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Pseudogauge freedom and the $SO(3)$ algebra of spin operators.

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The energy-momentum and spin tensors for a given theory can be replaced by alternative expressions that obey the same conservation laws for the energy, linear momentum, as well as angular momentum but, however, differ by the local redistribution of such quantities (with global energy, linear momentum, and angular momentum remaining unchanged). This arbitrariness is described in recent literature as the pseudogauge freedom or symmetry. In this letter, we analyze several pseudogauges used to formulate the relativistic hydrodynamics of particles with spin $1/2$ and conclude that the canonical version of the spin tensor has an advantage over other forms as only the canonical definition defines the spin operators that fulfil the $SO(3)$ algebra of angular momentum. This result sheds new light on the results encountered in recent papers demonstrating pseudogauge dependence of various physical quantities. It indicates that for spin-polarization observables, the canonical version is fundamentally better suited for building a connection between theory and experiment.

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