numerical Results

First, we consider a double U-bend as shown in Fig. 1, where the core index is \( n_1 = 1.45 \), the relative refractive index
Fig. 3 Field pattern at \( z = 2200 \mu m \).

The PML boundary condition was, for the first time, incorporated into the wide-angle FE-BPM based on the Padé approximation and its effectiveness was demonstrated. The FE-BPM with PML for three-dimensional optical waveguides is now under consideration.

V. CONCLUSION

The PML boundary condition was, for the first time, incorporated into the wide-angle FE-BPM based on the Padé approximation and its effectiveness was demonstrated. The FE-BPM with PML for three-dimensional optical waveguides is now under consideration.

REFERENCES


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### TABLE I \(^{(1)}\) CALCULATION CONDITIONS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TE MODE POWER LOSS FOR THE SEMICONDUCTOR COVER CASE \( (n_1 = 3.3, n_2 = 3.17, n_3 = 3.17, w_1 = 0.2\mu m, \text{and} \ w_2 = 0.1\mu m) \)

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### TABLE II \(^{(1)}\) CALCULATION CONDITIONS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TM MODE POWER LOSS FOR THE SEMICONDUCTOR COVER CASE \( (n_1 = 3.3, n_2 = 3.17, n_3 = 3.17, w_1 = 0.2\mu m, \text{and} \ w_2 = 0.1\mu m) \)

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### TABLE III \(^{(1)}\) CALCULATION CONDITIONS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL TE MODE POWER LOSS FOR THE AIR COVER CASE \( (n_1 = 3.3, n_2 = 3.17, n_3 = 1.0, w_1 = 0.2\mu m, \text{and} \ w_2 = 0.4\mu m) \)

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