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Superselection rule from measurement theory

Shogo Tanimura
Nagoya University, Japan

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Introduction of myself

- 1967, born in Nagoya, that is a city located between Tokyo and Osaka. Toyota city is in the same prefecture.
- 1990, finish the undergraduate course of Department of Applied Physics, Nagoya University (adviser: Haga)
- 1995, got PhD. degree, at E-lab, Department of Physics, Nagoya University (adviser: Ohnuki, Kitakado, Sanda, Yamawaki)
- JSPS Posdoc at University of Tokyo (host: Eguchi)
- Got job at Kyoto University, Osaka City University, again Kyoto University
- 2011, came back to Nagoya University

Visits to Germany

- First visit to Max-Planck Institute in Heidelberg
- Second visit to University of Göttingen to deliver seminars at Dr. Karl-Henning Rehren's and Dr. Ralf Meyer's groups, in 2012.



Research interests

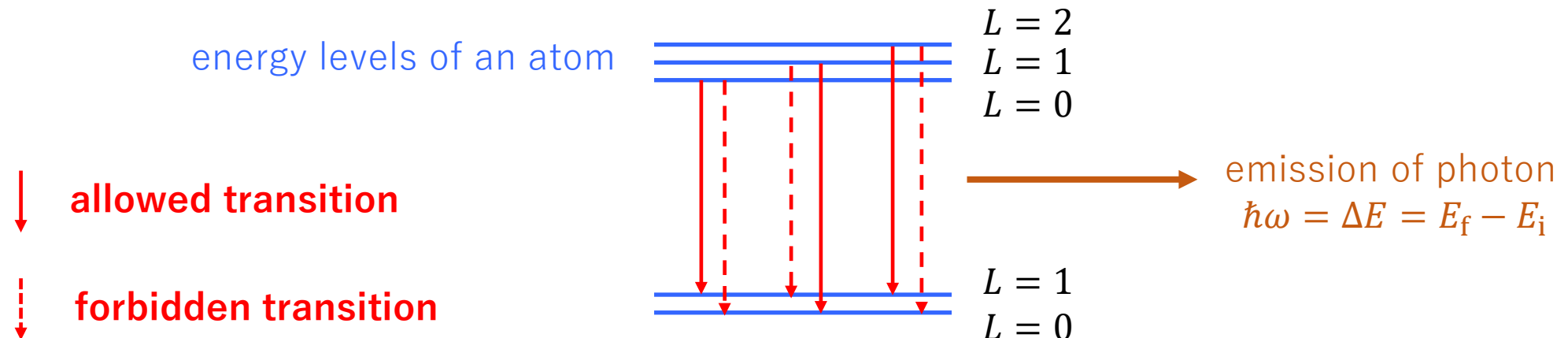
- Quantum Foundations
- Quantum Information Theory
- Dynamical Systems
- Statistical Mechanics
- Differential Geometry
- Category Theory
- Artificial Intelligence

Today's Topic

- Superselection rule in quantum theory from the viewpoint of measurement theory

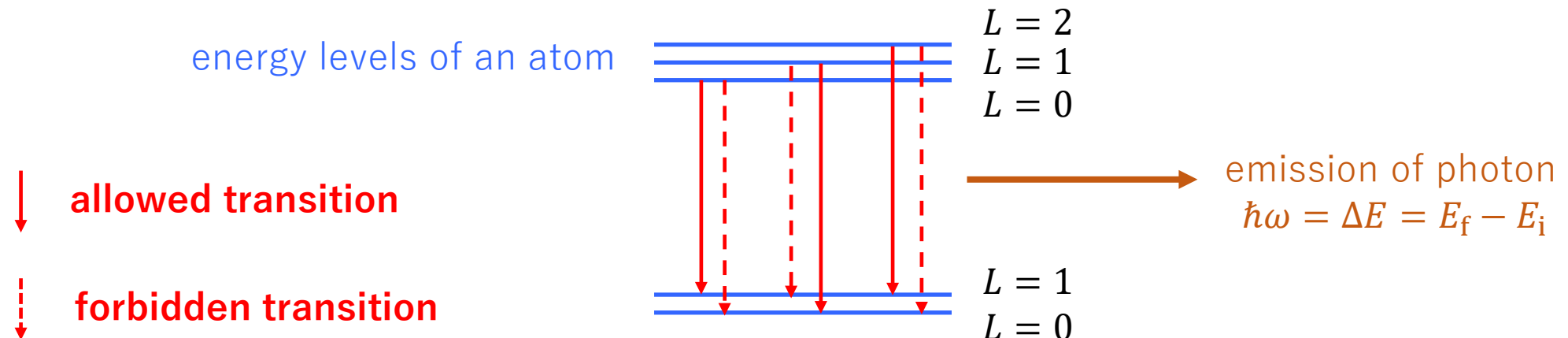
Selection rule

- Originally, the selection rule was found in spectrum of atoms.
- Some of photonic transitions do not occur even though they are allowed by energy conservation.
- **Selection rule:** $\Delta L = L_f - L_i = \pm 1$
- Some of transitions (for example $\Delta L = \pm 2$) are not allowed by angular-momentum conservation.



Selection rule

- **Some of transitions are selected to occur:** $\Delta L = L_f - L_i = \pm 1$
- In this case, the selection rule is another name of conservation law.
- A photon carries angular momentum by an amount of spin 1, and the total angular momentum should be conserved, and hence we observe the rule $\Delta L = \pm 1$.



What is the superselection rule?

- There are various appearance (even various formulations) of the superselection rule.
- Originally, it was found in the context of relativistic quantum field theory by Wick, Wigner, and Wightman (WWW) in 1952.

The statement of superselection rule

- There is a superselection charge \hat{Q} .
- If a self-adjoint operator \hat{A} represents a *truly observable* quantity, it must satisfy $[\hat{A}, \hat{Q}] := \hat{A}\hat{Q} - \hat{Q}\hat{A} = 0$.
- By contraposition, **if $[\hat{A}, \hat{Q}] \neq 0$ for a self-adjoint operator \hat{A} , \hat{A} does not represent a truly observable quantity.**
- The **selection rule** selects observable transitions of an atom.
- The **superselection rule** selects observable operators of a system.

Example of application of the superselection rule

- complex scalar field: $\hat{\phi}(x)$
- conserved current: $\hat{j}_\mu(x) = -i\hat{\phi}^* \partial_\mu \hat{\phi} + i(\partial_\mu \hat{\phi}^*) \hat{\phi}$, $\partial_\mu \hat{j}^\mu = 0$
- superselection charge: $\hat{Q} := \int \hat{j}^0 d^3x$
- $[\hat{Q}, \hat{\phi}] = -i\hat{\phi} \neq 0 \implies \hat{\phi}$ itself is not observable.
- Neutral quantities like $\hat{\phi}^* \hat{\phi}$ and \hat{j}_μ can be observable.

History of the superselection rule

- Around 1950, physicists discussed definition of the parity transformation of the Dirac field $\psi(x)$.
- parity transformation: $\psi(x, t) \mapsto \Pi\psi(x, t) = e^{i\theta}\gamma^0\psi(-x, t)$
- The phase factor $e^{i\theta}$ is not uniquely determined, it has ambiguity.
- Yang, Tiomno, Zharkov proposed four types $e^{i\theta} = \pm 1, \pm i$.
- 1951, Fermi discussed how to distinguish the intrinsic parity experimentarily.
- Wick, Wigner and Wightman noticed that **the Dirac spinor itself cannot be measured, and hence we cannot determine its parity phase factor.**

Univalence superselection rule

- $\hat{Q} = \hat{R}(2\pi)$: rotation by 360 degree around arbitrary axis.
- A measurable quantity \hat{A} must satisfy

$$\hat{R}(2\pi)^\dagger \hat{A} \hat{R}(2\pi) = \hat{A}$$

or equivalently, $[\hat{A}, \hat{Q}] = 0$.

- On the other hand, the Dirac spinor field $\hat{\psi}$ satisfies

$$\hat{R}(2\pi)^\dagger \hat{\psi} \hat{R}(2\pi) = -\hat{\psi}.$$

- Thus, the Dirac spinor field $\hat{\psi}$ itself is not a measurable quantity.
- However, $\hat{\psi}^\dagger \hat{\psi}$ is measurable.

Self-adjointness implies measurability?

- For the Dirac field $\hat{\psi}$,

$$\hat{\psi} + \hat{\psi}^\dagger, \quad i(\hat{\psi} - \hat{\psi}^\dagger)$$

are formally self-adjoint, but it seems that they are non-measurable.

- The gauge invariant quantities

$$\hat{\psi}^\dagger \hat{\psi}, \quad \hat{\psi}^\dagger \gamma^\mu \hat{\psi}$$

are formally self-adjoint and measurable.

- **Not all of the self-adjoint operators represent observables?**

von Neumann's postulate (1932)

- After showing that every observable is representable by a self-adjoint operator, von Neumann argued that **it is appropriate to assume that there is a physical observable corresponding to each self-adjoint operator.**

observable \hat{A} \Rightarrow ($\Leftarrow?$) self-adjoint $\hat{A}^\dagger = \hat{A}$

- Original German expression by von Neumann (1932)
《... **es ist zweckmässig anzunehmen, ...**》
- English translation by Beyer (1955)
《... **it is convenient to assume, ...**》
- English translation by Wightman (1995)
《... **it is appropriate to assume, ...**》

Implication of the superselection rule

- There exist some operators that are self-adjoint but do not correspond to measurable quantities.

- For the complex scalar field $\hat{\phi}$,

$$\hat{\phi} + \hat{\phi}^\dagger, \quad i(\hat{\phi} - \hat{\phi}^\dagger), \quad \hat{\phi}\hat{\phi}\hat{\phi} + \hat{\phi}^\dagger\hat{\phi}^\dagger\hat{\phi}^\dagger$$

are self-adjoint but non-measurable.

- For the Dirac field $\hat{\psi}$,

$$\hat{\psi} + \hat{\psi}^\dagger, \quad i(\hat{\psi} - \hat{\psi}^\dagger)$$

are formally self-adjoint but non-measurable.

- **In what sense they are non-measurable?**

Mathematical formulation of measurement

- Hilbert space of a **microscopic object system**: $\mathfrak{S} \ni |\alpha\rangle$
- Hilbert space of a **measuring apparatus**: $\mathfrak{R} \ni |\beta\rangle$
- Hilbert space of **the composite system**: $\mathfrak{S} \otimes \mathfrak{R} \ni |\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$
- **An observable of the object system** \hat{A} , self-adjoint operator on \mathfrak{S}
- **A meter observable of the apparatus** \hat{M} , self-adjoint operator on \mathfrak{R}
- A unitary operator \hat{U} acting on $\mathfrak{S} \otimes \mathfrak{R}$ describes interaction of the two system and their time-evolution

$$|\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle \mapsto \hat{U} |\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$$

- Read out a value of the meter $\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}$ on the state $\hat{U} |\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$ for inferring the value of \hat{A} on the state $|\alpha\rangle$.

Indirect-measurement model

- Read out a value of the meter $\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}$ on the state $\hat{U}|\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$ for inferring the value of \hat{A} on the state $|\alpha\rangle$.

$$\mathfrak{H} \rightarrow \mathfrak{H} \otimes \mathfrak{R}, \quad |\alpha\rangle \mapsto \hat{U}|\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$$

$$\hat{A} \downarrow \quad \hat{1} \otimes \hat{M} \downarrow \quad \hat{A} = \int \lambda \hat{E}_A(d\lambda), \quad \hat{M} = \int \lambda \hat{E}_M(d\lambda) \text{ spectral decompositions}$$

$$\mathfrak{H} \dashrightarrow \mathfrak{H} \otimes \mathfrak{R}$$

- POVM (probability-operator valued measure)

$$\hat{P}_M(d\lambda) := \langle \beta | \hat{U}^\dagger \left(\hat{1} \otimes \hat{E}_M(d\lambda) \right) \hat{U} | \beta \rangle$$

- In the ideal measurement, $\hat{E}_A(d\lambda) = \hat{P}_M(d\lambda)$. But we do not demand that the measurement is ideal.

von Neumann's model of measurement

- Hilbert space of a **microscopic object system**: $\mathfrak{S} = L^2(\mathbb{R})$
- Hilbert space of a **measuring apparatus**: $\mathfrak{R} = L^2(\mathbb{R})$
- Hilbert space of **the composite system**: $\mathfrak{S} \otimes \mathfrak{R}$
- **An observable of the object system** \hat{x} , position operator on \mathfrak{S}
- **A meter observable of the apparatus** \hat{X} , position operator on \mathfrak{R}
- A unitary operator $\hat{U} = \exp(-i\hat{x} \otimes \hat{P} / \hbar)$ with $[\hat{X}, \hat{P}] = i\hbar \hat{1}$ yeilds

$$\hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{X}) \hat{U} = \hat{X} + \hat{x}.$$

The meter \hat{X} shifts by the amount of \hat{x} . Hence, we can read out the position of the object particle from the meter position.

- This is not the ideal measurement.

Covariance condition

- Most of measurements are not ideal.
- What condition should be satisfied by a “good” measurement?
- In a good measurement, the meter follows a change of the object.

Group action on the observables

- Assume that a group G acts on the object Hilbert space \mathfrak{S} by a projective unitary representation \hat{S}_g ($g \in G$).
- The group G acts on the apparatus Hilbert space \mathfrak{R} by a projective unitary representation \hat{T}_g ($g \in G$).
- Assume that there are sets of observables which transform

$$\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{A}_\mu \hat{S}_g = \sum_\nu D_{\mu\nu}^A(g) \hat{A}_\nu, \quad \hat{T}_g^\dagger \hat{M}_j \hat{T}_g = \sum_k D_{jk}^M(g) \hat{M}_k$$

- For example, the group \mathbb{R} acts on the position operator as

$$\hat{S}_a^\dagger \hat{x} \hat{S}_a = \hat{x} + a \hat{1}$$

Covariant measurement

- Require that, for arbitrary action of $g \in G$,

$$\mathfrak{H} \rightarrow \mathfrak{H} \otimes \mathfrak{R}, \quad |\alpha\rangle \mapsto \hat{U}|\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$$

$$\hat{S}_g \downarrow \hat{S}_g \otimes \hat{T}_g \downarrow$$

$$\mathfrak{H} \dashrightarrow \mathfrak{H} \otimes \mathfrak{R}$$

the meter transforms covariantly

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}_j) \hat{U} \hat{S}_g &= \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{S}_g^\dagger \otimes \hat{T}_g^\dagger) (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}_j) (\hat{S}_g \otimes \hat{T}_g) \hat{U} \\ &= \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{1} \hat{S}_g \otimes \hat{T}_g^\dagger \hat{M}_j \hat{T}_g) \hat{U} \\ &= \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{T}_g^\dagger \hat{M}_j \hat{T}_g) \hat{U} \end{aligned}$$

- Require also that the representations D^A and D^M are equivalent.

Main assumption: isolated conservation

Assume that the measurement process conserves the charges \hat{Q}_κ which generate the unitary transformation $\hat{S}_\theta = e^{i\hat{Q}_\kappa\theta_\kappa}$ of the object system, namely, assume

$$\hat{U}\hat{S}_g = \hat{S}_g\hat{U}.$$

Then,

$$\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}_j) \hat{U} \hat{S}_g = \hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{T}_g^\dagger \hat{M}_j \hat{T}_g) \hat{U}$$

$$\hat{U}^\dagger \hat{S}_g^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}_j) \hat{S}_g \hat{U} =$$

$$\hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{S}_g \otimes \hat{M}_j) \hat{U} =$$

$$\hat{U}^\dagger (\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}_j) \hat{U} =$$

Therefore, **the covariant meter must obey the trivial representation.**

Main result: superselection rule

The observable \hat{A} of the object system that is measurable with a meter that is covariant under the group G generated by the charges \hat{Q}_κ that is a conserved during the measurement process, must obey the trivial representation of the group:

$$\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{A} \hat{S}_g = \hat{A}$$

or

$$[\hat{Q}_\kappa, \hat{A}] = 0$$

Relation with the uncertainty relation

- If two self-adjoint operators \hat{A} and \hat{B} do not commute, namely, if $[\hat{A}, \hat{B}] \neq 0$, there is no CONS (complete orthonormal system of the Hilbert space) that diagonalizes operators \hat{A} and \hat{B} simultaneously.
- It is often said “**measurement of \hat{A} inevitably disturbs the value of \hat{B} .**”
- **If \hat{B} is a conserved quantity, the value of \hat{B} cannot be changed. In this case, is measurement of \hat{A} impossible?**
- **Qualitative answer (Wigner, Araki, Yanase):**
precise measurement of \hat{A} is impossible. (This is a gentle version of the superselection rule.)
- **Quantitative answer (Ozawa):**

Definitions

- \hat{A} and \hat{B} : observables self-adjoint operators on $\mathfrak{S} \ni |\alpha\rangle$
- \hat{M} : meter, self-adjoint operator on $\mathfrak{R} \ni |\beta\rangle$
- \hat{U} : unitary operator on $\mathfrak{S} \otimes \mathfrak{R} \ni |\alpha\rangle \otimes |\beta\rangle$
- expectation value $\langle \hat{A} \rangle := \langle \alpha | \hat{A} | \alpha \rangle$
- standard deviation $\sigma(\hat{A}) := \sqrt{\langle (\hat{A} - \langle \hat{A} \rangle)^2 \rangle} = \sqrt{\langle \hat{A}^2 \rangle - \langle \hat{A} \rangle^2}$

Ozawa's formulation of the uncertainty relation

- error operator $\hat{E} := \hat{U}^\dagger \hat{M} \hat{U} - \hat{A}$
- error in the measurement of \hat{A} , $\varepsilon(\hat{A}) := \sqrt{\langle \hat{E}^2 \rangle}$
- disturbance operator $\hat{D} := \hat{U}^\dagger \hat{B} \hat{U} - \hat{B}$
- disturbance associated with the measurement, $\eta(\hat{B}) := \sqrt{\langle \hat{D}^2 \rangle}$
- Ozawa's inequality

$$\varepsilon(\hat{A})\eta(\hat{B}) + \varepsilon(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{B}) + \sigma(\hat{A})\eta(\hat{B}) \geq \frac{1}{2} |\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{B}] \rangle|$$

Proof of Ozawa's inequality (1/2)

By definitions,

- $\hat{E} := \hat{U}^\dagger \hat{M} \hat{U} - \hat{A}$, $\hat{U}^\dagger \hat{M} \hat{U} = \hat{E} + \hat{A}$
- $\hat{D} = \hat{U}^\dagger \hat{B} \hat{U} - \hat{B}$, $\hat{U}^\dagger \hat{B} \hat{U} = \hat{D} + \hat{B}$
- $[\hat{M}, \hat{B}] = [\hat{1} \otimes \hat{M}, \hat{B} \otimes \hat{1}] = 0$,

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} 0 = \hat{U}^\dagger [\hat{M}, \hat{B}] \hat{U} &= [\hat{U}^\dagger \hat{M} \hat{U}, \hat{U}^\dagger \hat{B} \hat{U}] \\ &= [\hat{E} + \hat{A}, \hat{D} + \hat{B}] \\ &= [\hat{E}, \hat{D}] + [\hat{E}, \hat{B}] + [\hat{A}, \hat{D}] + [\hat{A}, \hat{B}] \end{aligned}$$

$$\therefore [\hat{E}, \hat{D}] + [\hat{E}, \hat{B}] + [\hat{A}, \hat{D}] = -[\hat{A}, \hat{B}]$$

Proof of Ozawa's inequality (2/2)

• The Kennard-Robertson inequality: $\sigma(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{B}) \geq \frac{1}{2} |\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{B}] \rangle|$

• $\varepsilon(\hat{A}) := \sqrt{\langle \hat{E}^2 \rangle} \geq \sqrt{\langle \hat{E}^2 \rangle - \langle \hat{E} \rangle^2} = \sigma(\hat{E})$

• $\eta(\hat{B}) := \sqrt{\langle \hat{D}^2 \rangle} \geq \sqrt{\langle \hat{D}^2 \rangle - \langle \hat{D} \rangle^2} = \sigma(\hat{D})$

From $[\hat{E}, \hat{D}] + [\hat{E}, \hat{B}] + [\hat{A}, \hat{D}] = -[\hat{A}, \hat{B}]$,

$$\sigma(\hat{E})\sigma(\hat{D}) + \sigma(\hat{E})\sigma(\hat{B}) + \sigma(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{D}) \geq \sigma(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{B})$$

$$\therefore \varepsilon(\hat{A})\eta(\hat{B}) + \varepsilon(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{B}) + \sigma(\hat{A})\eta(\hat{B}) \geq \dots \geq \frac{1}{2} |\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{B}] \rangle|$$

Uncertainty relation with a conserved quantity

- If $\hat{B} = \hat{Q}_{\text{object}} + \hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}} = \hat{Q}_{\text{object}} \otimes \hat{1} + \hat{1} \otimes \hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}$ is conserved, then the disturbance $\eta(\hat{B}) = 0$, and hence

$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon(\hat{A})\sigma(\hat{Q}_{\text{object}} + \hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}) &\geq \frac{1}{2} |\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{Q}_{\text{object}} + \hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}] \rangle| \\ &= \frac{1}{2} |\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{Q}_{\text{object}}] \rangle|\end{aligned}$$

- Lower bound of the error in the measurement of the observable that does not commute with the additive conserved quantity is given by

$$\varepsilon(\hat{A}) \geq \frac{|\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{Q}_{\text{object}}] \rangle|^2}{4 \left\{ \left(\sigma(\hat{Q}_{\text{object}}) \right)^2 + \left(\sigma(\hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}) \right)^2 \right\}}$$

Comparison

- The WAY-Ozawa relation holds **when $\hat{Q}_{\text{object}} + \hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}$ is conserved** in the process of measurement:

$$\varepsilon(\hat{A}) \geq \frac{|\langle [\hat{A}, \hat{Q}_{\text{object}}] \rangle|^2}{4\{(\sigma(\hat{Q}_{\text{object}}))^2 + \sigma(\hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}})^2\}} \neq 0 \implies \text{No precise measurements}$$

- The superselection rule holds **when \hat{Q}_{object} and $\hat{Q}_{\text{apparatus}}$ are conserved individually**:

$$[\hat{A}, \hat{Q}_{\text{object}}] \neq 0 \implies \text{No covariant measurements of } \hat{A}$$

- In this sense, **the superselection rule can be regarded as an extreme case of the uncertainty relation.**

Superselection sectors

- In general, the unitary representation \hat{S}_g of $g \in G$ admits a nontrivial cohomology:

$$\hat{S}_{g_1} \circ \hat{S}_{g_2} = \hat{C}(g_1, g_2) \hat{S}_{g_1 \circ g_2}$$

- $\hat{C}(g_1, g_2)$ is commutative with all the measurable observables and with $\{\hat{S}_g \mid g \in G\}$.
- (ρ, V_ρ) : irreducible projective unitary representation of G . Then

$$\mathfrak{H} = \bigoplus_\rho \mathfrak{H}_\rho = \bigoplus_\rho (V_\rho \otimes W_\rho), \quad \hat{S}_g = \bigoplus_\rho (\hat{\rho}_g \otimes \hat{1})$$

summation is taken over inequivalent irreducible projective unitary representations.

- Each subspace \mathfrak{H}_ρ defines a sector.

Absence of interference term

- The Hilbert space is decomposed accordingly to irreducible projective unitary representations of G :

$$\mathfrak{H} = \bigoplus_{\rho} \mathfrak{H}_{\rho} = \bigoplus_{\rho} (V_{\rho} \otimes W_{\rho}), \quad \hat{S}_g = \bigoplus_{\rho} (\hat{\rho}_g \otimes \hat{1})$$

summation is taken over inequivalent irreducible projective unitary representations.

- Under the superselection rule, “measurable observable” \hat{A} satisfying $\hat{A}\hat{S}_g = \hat{S}_g\hat{A}$ should have a form $\hat{A} = \bigoplus_{\rho} (\hat{1} \otimes A_{\rho})$.
- If ρ_1 and ρ_2 are in-equivalent representation of G , and if $|\psi_1\rangle \in \mathfrak{H}_{\rho_1}$ and $|\psi_2\rangle \in \mathfrak{H}_{\rho_2}$, then

$$\langle \psi_1 + \psi_2 | \hat{A} | \psi_1 + \psi_2 \rangle = \langle \psi_1 | \hat{A} | \psi_1 \rangle + \langle \psi_2 | \hat{A} | \psi_2 \rangle.$$

Interference term $\langle \psi_1 | \hat{A} | \psi_2 \rangle$ between different sectors vanishes.

Summary

- The superselection rule is derived from the viewpoint of measurement.
- When the object system admits action of a group G , if the meter is required to be covariant under the action of G , and if the generator of the G -action is conserved within the object system, the measurable quantity \hat{A} must satisfy the superselection rule, $\hat{S}_g^\dagger \hat{A} \hat{S}_g = \hat{A}$ or $[\hat{Q}_\kappa, \hat{A}] = 0$.
- The superselection rule forbids disturbance of the superselection charge, so it is regarded as an extreme case of the uncertainty relation with additive conservation charge.
- Absence (or non-observability) of interference of different sector is explained.

Remaining problems

- Spontaneous symmetry breaking
- Local gauge symmetry
- Color confinement?

ご清聴ありがとうございました。

Thank you for your attention.