Anomalous slow fidelity decay for symmetry breaking perturbations

T. Gorin\textsuperscript{1}, H. Kohler\textsuperscript{2}, T. Prosen\textsuperscript{3}, T. H. Seligman\textsuperscript{4}, H.-J. Stöckmann\textsuperscript{5} and M. Žnidarič\textsuperscript{3,6}

\textsuperscript{1} Max-Planck Institute für Physik der Komplexen Systeme, D-01187 Dresden, Germany
\textsuperscript{2} Institut für theoretische Physik, Universität Heidelberg, D-69120 Heidelberg, Germany
\textsuperscript{3} Department of Physics, Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, University of Ljubljana, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia
\textsuperscript{4} Centro de Ciencias Físicas, UNAM, Cuernavaca, Mexico
\textsuperscript{5} Fachbereich Physik der Philips-Universität Marburg, D-35032 Marburg, Germany
\textsuperscript{6} Abteilung für Quantenphysik, Universität Ulm, D-89069 Ulm, Germany

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Symmetries as well as other special conditions can cause anomalous slowing down of fidelity decay. These situations will be characterized, and a family of random matrix models to emulate them generically presented. An analytic solution based on exponentiated linear response will be given. For one representative case the exact solution is obtained from a supersymmetrical calculation. The results agree well with dynamical calculations for a kicked top.

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Sensitivity to perturbations as measured by fidelity decay has received a great deal of attention both in the context of quantum and classical dynamical systems \cite{1, 2, 3, 4} and as a benchmark for the stability of possible quantum information devices \cite{5, 6}. Fidelity may be described as the cross-correlation function between unperturbed and perturbed evolution of a quantum or classical wave system. Linear response theory has been particularly successful in describing fidelity decay, by relating it to the correlation decay of the perturbing operator in the interaction picture \cite{2, 3, 6}. For chaotic systems a recently introduced random matrix model \cite{7} is in excellent agreement with experiments \cite{8, 9}.

It has been shown, that so-called residual perturbations that have vanishing diagonal matrix elements in the eigenbasis of the unperturbed Hamiltonian, lead to very slow fidelity decay known also as quantum freeze of fidelity \cite{10, 11}. Fidelity freeze is a pure wave phenomenon without classical analogue \cite{12}. In the field of quantum computation, it is known as dynamical decoupling \cite{13, 14}. One can identify four different physical situations in which quantum freeze or anomalous slow fidelity decay occurs. The case when the perturbation can be written as a time derivative (or commutator with the unperturbed Hamiltonian) is treated in Refs. \cite{11, 12}.

In this letter we treat the three other and indeed physically most important cases: The first one corresponds to a perturbation which breaks an antiunitary symmetry (e.g. time-reversal) in an optimal way, meaning that the perturbation anticommutes with the antiunitary symmetry, e.g. switching on the magnetic field. The other two cases correspond to a mean field approach in which the diagonal part of the perturbation is moved to the unperturbed Hamiltonian. We will consider unperturbed Hamiltonians, with and without an antiunitary symmetry. To obtain a generic understanding, all cases are considered in the framework of random matrix theory (RMT). We present general theoretical results in the linear response regime, as well as an exact analytical result obtained by a supersymmetry method \cite{15} for the antiunitary symmetry-breaking case. Our results display excellent agreement with numerical experiments for quantum kicked tops.

To study fidelity decay, we consider the perturbed Hamiltonian $H = H_0 + V$. If $U(t)$ and $U_0(t)$ are the unitary propagators under $H$ and $H_0$, respectively, we define the fidelity amplitude as

$$f(t) = \langle \Psi_0(t) | \Psi(t) \rangle = \langle \Psi(0) | U_0(-t) U(t) | \Psi(0) \rangle,$$  

(1)

where $\Psi(t) = U(t) | \Psi(0) \rangle$ and $\Psi_0(t) = U_0(t) | \Psi(0) \rangle$. Fidelity is defined as $F(t) = |f(t)|^2$. In Refs. \cite{2, 3}, it has been shown that within second order time-dependent perturbation theory (Born series) the fidelity amplitude, averaged over random initial states, can be expressed in terms of the two-point time correlation integral $C(t)$:

$$\langle f(t) \rangle_E = 1 - 4\pi^2 \lambda^2 C(t) + O(\lambda^4),$$  

(2)

where $\langle \ldots \rangle_E$ denotes the average over random initial states, which are concentrated on a small energy interval that contains many levels $N_E$. For the fidelity amplitude, this averaging amounts to taking a restricted trace of the echo operator, in the eigenbasis of the unperturbed Hamiltonian $H_0$. Therefore, we may write:

$$C(t) = \int_0^t dt' \int_0^{t'} dt'' \langle V(t') V(t'') \rangle_E,$$  

(3)

$$\langle V(t') V(t'') \rangle_E = \frac{1}{N_E} \sum_\alpha' \sum_\beta |V_{\alpha\beta}|^2 e^{2\pi i (E_\alpha - E_\beta)(t' - t'')},$$

where the $E_\alpha$ are the eigenvalues of $H_0$, and $V(t) = U_0(t)^{\dagger} V U_0(t)$ is the perturbation in the interaction picture. The matrix elements $V_{\alpha\beta}$ are taken in the eigenbasis of $H_0$. The primed sum runs over $N_E$ eigenstates of $H_0$.

Often, the exponentiated version of Eq. \cite{2},

$$\langle f(t) \rangle_E = e^{-\varepsilon C(t)} + O(\lambda^4), \quad \varepsilon = 4\pi^2 \lambda^2,$$  

(4)
is able to describe the fidelity decay from the perturbative to the golden rule regime well. This is true, in particular, if the system is chaotic, such that the perturbation can be described by one of the random Gaussian ensembles (RMT approach). We now consider the situation of a residual perturbation, i.e., one with vanishing diagonal, $V_{\alpha\alpha} = 0$ within the RMT models. Thus, we assume that the non-zero matrix elements of this perturbation are independent normalized Gaussian random variables with variance

$$\langle |V_{\alpha\beta}|^2 \rangle = 1 - \delta_{\alpha\beta},$$

where $\langle \ldots \rangle$ denotes an ensemble average. For the perturbation matrix $V$, we consider three different ensembles, which fulfill Eq. 5: (i) an ensemble of imaginary antisymmetric matrices, (ii) an ensemble of real symmetric matrices, and (iii) an ensemble of Hermitean matrices with deleted diagonal.

The average of the correlation integral $C(t)$ over any of those ensembles gives:

$$\langle C(t) \rangle = \frac{t}{2} - \int_0^t dt' \int_0^{t'} dt'' b(t'')$$

where $b(t)$ is the two-point spectral form factor of $H_0$. Here, as well as throughout the rest of the letter, we use units, where the Heisenberg time is equal to one. If $N_F$ is sufficiently large, $b(t)$ tends to a well defined smooth function (self-averaging); else we average over a random matrix ensemble for $H_0$ as well. For Gaussian orthogonal (GOE) and unitary (GUE) ensembles, the form factors are given in Ref. 11. Note that the term proportional to $t^2$ is missing as compared to the linear response result for a generic perturbation. For what follows, we assume that the average $\langle \ldots \rangle$ includes such a procedure.

Let us first concentrate on the special case of unperturbed Hamiltonians $H_0$ taken from the GUE. Then, we have $b(t) = \max\{1 - t, 0\}$, and

$$\langle C(t) \rangle = C_{\text{GUE}}(t) = \begin{cases} \frac{t^2}{2} - \frac{t^4}{2} + \frac{t^6}{6} & : t \leq 1, \\ \frac{1}{6} & : t > 1 \end{cases}$$

As a result, for times longer than the Heisenberg time, Eq. 2 predicts the fidelity to “freeze” on a minimal value

$$f_{\text{plateau}} = 1 - \frac{\varepsilon}{6}.$$ 

Since the next correction term grows quadratically in time, $\langle f(t) \rangle = f_{\text{plateau}} + O(\lambda^4 t^2)$, we find that the plateau ends at a time of order $t^* \sim 1/\lambda$.

Second, we choose $H_0$ from the GOE. Also in this case, the integrals in equation 10 can be performed analytically (see Ref. 7). Here we just give the the leading asymptotics for $t \gg 1$:

$$C_{\text{GOE}}(t) = \frac{\ln(2t) + 2}{12} + O(t^{-1} \ln t)$$

This yields a logarithmically slow decay of fidelity

$$\langle f(t) \rangle \approx 1 - \frac{\varepsilon}{12} |2 + \ln(2t)| + O(\lambda^4 t^2).$$

Both results for the plateau value of the fidelity amplitude, Eq. 8 and Eq. 10, follow from Eq. 6. They are thus valid for any of the three ensembles used for the perturbation, (i), (ii), and (iii). Indeed, a similar result could be obtained for the Gaussian symplectic ensemble.

In 7 the averages $\langle F(t) \rangle$ and $\langle \langle f(t) \rangle \rangle^2$ were shown to differ only in a term proportional to $t^2$, which is absent in the quantum freeze case. Thus, the eqs. 2 and 6 yield the linear response approximation for fidelity decay. Numerics indicate that $\langle F(t) \rangle \approx \langle \langle f(t) \rangle \rangle^2$, in general, in accordance with an argument given in 2.

For long times and small perturbations, the fidelity amplitude can be expressed in terms of level shifts. Within the second order stationary perturbation theory, its average is then given by the Fourier transform of the level curvature distribution, which was obtained analytically in 13. The final result is surprisingly simple:

$$\langle f(t) \rangle = \begin{cases} \tau K_1(\tau) & : \text{GOE} \\ (1 + \tau)e^{-\tau} & : \text{GUE} \end{cases}$$

where $K_1$ is the modified Bessel function of first order. The GOE branch is valid for an unperturbed GOE Hamiltonian, and a perturbation matrix of type (i) or (ii). The GUE branch is valid for an unperturbed GUE Hamiltonian, and a perturbation matrix of type (iii). More details on the asymptotic behavior of fidelity decay in situations of quantum freeze will be published elsewhere.

One should stress that diagonal elements of the perturbation vanish also in the presence of a discrete or continuous unitary symmetry $R$, of $H_0$, which anti-commutes with $V, RV = -VR$. However, it turns out that its effect on fidelity enhancement is less drastic than the predictions of Eqs. 7 and 9, because of the lack of correlations between different subspectra of $H_0$. As a result, the asymptotic growth of the correlation integral is linear $C(t) \propto t$, for times before and after the Heisenberg time.

For the case of $H_0$ taken from the GOE and a purely imaginary antisymmetric perturbation the average fidelity can be obtained exactly by supersymmetry techniques in the limit of large dimension $N$. The calculation is technically much more involved than for the case of a GOE perturbation and will be presented elsewhere. The result again is a VWZ-like integral (see Ref. 17, Eq. (8.10)) and is given by

$$\langle f(t) \rangle = \int_{\text{Max}(0,t-1)}^t du \int_0^{v} \frac{dv}{\sqrt{[u^2 - v^2][u + 1]^2 - v^2]} \left[ (t - u)(t - u + 1) \right] \left[ 1 + \varepsilon(t^2 - v^2) \right] \times [t(2u + 1 - t) + v^2] e^{-\frac{\varepsilon}{2}[(2u + 1 - t) - v^2]}. \quad (12)$$
in the integrand, and a minus sign with the $v$ term in Eq. (12) is obtained as $\varepsilon = 5 \times 10^{-5}$. Part (a) shows the GOE case with a purely antisymmetric random Gaussian perturbation. Part (b) shows the GUE case, with an independent random matrix simulation where for each realization we draw a parameter $\alpha$ from a Gaussian distribution of width $1 \times 10^{-5}$. The GOE case. As above we determine $S_{\lambda}^{cl}$ and average the fidelity over $100$ samples, similarly as for the GUE case. We have also performed numerical simulations, where we computed averages over $10^4$ samples of $100 \times 100$ matrices. Only the $10$ central states have been taken into account. In the GOE case, we have also performed numerical simulations for symmetric perturbations with deleted diagonal (case (ii)) and we have not found significant deviations from the antisymmetric case (i). For strong perturbations the plateau disappears and we find a partial revival of fidelity near the Heisenberg time, similar as in Ref. [16].

We have concentrated on the unitary antisymmetric perturbation, because of its invariance properties, which allow to obtain results in closed form. Yet the linear response result in Eq. 2 can be carried to higher order, and at least up to sixth order they coincide with the one for symmetric perturbations with deleted diagonal [13].

The RMT model can also be compared to dynamical systems with chaotic classical limit. For this purpose we have considered a quantized kicked top [20].

In the first example, we choose a one step propagator

$$U_\lambda = P^2 e^{-iyS_y} P^2 e^{-i\mu S_x}, \quad \gamma = \pi/2.A$$

with $P = e^{-i\sigma_y S_y^z/2} e^{-i\mu S_x}$ and $S_{x,y,z}$ being standard spin operators. $U_\lambda$ is time-reversal invariant, and the perturbation $S_\gamma$ is antisymmetric in the eigenbasis of $U_\lambda$. The “symmetrization” of $U_\lambda$ is essential for $V$ to anticommute with the time-reversal symmetry.

We choose the spin $S = 200$, one initial random state and average the fidelity over $400$ realizations of the propagator $U_\lambda$ where for each realization we draw a parameter $\alpha$ from a Gaussian distribution of width $1$ centered around $30$. The results of fidelity decay for different strengths of perturbation are shown in Fig. 2(a). We find good agreement with the square of the theoretical result for the fidelity amplitude, which in turn agrees well with RMT simulations for the fidelity (not shown). Without averaging over an ensemble of dynamical systems we get considerable fluctuations around RMT curves. Note that we do not use any fit parameters. The dimensionless perturbation strength $\varepsilon$ in Eq. (12) is obtained as $\varepsilon = 4N\sigma_{cl}(S\lambda)^2 = 4\lambda^2 S^3\sigma_{cl}$, where $\sigma_{cl} = 0.153$ is an integral of the classical correlation function calculated using the corresponding classical map, see e.g. Ref. [3] for more details. Heisenberg time is $t_H = N = 2S$.

We also consider an unperturbed propagator without time-reversal symmetry, that corresponds to GUE case,

$$U_\lambda = P e^{-i\varepsilon S_y} e^{-i\mu S_x^z/2 S} e^{-i\varepsilon S_x} e^{-i\mu S_y}$$

with $\gamma = \pi/2.4, \mu = 10, \xi = 1$. Here we have set diagonal matrix elements of the perturbation in the eigenbasis of $U_\lambda$ to zero by hand, $S_{\lambda}^{cl} = S_y - \text{diag} S_{\lambda}$. We take $S = 200$ and average the fidelity over $100$ samples, similarly as for GOE case. As above we determine $\varepsilon$ from the classical correlation integral $\sigma_{cl} = 0.168$. In Fig. 2(b), the results of the numerical simulation are plotted, together with
The physical importance of such systems becomes apparent in two quite different aspects. On one hand mean field theories in some sense include the diagonal part of the perturbation in the unperturbed Hamiltonian, and thus the quantum freeze sheds new light on the surprising success of such theories. On the other hand this result shows that for a quantum information process to be effective beyond the Heisenberg time, one has to suppress the diagonal part of any static perturbation.

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FIG. 2: Fidelity freeze for a quantized kicked top. In (a) perturbation is imaginary antisymmetric with unperturbed dynamics having antunitary symmetry [10] while in (b) the unperturbed evolution as well as the perturbation have no symmetries left [14]. The dashed lines give the numerical simulations, while the solid lines give the square of the theoretical prediction [12] in (a) and RMT simulations in (b).

RMT Monte Carlo simulation (full line). Again, good agreement with the RMT model is observed.

We have presented RMT models that display the eminent features of quantum freeze of fidelity under a wide range of circumstances not previously considered. We allow for any unperturbed Hamiltonian or ensemble of Hamiltonians for which the spectral form factor is known. The perturbations are represented by ensembles of random Hermitian matrices with zero entries on the diagonal. We give a perturbative solution for the general model, and we present an exact solution obtained by supersymmetric techniques, for the case of Hermitian antisymmetric perturbations of GOE Hamiltonians. Kicked top models display excellent agreement with the random matrix results.

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