

New techniques for bounding stabilizer rank

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AGATES Kickoff Workshop

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**Northeastern
University**

Computational basis

- Let $\{|0\rangle, |1\rangle\} \subseteq \mathbb{C}^2$ be the computational basis for \mathbb{C}^2

$$|0\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad |1\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- Let $\{|x\rangle: x \in \mathbb{F}_2^n\} \subseteq (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ be the computational basis for $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$

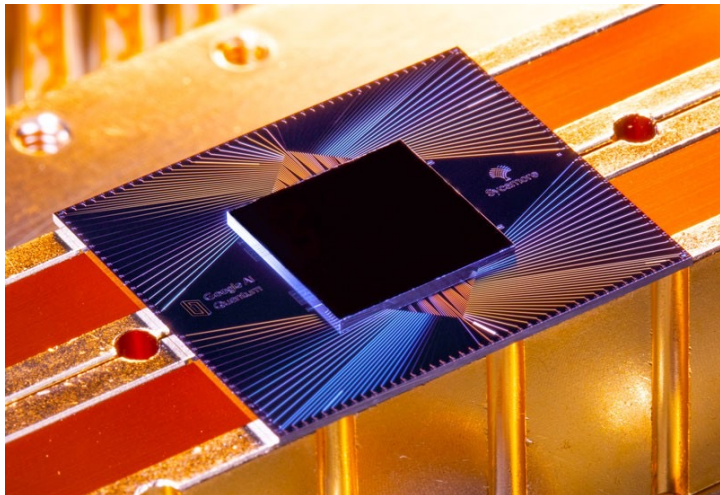
$$|00\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad |01\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad |10\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad |11\rangle = \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- A **state** is a unit vector in $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ (mod phase, i.e. an element of \mathbb{P}^{2^n-1}).
- We often omit normalization.
- States in \mathbb{C}^2 are called **qubits**.
- States are denoted $|\psi\rangle, |\phi\rangle$, etc.
- $\langle\psi|$ denotes conjugate-transpose of $|\psi\rangle$

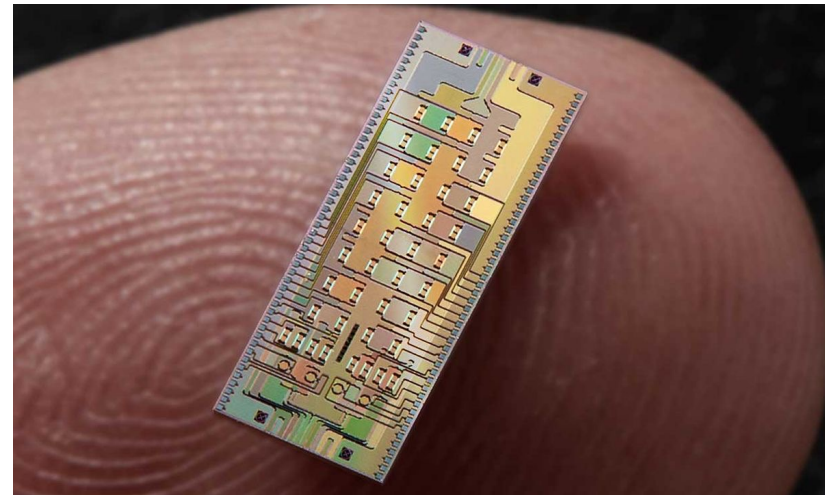
Quantum circuits

General framework:

1. **Prepare** a computational basis state $|0 \cdots 0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$.
2. **Apply** a unitary matrix $U|0 \cdots 0\rangle$
3. **Measure** in the computational basis. For $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$, $p(x) = |\langle x|U|0 \cdots 0\rangle|^2$.



Google Sycamore superconducting qubit chip.
n=53 qubits (with errors!!)



Xanadu X8 photonic chip
n=8 qubits (with errors!!)

Quantum circuits

General framework:

1. **Prepare** a computational basis state $|0 \cdots 0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$.
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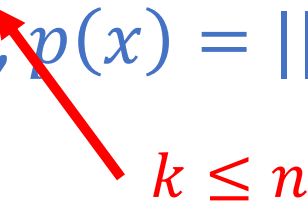
The measurement destroys the state!

Need $\Omega(2^n)$ repetitions to approximate p .


Subtle power of quantum computer: You can sample from $p \in \mathbb{R}_+^{2^n}$

Quantum circuits

General framework:

1. **Prepare** a computational basis state $|0 \cdots 0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$.
2. **Apply** a unitary matrix $U|0 \cdots 0\rangle$
3. **Partially measure.** For $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$, $p(x) = ||(\langle x| \otimes \mathbb{I})U|0 \cdots 0\rangle ||^2$
 $k \leq n$

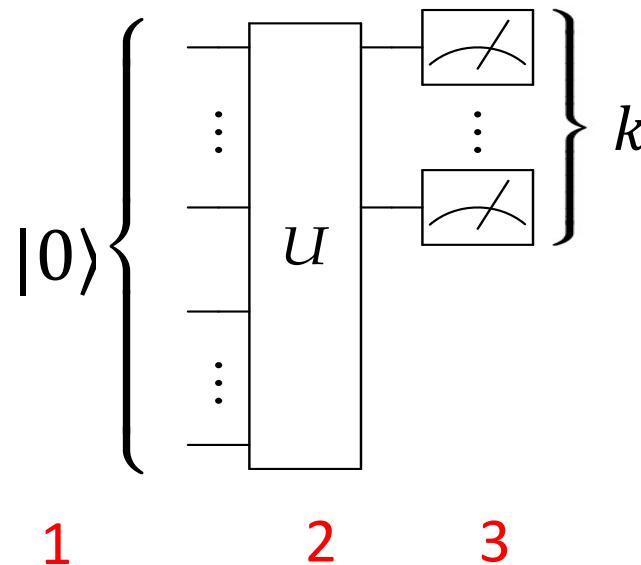
Partial measurement only partially destroys the state.

Leftover state is $\frac{1}{\sqrt{p(x)}} (\langle x| \otimes \mathbb{I})U|0 \cdots 0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n-k}$.
 **Normalization**

Quantum circuits

General framework:

1. **Prepare** a computational basis state $|0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$.
2. **Apply** a unitary matrix $U|0\rangle$
3. **Measure** in the computational basis. For $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$, $p(x) = ||(\langle x| \otimes \mathbb{I})U|0\rangle||^2$

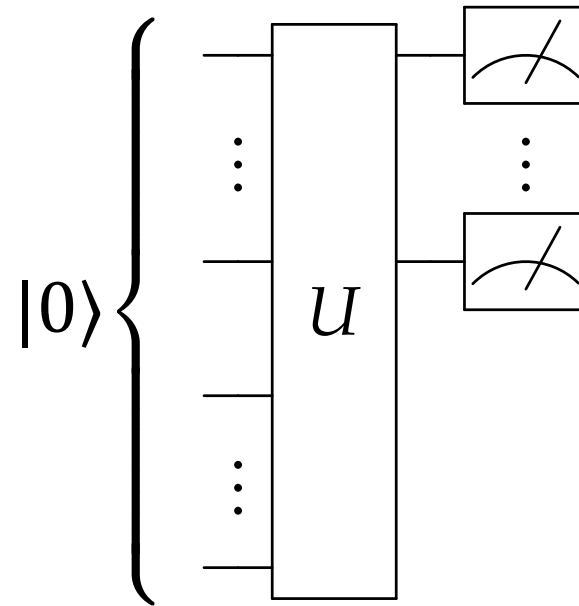


This talk: Classical simulation of Clifford+T circuits via stabilizer rank

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Classical simulation of quantum circuits

Question: Given a classical description of a quantum circuit

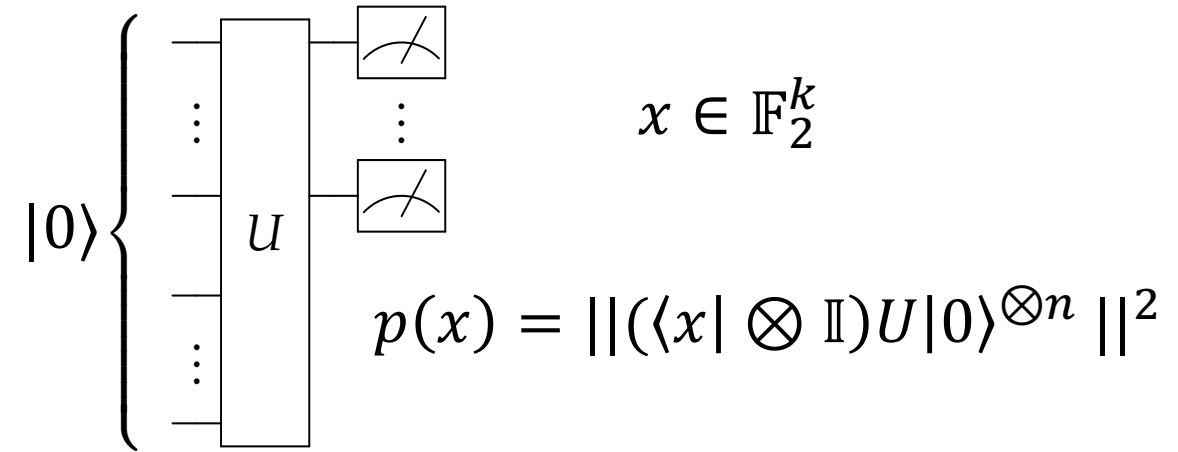


Can it be simulated efficiently on a classical computer?

Types of simulation

- Strong simulation:

Compute $p(x)$ for all $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$.



- ϵ -Strong simulation:

Find a probability vector \tilde{p} such that

$$(1 - \epsilon)p(x) \leq \tilde{p}(x) \leq (1 + \epsilon)p(x) \quad \text{for all } x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k.$$

- Weak simulation:

Sample elements of $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$ from a probability distribution \tilde{p} such that

$$\|\tilde{p} - p\|_1 \leq \epsilon$$

This talk: Classical simulation of Clifford+T
circuits via stabilizer rank

Clifford circuits

The **Clifford group** is the group of unitaries $U: (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n} \rightarrow (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ generated by the **Clifford gates**

$$H = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \quad S = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & i \end{bmatrix} \quad CNOT = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

... and global phases $U(1) = \{e^{i\theta} : \theta \in [0, 2\pi)\}$

The **Pauli group** on \mathbb{C}^2 is the group of unitaries $U: \mathbb{C}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^2$ generated by the **Pauli gates**

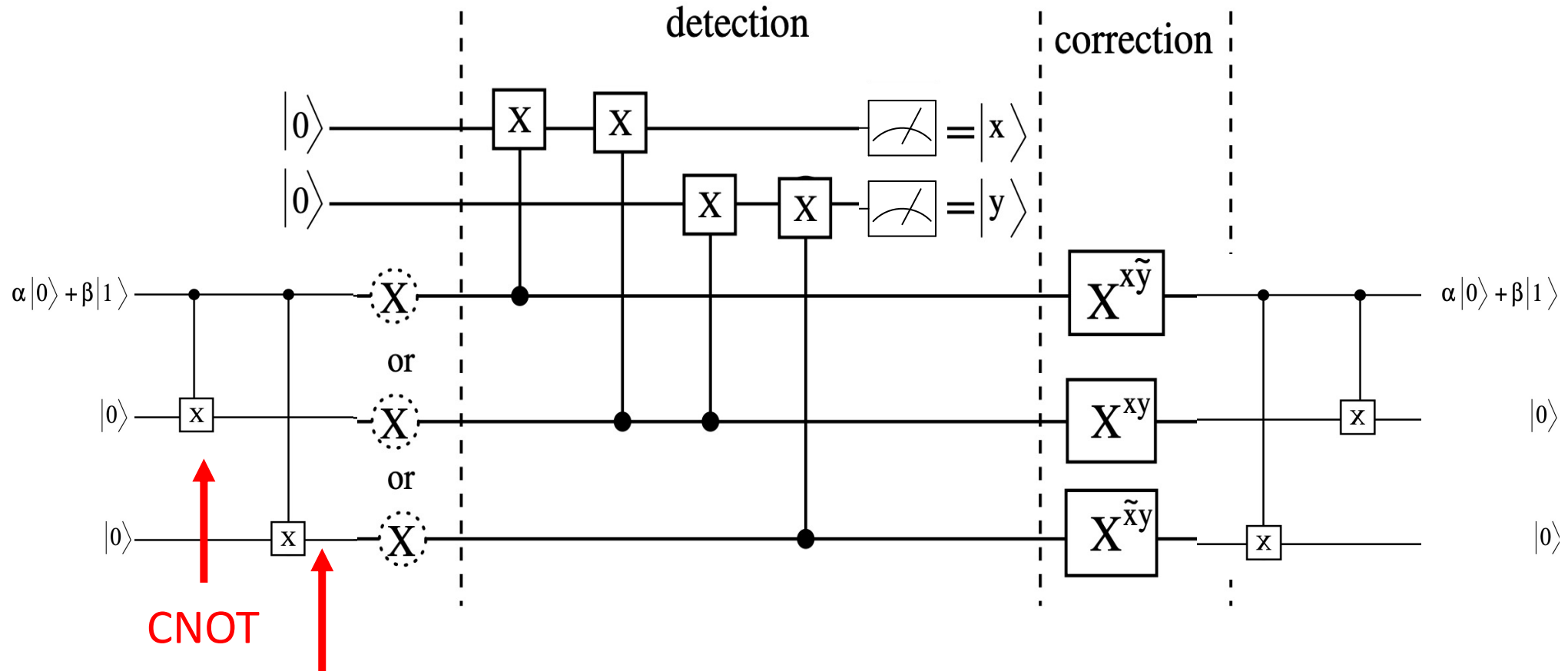
$$X = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad Z = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \quad iI_2 = i \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

- As an abstract group, the Pauli group on \mathbb{C}^2 is the central product $C_4 \circ D_4$.
- The Clifford group is the normalizer of the n -fold tensor product of the unitary Pauli group.
- Open problem: Character table for Clifford group?

Why Clifford circuits?

1. Implementation
2. Error correction
3. Clifford + any other gate is dense in the unitary group
4. Standard set of gates

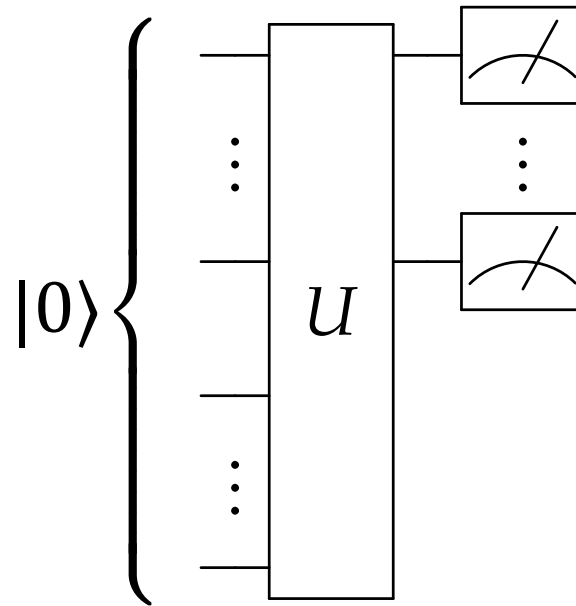
Correcting an $X = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ error with Clifford circuit



$$\alpha|000\rangle + \beta|111\rangle$$

Classical simulation of Clifford circuits

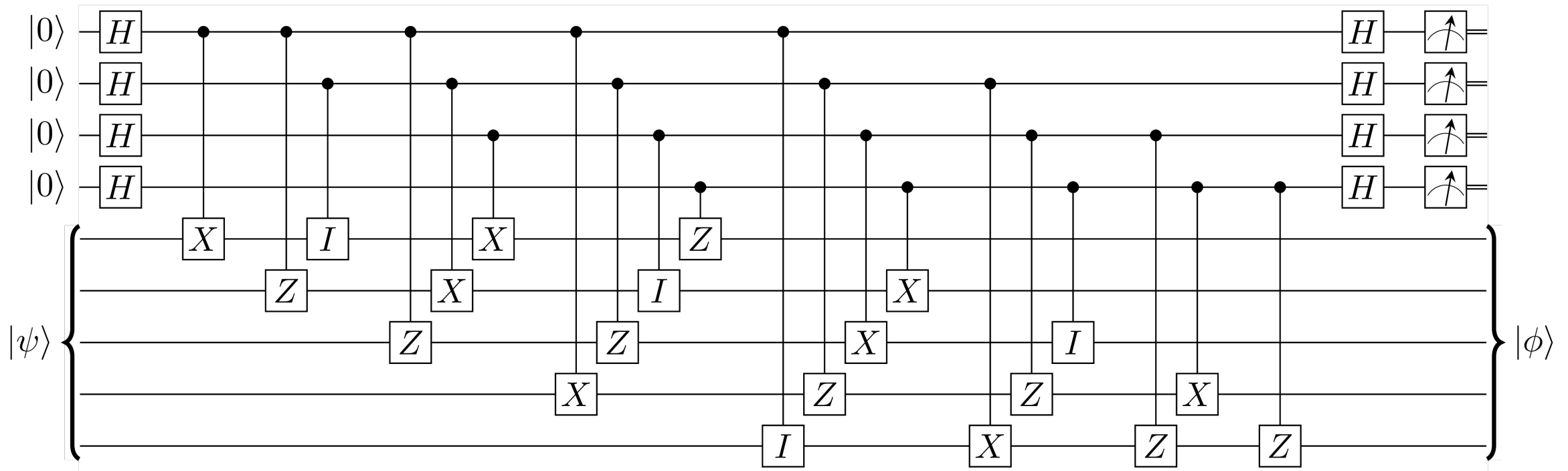
Question: Given a classical description of a **Clifford** circuit



Can it be simulated efficiently on a classical computer?

Classical simulation of Clifford circuits

Question: Given a classical description of a Clifford circuit



Can it be simulated efficiently on a classical computer?

[Gottesman-Knill 98]: Yes. Clifford circuits can be efficiently simulated.

... Strongly, weakly, and ϵ -strongly

... Even the leftover state $\frac{1}{\sqrt{p(x)}} (\langle x | \otimes \mathbb{I}) U | 0 \cdots 0 \rangle$
can be computed (and represented) efficiently!

Clifford+T circuits

The **Clifford+T group** is the unitary group $U: (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n} \rightarrow (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ generated by the **Clifford gates**

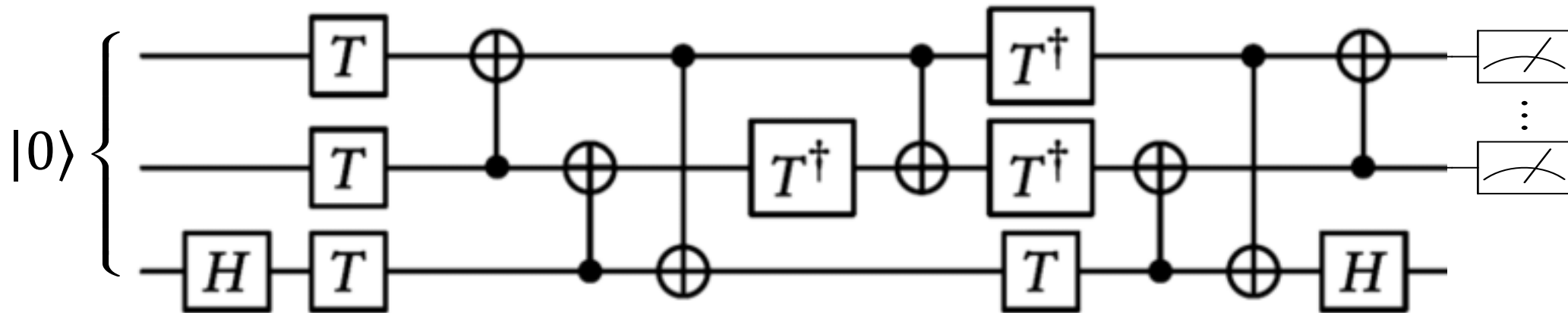
$$H = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 1 & -1 \end{bmatrix} \quad S = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & i \end{bmatrix} \quad CNOT = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

and **T-gates**

$$T = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & e^{i\pi/4} \end{bmatrix}.$$

Classical simulation of Clifford+T circuits

Question: Given a classical description of a **Clifford+T** circuit



Can it be simulated efficiently on a classical computer?

Quantum circuits

General framework:

1. **Prepare** a computational basis state $|0 \cdots 0\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$.
2. **Apply** a small number of **Clifford+T** gates $U_1 U_2 \cdots U_{O(n^l)} |0 \cdots 0\rangle$
3. **Measure** in the computational basis. For $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$, $p(x) = |\langle x | U_1 U_2 \cdots U_{O(n^l)} | 0 \cdots 0 \rangle|^2$.

Subtle power of quantum computer: Can apply $U_1 U_2 \cdots U_{O(n^l)}$ efficiently, and sample from $p \in \mathbb{R}_+^{2^n}$.

This talk: Classical simulation of Clifford+T
circuits via stabilizer rank

Partial answer: Stabilizer rank

- A state $|\phi\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ is a **stabilizer state** if $|\phi\rangle = U|0\rangle^{\otimes n}$ for some Clifford circuit U .
- The **stabilizer rank** of a state $|\psi\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$, denoted $\chi(|\psi\rangle)$, is the minimum number r for which

$$|\psi\rangle = \sum_{i=1}^r c_i |\phi_i\rangle$$

for some $c_i \in \mathbb{C}$ and $|\phi_i\rangle$ stabilizer states.

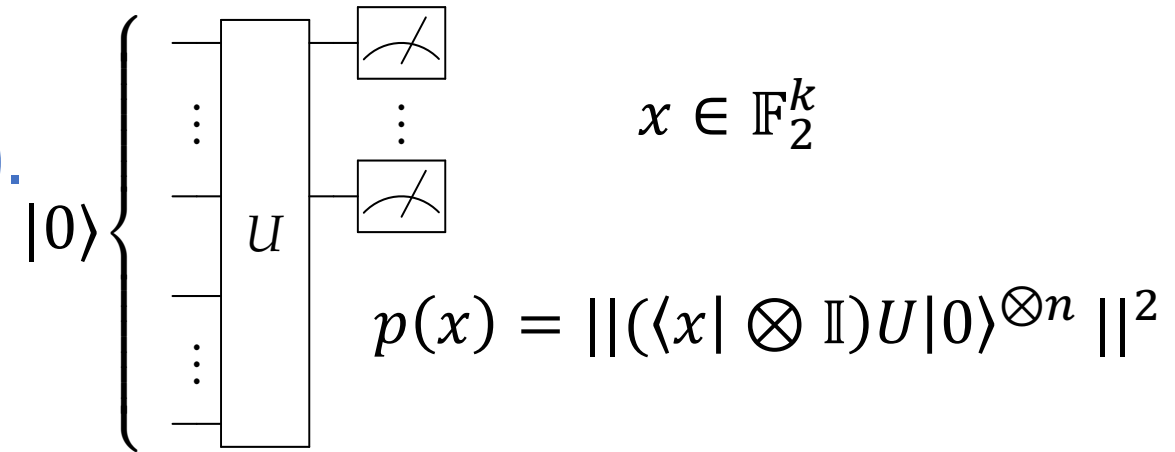
- The **δ -approximate stabilizer rank** of $|\psi\rangle$ is
$$\chi_\delta(|\psi\rangle) = \min\{\chi(|\mu\rangle) : \|\psi\rangle - |\mu\rangle\| \leq \delta\}.$$

Partial answer: Stabilizer rank $|H\rangle = |0\rangle + (1 + \sqrt{2})|1\rangle \approx |0\rangle + 2.41|1\rangle$

[Bravyi-Smith-Smolín 16, Bravyi-Gosset 16]: A Clifford+T circuit with n T-gates can be simulated...

- Strongly with cost quadratic in $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

Compute $p(x)$ for all $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$



- ϵ -Strongly with cost linear in $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

Find a probability vector \tilde{p} such that $(1 - \epsilon)p(x) \leq \tilde{p}(x) \leq (1 + \epsilon)p(x)$

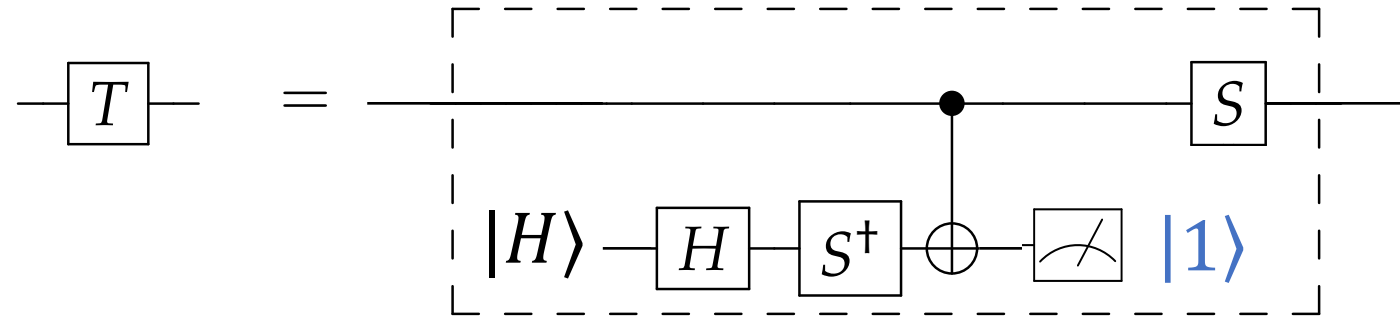
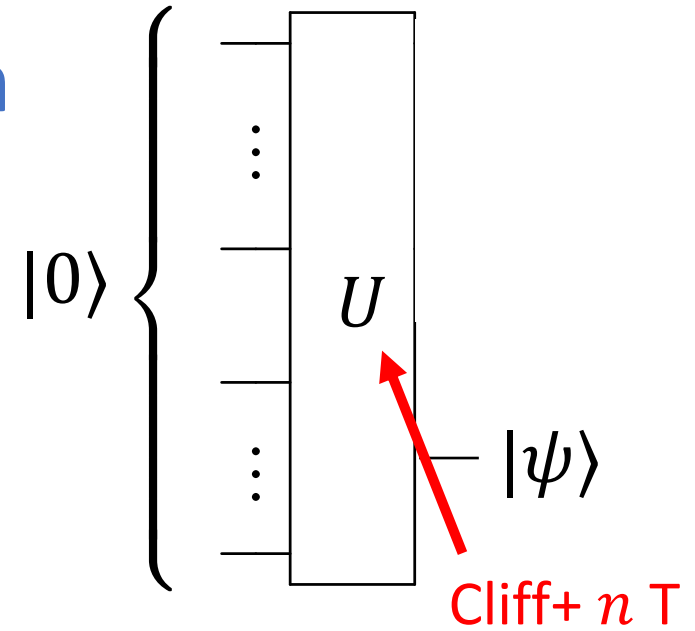
- Weakly with cost linear in $\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

Sample elements of $x \in \mathbb{F}_2^k$ from a probability distribution \tilde{p} such that

$$\|\tilde{p} - p\|_1 \leq \epsilon$$

Proof idea [\[GK98\]](#): Clifford circuits can be efficiently simulated.

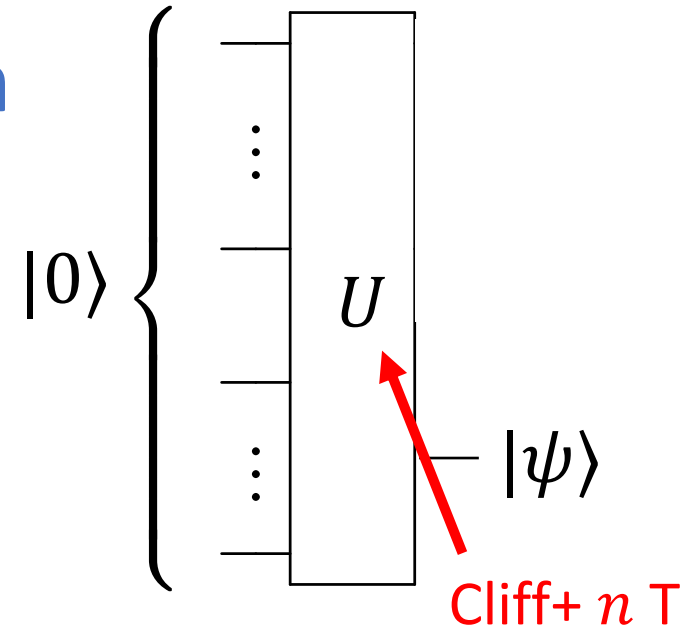
$$- \boxed{T} - = (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (\mathbb{I} \otimes |H\rangle)$$



$$\begin{aligned} \text{So } T|0\rangle &= (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (|0\rangle \otimes |H\rangle) \\ &= (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (|0\rangle \otimes |0\rangle) \\ &\quad + (1 + \sqrt{2}) (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (|0\rangle \otimes |1\rangle) \end{aligned}$$

Proof idea [\[GK98\]](#): Clifford circuits can be efficiently simulated.

$$-\boxed{T}- = (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (\mathbb{I} \otimes |H\rangle)$$



Let $r = \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$ and $|H\rangle^{\otimes n} = \sum_{i=1}^r c_i |\phi_i\rangle$.

$$\begin{aligned} |\psi\rangle &= (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1 \dots 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (|0\rangle \otimes |H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^r c_i (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1 \dots 1|) \underbrace{U_{\text{Cliff}} (|0\rangle \otimes |\phi_i\rangle)}_{= U_{\text{Cliff}}^{(i)} |0\rangle} \end{aligned}$$

By [GK98], can simulate each efficiently.



Known bounds on stabilizer rank

$$\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$$

- [Huang-Newman-Szegedy 20]: $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$ super-polynomial unless P=NP.
- [Bravyi-Smith-Smolín 16]: $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(\sqrt{n})$.
- [Peleg-Shpilka-Volk 21]: $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(n)$.
- [Qassim-Pashayan-Gosset 21]: $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \leq 2^{\alpha n}$, where $\alpha = \frac{1}{4} \log_2(3)$.

$$\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$$

- [Peleg-Shpilka-Volk 21]:

There exists $\delta > 0$ such that

- [Bravyi-Gosset 16]:

This talk: Alternate proofs up to log factor

$$\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(\sqrt{n}/\log n)$$

$$\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \leq O\left(\frac{1}{\delta^2} 2^{\alpha n}\right), \text{ where } \alpha \approx 0.228.$$

Rest of talk

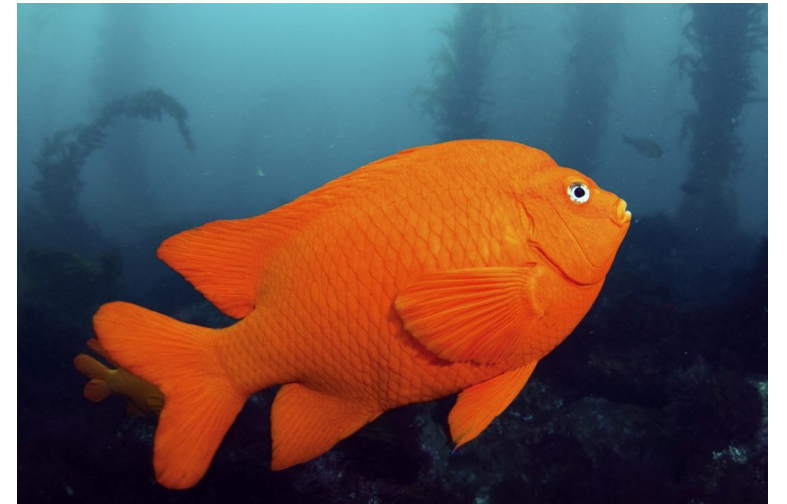
→ Lower bounds

- $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(n/\log n)$.
- There exists $\delta > 0$ such that $\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(\sqrt{n}/\log n)$.

Match [Peleg, Shpilka, Volk 22] up to log factor

Upper bounds

- Generic stabilizer rank



Fact: If $|\phi\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ is a stabilizer state, then the coordinates of $|\phi\rangle$ are $\{0, \pm 1, \pm i\}$ (up to normalization).

Theorem [Dehaene, De Moor 03]:

$|\phi\rangle \in (\mathbb{C}^2)^{\otimes n}$ is a stabilizer state $\Leftrightarrow |\phi\rangle = \sum_{x \in A} i^{l(x)} (-1)^{q(x)} |x\rangle$,

where $A \subseteq \mathbb{F}_2^n$ is an affine linear subspace

$l: \mathbb{F}_2^n \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_2$ is a linear function

$q: \mathbb{F}_2^n \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_2$ is a quadratic polynomial

Most results on stabilizer rank, and modern proofs of [GK98],
use this characterization!

Subset-sum representations

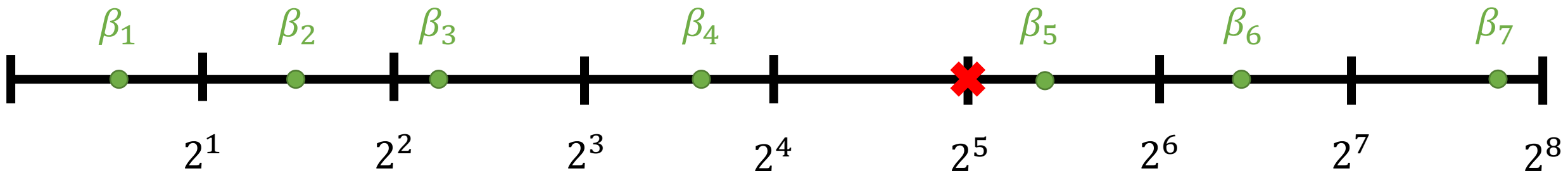
- Let $\alpha \in \mathbb{C}^k, \beta \in \mathbb{C}^r$. We say β is a **subset-sum representation** of α if each α_j is equal to the sum of some subset of $\{\beta_1, \dots, \beta_r\}$.
- Example: $\beta = (1, 2)$ is a subset-sum representation of $\alpha = (1, 2, 3)$.
- Example: If $|\psi\rangle = \sum_{i=1}^r c_i |\phi_i\rangle$ is a stabilizer decomposition, then
$$\beta = (c_1, \dots, c_r, -c_1, \dots, -c_r, ic_1, \dots, ic_r, -ic_1, \dots, -ic_r) \in \mathbb{C}^{4r}$$
is a subset-sum representation of $|\psi\rangle$.

$|\phi_i\rangle$ stabilizer \Rightarrow coordinates are in $\{0, \pm 1, \pm i\}$



$$\Rightarrow \chi(|\psi\rangle) \geq \frac{1}{4} \cdot (\text{the size of the smallest subset-sum rep of } |\psi\rangle)$$

Lower bounds on the size of a subset-sum rep

- Let $\alpha \in \mathbb{C}^k, \beta \in \mathbb{C}^r$. We say β is a **subset-sum representation** of α if each α_j is equal to the sum of some subset of $\{\beta_1, \dots, \beta_r\}$.
- Trivially, $r \geq \log_2 k$, since $\{\beta_1, \dots, \beta_r\}$ has just 2^r different subsets.
- \swarrow α exponentially increasing
Theorem [Moulton 01]: If $2|\alpha_j| \leq |\alpha_{j+1}|$ for all $j \in \{1, \dots, k-1\}$, then $r \geq k/\log_2 k$.
 \swarrow Linear in k , instead of logarithmic!
- Example: If $\alpha = (2^1, 2^2, \dots, 2^k)$, then $r \geq k/\log_2 k$



Lower bounds on the size of a subset-sum rep

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 Linear in k , instead of logarithmic!
 - Example: If $\alpha = (2^1, 2^2, \dots, 2^k)$, then $r \geq k/\log_2 k$
- Theorem [Lovitz-Steffan]: If the coordinates of $|\psi\rangle$ contain an exponentially increasing sequence of length k , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \geq k/(4\log_2 k)$.

Lower bound on stabilizer rank

- Theorem [Lovitz-Steffan]: If the coordinates of $|\psi\rangle$ contain an exponentially increasing sequence of length k , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \geq k/(4\log_2 k)$.

Corollary [Lovitz-Steffan]: $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq n/(4\log_2 n)$.

Proof: Since $|H\rangle \approx |0\rangle + 2.41|1\rangle$,

$$|H\rangle^{\otimes n} \approx |0 \cdots 0\rangle + (2.41)(|0 \cdots 01\rangle + \cdots + |10 \cdots 0\rangle) + \cdots + (2.41)^n |1 \cdots 1\rangle.$$

$\Rightarrow |H\rangle^{\otimes n}$ contains the exponentially increasing sequence $(2.41, 2.41^2, \dots, 2.41^n)$

$\Rightarrow \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq n/(4\log_2 n)$ by boxed theorem.



Lower bound on approximate stabilizer rank

- The **δ -approximate stabilizer rank** of a normalized state $|\psi\rangle$ is
$$\chi_\delta(|\psi\rangle) = \min\{\chi(|\mu\rangle) : \||\psi\rangle - |\mu\rangle\| \leq \delta\}.$$
- Theorem [Lovitz-Steffan]: There exists $\delta > 0$ for which
$$\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \sqrt{n}/(4 \log_2 \sqrt{n}).$$

Proof sketch: Show that for δ small enough, any state that is δ -close to $|H\rangle^{\otimes n}$ must contain an exponentially increasing sequence of length \sqrt{n} (Use De Moivre-Laplace).

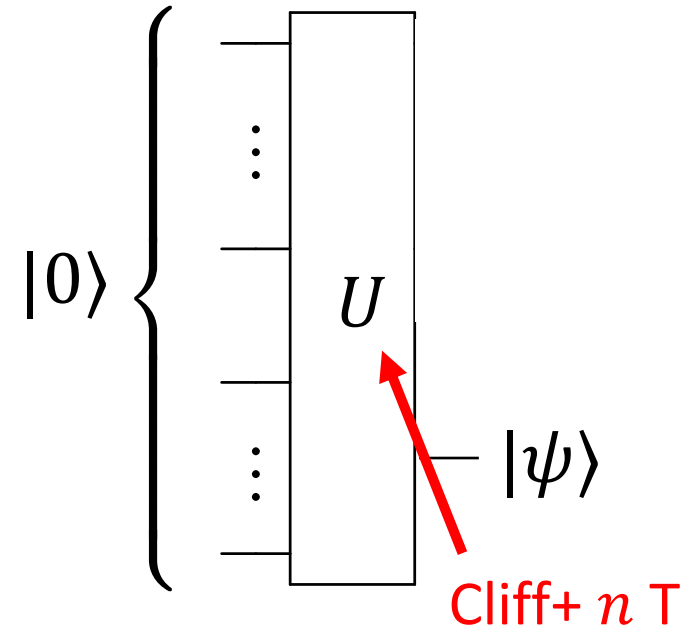
Result follows from boxed theorem.



Super-linear lower bound on $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$?

[BSS16] idea:

The **T-count** of a state $|\psi\rangle$ is the minimum number n of T gates needed to prepare $|\psi\rangle$ with a Cliff+T circuit U



Fact: If $|\psi\rangle$ has T-count n , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \leq \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

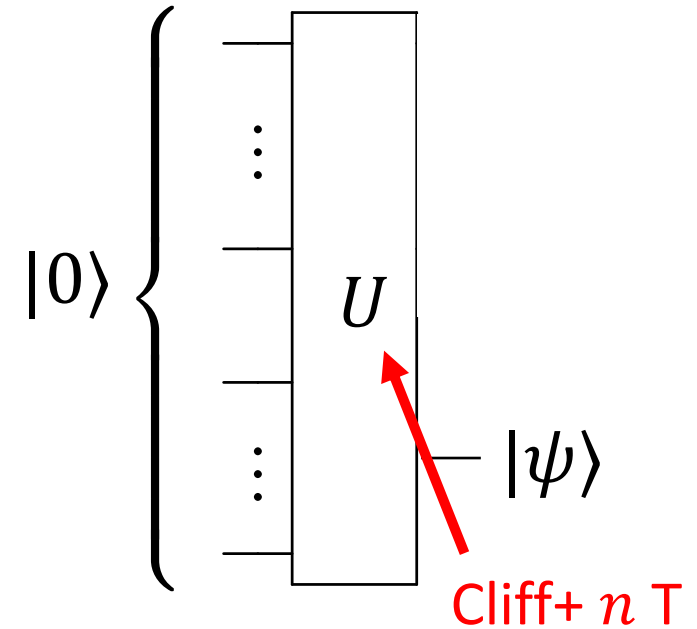
Proof:

$$\text{---} \boxed{T} \text{---} = (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1|) U_{\text{Cliff}} (\mathbb{I} \otimes |H\rangle)$$

Super-linear lower bound on $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$?

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Fact: If $|\psi\rangle$ has T-count n , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \leq \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

Proof:

Let $r = \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$ and $|H\rangle^{\otimes n} = \sum_{i=1}^r c_i |\phi_i\rangle$.

$$\begin{aligned} |\psi\rangle &= (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1 \dots 1 |) U_{\text{Cliff}}(|0\rangle \otimes |H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^r c_i (\mathbb{I} \otimes \langle 1 \dots 1 |) U_{\text{Cliff}}(|0\rangle \otimes |\phi_i\rangle) \end{aligned}$$

... so $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \leq r$.

Stabilizer state!




Super-linear lower bound on $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$?

Fact: If $|\psi\rangle$ has T-count n , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \leq \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

[BSS16] idea: For each n , if there exists a state $|\psi_n\rangle$ that:

1. Has T-count n
2. Satisfies $\chi(|\psi_n\rangle) \geq n^{1+\epsilon}$

... then $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \underset{1}{\geq} \chi(|\psi_n\rangle) \underset{2}{\geq} n^{1+\epsilon}$  Super-linear

Super-linear lower bound on $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$?

Fact: If $|\psi\rangle$ has T-count n , then $\chi(|\psi\rangle) \leq \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})$.

[BSS16] idea: For each n , if there exists a state $|\psi_n\rangle$ that:

1. Has T-count n
2. Every subset-sum rep of $|\psi_n\rangle$ has size at least $n^{1+\epsilon}$

$$\dots \text{ then } \underbrace{\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})}_{1} \geq \underbrace{\chi(|\psi_n\rangle)}_{2} \geq \frac{1}{4} n^{1+\epsilon} \leftarrow \text{Super-linear}$$

[Beverland-Campbell-Howard-Kliuchnikov 2020]: A state of T-count n can have an exponentially increasing sequence of length at most $O(n)$.

Rest of talk

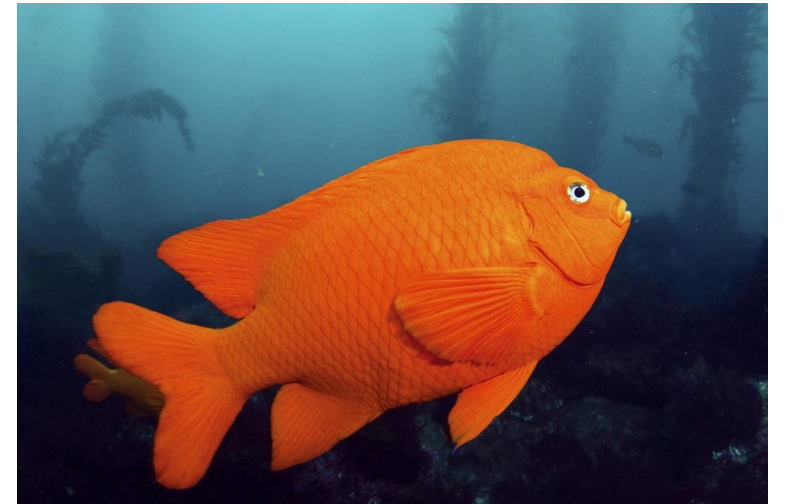
Lower bounds

- $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(n/\log n)$.
- There exists $\delta > 0$ such that $\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(\sqrt{n}/\log n)$.

Match [Peleg, Shpilka, Volk 22] up to log factor

→ Upper bounds

- Generic stabilizer rank



Upper bounds: Generic stabilizer rank

- Let $\chi_n = \max\{\chi(|\psi\rangle^{\otimes n}) : |\psi\rangle \in \mathbb{C}^2\}$ be the n -th **generic stabilizer rank**.
- $\chi_n \geq \max\{n + 1, \chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n})\}$ Question: Super-linear lower bound on χ_n ?
- Fact: $\chi(|\psi\rangle^{\otimes n}) = \chi_n$ for all but finitely many $|\psi\rangle \in \mathbb{C}^2$ (up to scale).
- Proposition [Lovitz-Steffan]: $\chi_n = O(2^{n/2})$
(Slight improvement of recent bound $O((n + 1)2^{n/2})$ of [Qassim-Pashayan-Gosset 21])
- Fact: There exists a single set of χ_n stabilizer states that can be superimposed to produce any state of the form $|\psi\rangle^{\otimes n}$. Q: Describe such a set?

Summary

Classical simulation of Clifford+T circuits via stabilizer rank

Lower bounds

- $\chi(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(n/\log n)$.
 - There exists $\delta > 0$ such that $\chi_\delta(|H\rangle^{\otimes n}) \geq \Omega(\sqrt{n}/\log n)$.
- Match [Peleg, Shpilka, Volk 22] up to log factor

Upper bounds

- Generic stabilizer rank



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