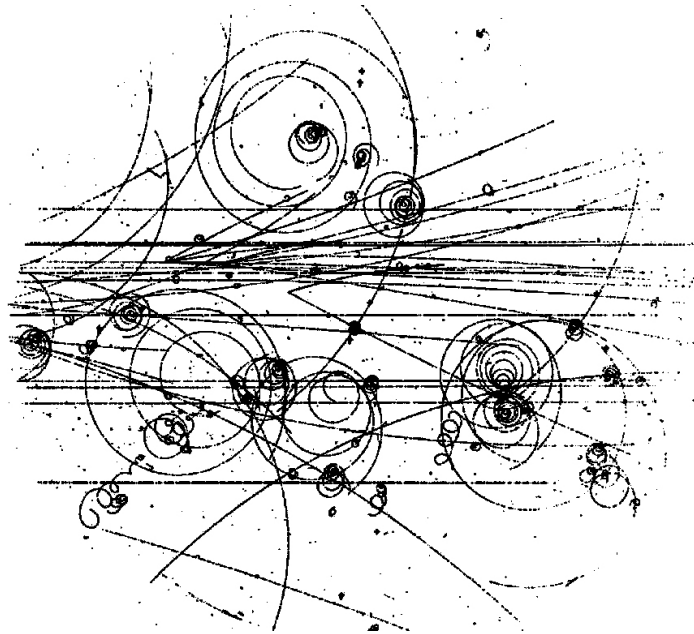


DAVIDE CAMINO

# QUANTUM COMPUTING FOR LOGICAL INFERENCE

Subtitle





# CONTENTS

## I THEORETICAL BASES

1	QUANTUM MECHANICS	3
1.1	Experiments	3
1.1.1	Spin	3
1.1.2	Qubit	5
1.1.3	Boolean Logic	5
1.2	Quantum states	6
1.2.1	Vector Spaces	7
1.2.2	Bra and Ket	7
1.2.3	Hidden variables	8
1.2.4	Spin states	9
1.3	Observables	11
1.3.1	Hermitian operator	11
1.3.2	Principles of quantum mechanics	12
1.3.3	Spin Operator	13
1.3.4	Theory and experiments	14
1.3.5	Operator and Measure	16
1.4	Temporal Evolution	16
1.4.1	Unitarity	16
1.4.2	Time-Development Operator	17
1.4.3	The Hamiltonian	18
1.4.4	Commutators	19
1.4.5	Conservation of Energy	20
1.5	Conclusions	20
2	QUANTUM GATE	23
3	QUANTUM ANNEALING	25
4	ONTOLOGY	27
4.1	Knowledge Base	27
4.1.1	Ontology in philosophy	27
4.1.2	Ontology in computer science	27
4.1.3	OWL Language	28
4.1.4	Importance of ontologies	29
4.2	Example ontologies	29
4.2.1	Simple ontology	29
4.2.2	DOLCE ontology	31
4.3	Reasoning on ontology	31
4.3.1	<i>SRQIQ</i> DL	31
4.3.2	Interpretation of a knowledge base	32
4.3.3	Complexity of reasoning	33
4.4	Conclusions	34

## II TOOLS

5	ENVIRONMENT SETUP	37
---	-------------------	----

5.1	Python environment . . . . .	37
5.2	IBM Qiskit . . . . .	37
5.2.1	Hello World . . . . .	38
5.2.2	Transpilation . . . . .	38
5.2.3	Execution . . . . .	39
5.2.4	A complete example on real hardware . . . . .	40
5.3	D-Wave Ocean . . . . .	40
5.3.1	Hello World . . . . .	40
5.3.2	Example on real hardware . . . . .	41
5.3.3	Minor embedding . . . . .	41
5.4	PyQUBO and qubover . . . . .	41
5.4.1	PyQUBO . . . . .	42
5.4.2	qubover . . . . .	43
5.5	Conclusion . . . . .	44
6	QA-PROLOG . . . . .	45
6.1	The project . . . . .	45
6.1.1	Reason . . . . .	45
6.1.2	Prolog . . . . .	46
6.1.3	Feature of QA-Prolog . . . . .	47
6.2	Pipeline . . . . .	47
6.2.1	QMASM . . . . .	48
6.3	Update to the project . . . . .	49
6.4	Related Work . . . . .	49
6.5	Conclusion . . . . .	49
 III EXPERIMENTS		
7	A QUANTUM ONTOLOGY . . . . .	53
7.1	Ontology structure . . . . .	53
7.2	Prolog version . . . . .	53
7.3	Inference on the ontology . . . . .	53
7.4	Conclusion . . . . .	53
8	QAOA . . . . .	55
8.1	QAOA . . . . .	55
8.2	From QUBO to Pauli operator . . . . .	55
8.3	Experiments . . . . .	55
8.4	Conclusion . . . . .	55
9	CONCLUSION . . . . .	57

## Part I

### THEORETICAL BASES



In this chapter we will explore the basics of quantum mechanics in order to understand what we can or cannot do with a quantum computer. The reference architecture for this work is the quantum gate-based quantum computer. In the next pages we will try to justify why the algorithms that run on this hardware need to be reversible.

The chapter starts from the very beginning with the definition of a quantum system and presents the basis to understand the evolution of a quantum system, trying to justify why every evolution needs to be reversible and what exactly reversibility means. At the end of the chapter we will put all of our new knowledge together to derive the famous Schrödinger equation.

With all this work we will be able to imagine the function of a quantum gate and understand the limitations that are imposed when we develop an algorithm for a quantum computer.

## 1.1 EXPERIMENTS

We start our introduction to quantum mechanics with an experiment. Experiments are not only an excuse to introduce the topic, but the essential key of physics, both classical and modern.

Theory and models need to adapt to the experiments, and when the experimental results are in contradiction with the actual model it means that the model needs to be changed to respect the behavior of the world.

### 1.1.1 Spin

We analyze the experiment of an electron in a magnetic field. An electron is an electrically charged particle; when some electrons are shot in an electric field all of them are influenced by Coulomb's law; if all electrons have the same initial velocity the beam of electrons remains intact.

What happens to the same beam in a magnetic field? Again electrons are deflected by a force, but this time the beam splits. If the initial velocity was parallel to the x axis and the magnetic field is oriented along the z axis some electrons are deflected upward, some downward, but the intensity of the deflection is the same for all the electrons. This means that no electrons are deflected less or more than the others and the beam splits exactly into two parts.



Figure 1.1: Experiment's schema

Starting from this experiment we can make a measuring instrument: this apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  can be oriented along an arbitrary axis, and in the previous configuration  $\mathcal{A}$  displays  $+1$  if the electron is deflected upward,  $-1$  otherwise. We call this number the spin of the electron.

*Repeatability of measure*

If we measure the spin of an electron and  $\mathcal{A}$  displays  $+1$ , we can confirm the experiment's results by measuring the spin again and we obtain spin  $+1$  every time. This means that the measurements are repeatable (an essential property to construct models and make predictions). We can think, and it will be clear later why it is useful, that the first experiment prepares the spin  $+1$  and the others confirm this result.

Spin is a quantum property and all the visual representations such as the rotation of the electron around its axis would lead to misrepresentation. Spin and rotation, however, have some similarities. Let's analyze what would happen if we consider a charged sphere in a magnetic field with the laws of classical physics. We consider a sphere rotating around its axis, and this axis is parallel to the  $z$  axis. The  $x$  or  $y$  component of the angular momentum is zero. Measuring the component along a generic axis, oriented like the versor  $\hat{n}^1$ , we would obtain a result proportional to the projection of  $\hat{z}$  on  $\hat{n}$ . This projection can be found with the scalar product  $\hat{z} \cdot \hat{n} = \cos \theta^2$ , where  $\theta$  is the angle between the axes.

Now we consider the quantum version of this phenomenon. Let's start by measuring the  $z$  component of the spin and assume that the result is  $\sigma_z = +1$ ; if we rotate the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  around, for example, the  $x$  axis, we can measure  $\sigma_x$ . This component would not be zero, and  $\mathcal{A}$  keeps displaying only  $+1$  or  $-1$ . The single result is not helpful, but we can repeat the experiment, namely:

1. orienting  $\mathcal{A}$  along the  $z$  axis and preparing a spin  $\sigma_z = +1$
2. rotating  $\mathcal{A}$  around  $x$
3. measuring the  $x$  component of the spin

statistically we would observe the same number of  $\sigma_x = +1$  and  $\sigma_x = -1$ .

If we start the experiments with a spin prepared as  $\sigma_z = +1$  and then orient  $\mathcal{A}$  along a generic axis  $\hat{n}$  each measure would be binary and unpredictable, but the mean of the measures tends to  $\hat{z} \cdot \hat{n} = \cos \theta$  where  $\theta$  is the angle between  $\hat{z}$  and  $\hat{n}$ . In the most general case we can start with the apparatus oriented like  $m$  and prepare the spin  $\sigma_m = +1$ , then we rotate  $\mathcal{A}$  around  $\hat{n}$  without interfering with the spin and measure again; we would obtain the statistical result  $\langle \sigma_n \rangle = \hat{n} \cdot \hat{n}^3$ .

The result of a single measure is non deterministic, but we can make predictions over the mean values of the measures: the expected values behave as the single results of the classic experiment.

*Invasive experiment*

Considering now a sequence of three measures: starting with  $\mathcal{A}$  oriented along  $z$  we prepare the spin  $\sigma_z = +1$ , then we rotate  $\mathcal{A}$  to measure  $\sigma_x$  obtaining, let's say,  $+1$  (the reasoning is the same if we obtain  $-1$ ); lastly returning with  $\mathcal{A}$  parallel to  $z$  we cannot make any prediction on the single

<sup>1</sup> A versor is a vector of magnitude 1 (unit vector), it is normally used to specify a direction.

<sup>2</sup> We can use directly the angle because we are considering versors.

<sup>3</sup> The Dirac bracket  $\langle \rangle$  denotes the statistical mean of a quantity. We call that expectation value.



82 result, the initial configuration (with  $\sigma_z = +1$ ) is lost forever, the only result  
83 we can predict is that  $\langle \sigma_z \rangle = 0$ .

#### 84 1.1.2 Qubit

85 We have introduced the spin referring to electrons in a magnetic field. How-  
86 ever, we can study the spin without examining the associated electron; we  
87 have isolated a simple physical system, the simplest we can study.

88 Spin belongs to a class of simple physical systems called *qubit*; in all of  
89 these systems the result of a measure is binary. We will see that, even if the  
90 result of a measure is equal to the classical *bit*, the qubit system is described  
91 in a very different way compared to its classical alter ego.

#### 92 1.1.3 Boolean Logic

93 In this paragraph we try to understand why we need two different ways  
94 to describe a classical and a quantum state space. To do so we analyze the  
95 results of some logical propositions, both basic and composed via logical  
96 connectives.

97 Starting with the classical case we consider a bag of colored and numbered  
98 balls. We can construct the state space by enumerating all states, namely  
99 taking each ball from the bag and annotating the pair number–color. The  
100 basic propositions we analyze are:

- 101 • The extracted ball is red.
- 102 • The number on the extracted ball is even.

103 If we consider a particular state we can say if a proposition is true or  
104 false; we can also define two subsets of balls, the first with all the red balls  
105 (for this subset the first proposition is true), the second one with the balls  
106 that show an even number (subset that makes the second proposition true).  
107 Considering now disjunction and conjunction:

- 108 • The extracted ball is red *or* even.
- 109 • The extracted ball is red *and* even.

110 Again it is simple to associate a truth value to these propositions if we con-  
111 sider a single state; also we can construct two subsets that satisfy the propo-  
112 sitions from the subsets we defined before: the new subsets are respectively  
113 the union and intersection of the old ones.

114 In the quantum world the situation is very different. Let's start from  
115 propositions that can be verified with a simple experiment:

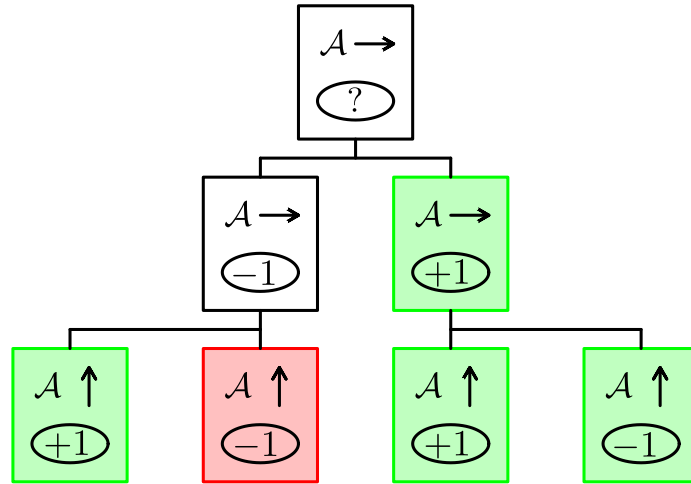
- 116 • The  $z$  component of the spin is  $+1$ .
- 117 • The  $x$  component of the spin is  $+1$ .

118 If we want to check the first proposition we can orient the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  along  
119  $z$  and make a measurement; the same procedure can be followed for the  
120 second proposition. The disjunction and conjunction of these propositions  
121 are:

- The  $z$  component of the spin is  $+1$  *or* the  $x$  component is  $+1$ .
- The  $z$  component of the spin is  $+1$  *and* the  $x$  component is  $+1$ .

Starting with the disjunction. Considering a state prepared, without our knowledge, with  $\sigma_z = +1$ . If our first measure is along the  $z$  axis,  $\mathcal{A}$  will always display  $+1$  and we can immediately conclude that the proposition is true. If we start measuring the  $x$  component, we have a 50% chance that  $\mathcal{A}$  displays  $+1$  or  $-1$ ; also this measurement destroys the initial state and the measure of  $\sigma_z$  becomes non predictable. In this scenario we have a 25% chance of deducing that the proposition is false; figure 1.2 shows all the possible measurement results in this case. The logical value of a proposition depends on the order in which we perform the measurements.

The disjunction is not commutative.



**Figure 1.2:** The apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  is represented as a box, the arrow represents the direction along which the apparatus is oriented, the display (ellipse) shows the result of measurement. We have highlighted in green the cases in which we can immediately conclude that the disjunction of the propositions is true

The conjunction is even worse: no matter the order of the measurements, the second one destroys the result of the first. The disjunction is true if at least one of the sub-propositions is true, and if we find a spin component that is  $+1$  we can always confirm this result with another measurement. In the conjunction the two sub-propositions must be true *at the same time*, but with the second measurement we lose all the knowledge of the first one. We can never conclude that the conjunction is true.

The conjunction loses its meaning.

## 1.2 QUANTUM STATES

In the previous section we have understood that a state space of a quantum system cannot be represented in the same way as a classical state space. Now we present a formal mathematical model to describe the state space for spin.

**Axiom 1.** *The state space for a quantum system is a complex vector space.*

This is a physical axiom, which means that it is true because there are a lot of experiments that confirm this model and none that shows a contradiction.

### 1.2.1 Vector Spaces

A vector space is a mathematical and abstract construction that can have multiple dimensions (even infinite) and has, as components, integers, real or complex numbers, or other elements. An example that shows well how abstract a vector space can be is the complex-valued continuous function of variable  $x$ ; the set of these functions generates a vector space.

In quantum mechanics the state space is described by a vector space having as element  $|A\rangle$  called *ket*. The properties of this space are: *Hilbert space*

- the sum of two kets is a ket;
- addition is commutative;
- addition is associative;
- existence of identity element for addition;
- existence of inverse elements for addition;
- existence of identity element for scalar multiplication;
- linearity property.

### 1.2.2 Bra and Ket

An example of ket that we will find often is the column vector of two dimensions:

$$|A\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \end{pmatrix}$$

where  $\alpha_1$  and  $\alpha_2$  are complex numbers. With this simple example of ket it is easy to verify the validity of all previously described properties.

If, for complex numbers, exists the complex conjugate, for every ket there exists a *bra*. The set of bra generates a dual conjugate space with respect to the state space of ket. We denote a bra as  $\langle A|$ . If  $|A\rangle$  is the ket of the previous example the corresponding bra is a row vector having as elements the complex conjugate of  $|A\rangle$ :

$$\langle A| = (\alpha_1^*, \alpha_2^*).$$

Name and symbol associated with elements of Hilbert spaces become clear when we define the product *bra-ket*, this is the corresponding scalar product of an ordinary vector and is called inner product. Considering bra and ket of two dimensions we can evaluate the inner product by adding the products of corresponding components: *Inner product*

$$\langle A|B\rangle = (\alpha_1^*, \alpha_2^*) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \end{pmatrix} = \alpha_1^* \beta_1 + \alpha_2^* \beta_2.$$

Having the inner product we can define:

**VECTOR** normalized vector  $|A\rangle$  in which  $\langle A|A\rangle = 1$ ;

**ORTHOGONAL VECTOR** vectors that have a null inner product:  $\langle A|B\rangle = 0$ .

We are familiar with these concepts in two and three dimensions, the first one is a vector of length one, the second is the right angle between two vectors. This representation is misleading in our case, we cannot imagine a ket like an arrow and the state space is completely abstract even if there are properties and operations in common between this space and the 3D space that we are familiar with.

We have lost the geometric interpretation, and it seems that we have defined two completely abstract and useless concepts, we will see next that these are key concepts in the description of quantum systems and have a precise and important physical meaning.

*Orthonormal basis* By having a vector space is possible to build a set of orthogonal versors that generates all vectors in the given space. This set is called orthonormal basis and the cardinality of the set is equal to the dimension of the space.

Formally having a basis  $\mathcal{B} = \{|i_1\rangle, |i_2\rangle, \dots, |i_N\rangle\}$  of a space with N dimensions, we can write a generic vector in that space as

$$|A\rangle = \sum_{n=1}^N \alpha_n |i_n\rangle = \sum_{n=1}^N |i_n\rangle \langle i_n | A \rangle \quad (1.1)$$

this is the linear combination of the basis versors; where kets  $|i_n\rangle$  are the versors in the basis and  $\alpha_n$  are the vector components. We can obtain those components with the inner product between the vector  $|A\rangle$  and the basis versors:

$$\alpha_i = \langle i | A \rangle. \quad (1.2)$$

### 1.2.3 Hidden variables

In a classical system we can measure all the variables associated to a physical system and then make a deterministic prediction of the evolution of that system. From the experiments described in the first section we have learned that a quantum system is not completely predictable even if we can make all the measurements that we want<sup>4</sup>. We can ask ourselves if our measurements aren't enough, if there are other variables that can make the prediction completely deterministic. About that topic we don't have any experimental proof, the opinion of physicists is divided in two main visions:

OPINION ONE : there are hidden variables and, if we manage to measure them, the prediction of results become deterministic. These variables can be

- very difficult to measure
- unknowable to us because also we are constituted by quantum material.

OPINION TWO : hidden variables don't exist, we already know all the information about a given system and quantum mechanics is intrinsically non deterministic.

*No hidden variables* Probably no experiment could determine which vision is correct, but this doubt doesn't worsen our comprehension of the physical world. We can

<sup>4</sup> We remember that a measure along one axis destroys our knowledge about the result along another axis.

simply choose one vision and build our model coherently. We choose the simpler one, without hidden variables, all that we have to model are the quantities that we can measure and the measurements allow us to know all the information about a given system.

Even if we have lost complete determinism, knowing the state of a system gives us some information about the system and the successive measurements. In the next section we will see what we can deduce about spin.

#### 1.2.4 Spin states

Let's start enumerating all possible spin states along the coordinate axes. If we rotate the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  around  $z$ , we can obtain  $\sigma_z = \pm 1$ ; we call these states *up* and *down* and label them with kets  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$ . Orienting  $\mathcal{A}$  along  $x$ , we obtain *left*  $|l\rangle$  and *right*  $|r\rangle$ . Lastly, along the  $y$  axis, we measure the states *in*  $|i\rangle$  and *out*  $|o\rangle$ .

The hypothesis that there aren't hidden variables allows us to represent the space state in a simple way: each spin state can be represented as a ket in a two-dimensional complex vector space.

*Spin space states have two dimensions*

To express a vector we need a basis; we choose  $\mathcal{B} = \{|u\rangle, |d\rangle\}$ <sup>5</sup> and try to obtain all states as a linear combination (*superposition*) of the basis vectors. A generic state  $|A\rangle$  can be expressed as:

$$|A\rangle = \alpha_u |u\rangle + \alpha_d |d\rangle$$

where  $\alpha_u$  and  $\alpha_d$  are the components of  $|A\rangle$  along  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$ , and can be obtained by projection:  $\alpha_u = \langle u|A\rangle$  and  $\alpha_d = \langle d|A\rangle$  (as in equation 1.2).

$|A\rangle$  components are complex numbers and their physical meaning is: having a spin prepared in the state  $|A\rangle = \alpha_u |u\rangle + \alpha_d |d\rangle$ <sup>6</sup>;  $\alpha_u^* \alpha_u$  is the probability of measuring  $\sigma_z = +1$ , while  $\alpha_d^* \alpha_d$  is the probability that a measurement of  $\sigma_z$  will yield  $-1$ . Formally we can denote the probability of measuring  $+1$  and  $-1$  as  $P_u$  and  $P_d$  respectively and write:

*Probability amplitudes*

$$\begin{aligned} P_u &= \langle A|u\rangle \langle u|A\rangle \\ P_d &= \langle A|d\rangle \langle d|A\rangle. \end{aligned} \quad (1.3)$$

Components  $\alpha_u$  and  $\alpha_d$  are called probability amplitudes, and their physical meaning is given by the square of the magnitude. This is the actual probability, and we want the sum of all probabilities to be one. This is equivalent to requiring that  $|A\rangle$  is normalized:  $\langle A|A\rangle = 1$ .

Now we will show why  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$  have to be orthogonal:

$$\begin{aligned} \langle u|d\rangle &= 0 \\ \langle d|u\rangle &= 0. \end{aligned}$$

We try to give an idea with a *reductio ad absurdum*: if  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$  were not orthogonal, the projection of one on the other would not be null. This means

<sup>5</sup> We will show that these vectors are in fact orthogonal and why they need to be.

<sup>6</sup> From now on we use "prepared" or "measured" as synonyms: every measurement is invasive and can change the spin state, so no matter what was the previous state, after a measurement the state is the one we have measured.

that if we orient  $\mathcal{A}$  along  $z$  and measure  $\sigma_z = +1 = |u\rangle$ , we would have  $\alpha_d = \langle d|u\rangle \neq 0$ , which is a contradiction to experimental results. If  $\alpha_d \neq 0$ , then  $\alpha_d^* \alpha_d > 0$ ; we started with a state prepared as  $\sigma_z = +1$  and ended with a nonzero probability of measuring  $\sigma_z = -1$ : this is absurd.

Orthogonal states are  
mutually exclusive

We can extend the reasoning to a general and key concept of quantum mechanics: two orthogonal states are distinct and mutually exclusive. If the system is in the first state, the probability of finding it in the second is zero.

Now we are ready to express spin states as linear combinations of the basis vectors  $\mathcal{B} = \{|u\rangle, |d\rangle\}$ . The representation of the basis vectors themselves is naturally easy:

$$|u\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad (1.4)$$

$$|d\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.5)$$

To construct vector *right*, let's consider a spin prepared in the state  $|r\rangle$ . If we measure  $\sigma_z$ , we have a 50% chance of obtaining  $+1$  (and 50% for  $-1$ ); this means that for  $|r\rangle$  we have  $\alpha_u^* \alpha_u = \alpha_d^* \alpha_d = 1/2$ . A vector that satisfies this constraint is:

$$|r\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.6)$$

The reasoning is the same for state *left*; we also add the constraint that a state *left* cannot be *right* and vice versa:  $\langle r|l\rangle = \langle l|r\rangle = 0$ . We can express *left* as:

$$|l\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.7)$$

Lastly, the constraints to find explicit forms for *in* and *out* are:

- states must be orthogonal:  $\langle i|o\rangle = \langle o|i\rangle = 0$ ;
- if we have a spin prepared as *in* or *out*:
  - equiprobability of measuring  $\sigma_z = +1$  and  $\sigma_z = -1$ ;
  - equiprobability of measuring  $\sigma_x = +1$  and  $\sigma_x = -1$ .

Two vectors that satisfy these constraints are:

$$|i\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} \quad (1.8)$$

$$|o\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{i}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.9)$$

This last derivation shows why it is important that the state space is complex: if we only accepted real components for our vectors, the system of equations we have implicitly defined would not have any solution<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> To avoid confusion, we point out that  $|i\rangle$  is the ket of state *in*.  $i$ , instead, is the imaginary unit.

## 1.3 OBSERVABLES

We have learned that in classical mechanics we can trust our intuition, and we can do one or more measurements to know exactly the state of a system: a measurement does not perturb the state, which is the same before, during, and after the measurement.

In quantum mechanics the situation is more complex; our intuition is misleading, and we need mathematical tools to describe what we can measure: the observables. These tools are mathematical operators called *machines* ( $\mathbf{M}$ ) and have as both input and output state vectors.

**Axiom 2.** *Machines associated with observables are described by linear operators.*

We will show that machines are Hermitian operators, so let's start defining these operators and describing their properties<sup>8</sup>.

### 1.3.1 Hermitian operator

Formally, machines modify a state vector in this way:

$$\mathbf{M}|A\rangle = |B\rangle$$

The linearity of machines implies that:

$$\mathbf{M}|A\rangle = |B\rangle \Rightarrow \mathbf{M}z|A\rangle = z|B\rangle$$

and:

$$\mathbf{M}(|A\rangle + |B\rangle) = \mathbf{M}|A\rangle + \mathbf{M}|B\rangle.$$

If we choose a basis to represent machines and state vectors, we can write explicitly the linear operator as an  $N \times N$  matrix, where  $N$  is the dimension of the vector space of the state vectors. A generic machine that transforms spins can be expressed as:

$$\mathbf{M} = \begin{pmatrix} m_{11} & m_{12} \\ m_{21} & m_{22} \end{pmatrix}.$$

When we fix a basis, we are forced to express all state vectors and operators in that basis, but now we have a set of rules to define the application of the operator to a state vector, i.e. the matrix multiplication:

$$\mathbf{M}|A\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} m_{11} & m_{12} \\ m_{21} & m_{22} \end{pmatrix} \times \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_1 \\ \alpha_2 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \beta_2 \end{pmatrix} = |B\rangle$$

When we consider a linear operator, we can search for eigenvalues and eigenvectors (if they exist). Eigenvectors are vectors that don't change their direction when multiplied by the operator; their magnitude is scaled by a constant factor called the eigenvalue. Formally:

$$\mathbf{M}|\lambda\rangle = \lambda|\lambda\rangle$$

where  $|\lambda\rangle$  is the eigenvector and  $\lambda$  the eigenvalue.

*Eigenvalues and eigenvectors*

<sup>8</sup> The reason why we need this kind of operator will be clear in 1.3.2.

306 Considering the transformation between ket  $|A\rangle$  and  $|B\rangle$ :  $\mathbf{M}|A\rangle = |B\rangle$ ,  
 307 taking into account the dual space of bras and searching for a machine that  
 308 transforms the bra  $\langle A|$  into  $\langle B|$ , we cannot simply use the matrix having as  
 309 elements the complex conjugate of  $\mathbf{M}$ ; the correct operator is the *Hermitian*  
 310 *conjugate* of  $\mathbf{M}$ , which is the transpose of the matrix having as elements  
 311 the complex conjugates of  $\mathbf{M}$ . We denote the Hermitian conjugate with the  
 312 dagger  $\dagger$ :

$$\mathbf{M}^\dagger = [\mathbf{M}^*]^\mathrm{T} = [\mathbf{M}^\mathrm{T}]^*.$$

313 We can now write:

$$\mathbf{M}|A\rangle = |B\rangle \Rightarrow \langle A|\mathbf{M}^\dagger = \langle B|.$$

314 An operator that is equal to its Hermitian conjugate is called a *Hermitian*  
 315 *operator*. Formally,  $\mathbf{M}$  is Hermitian if and only if

$$\mathbf{M} = \mathbf{M}^\dagger.$$

316 Hermitian operators have some important properties:

- 317 • all eigenvalues are real;
- 318 • eigenvectors form a *complete set*: all vectors obtained with the applica-  
 319 tion of the operator can be expressed as a linear combination of eigen-  
 320 vectors;
- 321 • if  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_2$  are different eigenvalues, the associated eigenvectors are  
 322 orthogonal;
- 323 • if two eigenvalues are equal (*degeneracy*), it is always possible to find  
 324 two associated eigenvectors that are orthogonal.

Fundamental theorem 325 The last three properties can be summed up in the following way:

326 **Theorem 1.** *The eigenvectors of a Hermitian operator form an orthonormal basis.*

### 327 1.3.2 Principles of quantum mechanics

328 Let's introduce the first four principles of quantum mechanics, the ones  
 329 about observables<sup>9</sup>.

330 **Principles 1.** *Observables in quantum mechanics are described by linear operators*  
 331 **L.**

332 **L** must also be a Hermitian operator: we can consider this proposition an  
 333 axiom itself or deduce it from the other principles.

334 **Principles 2.** *The results of a measurement can only be the eigenvalues associated*  
 335 *with the observable operator.*

336 Calling  $\lambda_i$  a generic eigenvalue and  $|\lambda_i\rangle$  the associated eigenvector, if the  
 337 system is in the *eigenstate*  $|\lambda_i\rangle$ , the measurement always returns  $\lambda_i$ . Since  
 338 all  $\lambda_i$  must be physical quantities they must be real, a peculiar property of  
 339 Hermitian operators.

---

9 The fifth, and last one, concerns the temporal evolution. It will be discussed later on (1.4).



340 **Principles 3.** *Unambiguously distinguishable states are represented by orthogonal*  
 341 *vectors.*

342 Distinguishable states can be separated without ambiguity by a measure-  
 343 ment. For example, if we want to distinguish between  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$ , we mea-  
 344 sure  $\sigma_z$ : *up* and *down* are distinct. We cannot, instead, say if a certain system  
 345 is in state *up* or *right*, because even if the system is in the state  $|u\rangle$  we can  
 346 still measure  $\sigma_x$  and find (with 50% chance) that the system is in state  $|r\rangle$ .

347 The inner product is a measure of how much two states are indistinguish- *Overlap*  
 348 able; for that reason it is also called overlap. Two states are physically dis-  
 349 tinct if the overlap is zero.

$$\begin{aligned}\langle u | d \rangle &= 0 \\ \langle u | r \rangle &\neq 0\end{aligned}$$

350 **Principles 4.** *If the system is in state  $|A\rangle$  and we measure the observable  $L$ , the*  
 351 *probability of obtaining  $\lambda_i$  is:*

$$P(\lambda_i) = \langle A | \lambda_i \rangle \langle \lambda_i | A \rangle .$$

352 where  $\lambda_i$  is a generic eigenvalue of  $L$  and  $\langle \lambda_i |$ ,  $|\lambda_i\rangle$  are the bra and ket asso-  
 353 ciated with that eigenvalue (eigenvector of  $\lambda_i$ ).

### 354 1.3.3 Spin Operator

355 The principles tell us what properties a machine must have to represent an  
 356 observable. Let's construct the spin operator  $\sigma$ .

357 Until now, we have measured spins with the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$ , orienting  $\mathcal{A}$   
 358 along the component of our interest.  $\sigma$  is a mathematical tool that allows  
 359 us to make predictions about the result of a measurement with  $\mathcal{A}$  (fourth  
 360 principle); as we can rotate  $\mathcal{A}$ , we must also rotate  $\sigma$  (mathematically). For  
 361 this spatial property,  $\sigma$  is called a *3-vector operator*.

362 **OPERATOR  $\sigma_z$ :** Let's start with the simplest operator<sup>10</sup>. The second prin-  
 363 ciple says that all eigenvectors of  $\sigma_z$  are  $|u\rangle$  and  $|d\rangle$ , with associated eigen-  
 364 values  $+1$  and  $-1$ . We can write this assertion as equations:

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma_z |u\rangle &= |u\rangle \\ \sigma_z |d\rangle &= -|d\rangle .\end{aligned}$$

365 In matrix form:

$$\begin{aligned}\begin{pmatrix} (\sigma_z)_{11} & (\sigma_z)_{12} \\ (\sigma_z)_{21} & (\sigma_z)_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} &= \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \\ \begin{pmatrix} (\sigma_z)_{11} & (\sigma_z)_{12} \\ (\sigma_z)_{21} & (\sigma_z)_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} &= - \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix} .\end{aligned}$$

366 The solution of this system is<sup>11</sup>:

$$\sigma_z = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} .$$

<sup>10</sup> This is because we have chosen  $\mathcal{B} = \{ |u\rangle, |d\rangle \}$  as the basis.

<sup>11</sup> It is easy to verify that this operator is also linear.

**OPERATOR  $\sigma_x$ :** With the same reasoning, we can construct the operator along the  $x$  axis. We have already deduced the representations of *right* and *left* in equations 1.6 and 1.7 on page 10. The equations that allow us to construct  $\sigma_x$  are:

$$\begin{pmatrix} (\sigma_x)_{11} & (\sigma_x)_{12} \\ (\sigma_x)_{21} & (\sigma_x)_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\begin{pmatrix} (\sigma_x)_{11} & (\sigma_x)_{12} \\ (\sigma_x)_{21} & (\sigma_x)_{22} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix} = -\begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \\ -\frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \end{pmatrix}.$$

The solution of this system is:

$$\sigma_x = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

**OPERATOR  $\sigma_y$ :** The last direction is along the  $y$  axis. Considering the expressions for *in* and *out* given in equations 1.8 and 1.9 on page 10, and following the second principle, we can write:

$$\begin{aligned} \sigma_y |i\rangle &= |i\rangle \\ \sigma_y |o\rangle &= -|o\rangle. \end{aligned}$$

We can rewrite this in matrix form, and the solution we would obtain is:

$$\sigma_y = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

*Pauli matrices* We have obtained a matrix representation of the three spin operators  $\sigma_z$ ,  $\sigma_x$ , and  $\sigma_y$ :

$$\sigma_z = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} \quad \sigma_x = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \sigma_y = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.10)$$

These famous and important matrices are named after their inventor, Wolfgang Ernst Pauli.

#### 1.3.4 Theory and experiments

Thanks to the operators  $\sigma_z$ ,  $\sigma_x$ , and  $\sigma_y$ , if we know the state vector, we can statistically predict the result of a measurement of the spin along one of the three coordinate axes. What can we say about a measurement taken by orienting the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  along a generic direction?

Considering  $\mathcal{A}$  oriented along the unit vector  $\hat{n}$ , if  $\sigma$  behaves as a 3-vector, in order to obtain  $\sigma_n$  we only need the inner product:

$$\sigma_n = \vec{\sigma} \cdot \hat{n}$$

Expanding the components:

$$\sigma_n = \sigma_x n_x + \sigma_y n_y + \sigma_z n_z.$$

388 If we choose the basis  $\mathcal{B} = \{|u\rangle, |d\rangle\}$ , we can use the Pauli matrices to  
 389 express in matrix form the expression for  $\sigma_n$ :

$$\sigma_n = n_x \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} + n_y \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix} + n_z \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} n_z & n_x - in_y \\ n_x + in_y & -n_z \end{pmatrix}.$$

390 Given a direction (expressed by the unit vector  $\hat{n}$ ), we can construct the  
 391 matrix we have now made explicit, and then, after finding eigenvalues and  
 392 eigenvectors, we can know all possible results of a measurement and ob-  
 393 tain the probability associated with each result. For example, considering a  
 394 direction in the  $x$ - $z$  plane, the operator  $\sigma_n$  would be:

$$\sigma_n = \begin{pmatrix} \cos \theta & \sin \theta \\ \sin \theta & -\cos \theta \end{pmatrix}$$

395 where  $\theta$  is the angle between  $\hat{n}$  and  $z$ . For this matrix, the eigenvalues and  
 396 eigenvectors are:

$$\lambda_1 = 1 \quad |\lambda_1\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} \cos \frac{\theta}{2} \\ \sin \frac{\theta}{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

397 and

$$\lambda_2 = -1 \quad |\lambda_2\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} -\sin \frac{\theta}{2} \\ \cos \frac{\theta}{2} \end{pmatrix}.$$

398 It should be pointed out that the theory is in agreement with experimen-  
 399 tal results<sup>12</sup>. Eigenvalues are  $+1$  and  $-1$ , exactly the only results that the  
 400 apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$  can retrieve. The probability of obtaining a certain result can  
 401 be evaluated as:

$$P(+1) = |\langle u | \lambda_1 \rangle|^2 = \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2}$$

$$P(-1) = |\langle u | \lambda_2 \rangle|^2 = \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2}$$

402 Lastly, let's calculate the average value for the measurement  $\sigma_n$ . From the  
 403 first experiment we have seen in 1.1.1, we already know that the result of  
 404 repeated measurements with  $\mathcal{A}$  is  $\cos \theta$ . Let's verify if our model is coherent  
 405 with the world.

*Expectation value*

406 Expected values are obtained as:

$$\langle L \rangle = \sum_i \lambda_i P(\lambda_i)$$

407 Specifically:

$$\langle \sigma_n \rangle = (+1) \cos^2 \frac{\theta}{2} + (-1) \sin^2 \frac{\theta}{2} = \cos \theta.$$

408 This is in complete agreement with the experimental results.

409 Before going on, we present, without proof, a useful theorem about expect-  
 410 ation values:

411 **Theorem 2.** *To know the expectation value of an observable, we can simply place the*  
 412 *operator associated with the observable between the bra and ket of the state vector:*

$$\langle \mathbf{L} \rangle = \langle A | \mathbf{L} | A \rangle \quad (1.11)$$

413 where  $\mathbf{L}$  is an observable,  $|A\rangle$  is a state vector, and  $\langle A|$  is the corresponding  
 414 bra.

12 If not, we must abandon this model and build another one.

### 1.3.5 Operator and Measure

Operators allow us to know the probability of measuring a certain spin given the direction of the measurement and the state vector. This probability is expressed by the state vector that we obtain when we apply the operator  $\sigma$  to the initial state.

It is important not to confuse the measurement act with the application of a machine that represents the observables. The spin state after the measurement is not the same as the one we obtain after the application of the operator. The operator is only an abstract mathematical construct that allows us to make statistical predictions about results, but doesn't have physical implications.

Let's consider an example to clarify the previous assertion. Having a spin prepared in the *up* state, its state vector is  $|u\rangle = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$ . If we apply the operator  $\sigma_z$ , we would obtain again  $\begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}$ , and if we measure the spin with  $\mathcal{A}$  oriented along  $z$ , it will always display  $+1$ , and we conclude that the state after the measurement is  $|u\rangle$ .

Consider now a spin prepared *right*, i.e.  $|r\rangle = 1/\sqrt{2}|u\rangle + 1/\sqrt{2}|d\rangle$ . Applying again the operator  $\sigma_z$ , the new state vector is  $1/\sqrt{2}|u\rangle - 1/\sqrt{2}|d\rangle$ . This vector tells us the probability of measuring  $\sigma_z = +1$  (50%), but it is not the spin state after the measurement. Using the apparatus  $\mathcal{A}$ , we could measure:

- $+1$ : the final state will be *up*;
- $-1$ : the final state will be *down*.

No matter the result of the measurement, the final state will be different from the one we obtained by applying the operator.

## 1.4 TEMPORAL EVOLUTION

Let's explore the laws that describe the temporal evolution of a quantum system. In particular, we will see how the state vector can evolve over time.

### 1.4.1 Unitarity

In classical mechanics we are used to having a motion law that links different states of our system deterministically; this means being able to know precisely the following state given the previous one. A good law, however, doesn't allow us only to know the future, but also the past states that brought the system to the current state<sup>13</sup>.

*Reversibility* In other words, we want physical transformations to be reversible. This requirement is so important that we call this property the *minus first law*, because it underlies everything else. If we think about the system states as nodes in an oriented graph, reversibility imposes that each node has exactly one input edge and one output edge. This fundamental law is also true

<sup>13</sup> For example, if we observe a ball in free fall touching the floor with a certain speed and at a certain time, we can know exactly when and from what height the ball started its fall.

in quantum mechanics and is called *unitarity*<sup>14</sup>, and it assures us that no information is lost. The unitarity law can be expressed as:

**Axiom 3.** *If two identical isolated systems are in different states, they stay in different states, and they were in different states in the past.*

#### 1.4.2 Time-Development Operator

Considering a system in the state  $|\Psi(t)\rangle$ , where the  $t$  indicates that the state vector evolves over time, quantum motion equations allow us to obtain the state at time  $t$  given the initial state:

$$|\Psi(t)\rangle = \mathbf{U}(t) |\Psi(0)\rangle. \quad (1.12)$$

Thanks to the operator  $\mathbf{U}(t)$  we can know exactly the state vector  $|\Psi(t)\rangle$  at time  $t$ , given  $|\Psi(0)\rangle$ . This assertion can be rephrased as: *Determinism*

**Axiom 4.** *The temporal evolution of the state vector is deterministic.*

Quantum mechanics is still non-deterministic, because knowing the state vector doesn't mean knowing the result of a measurement.

In order for  $\mathbf{U}(t)$  to behave as we want, it has to:

- be a linear operator;
- respect reversibility.

The second constraint allows us to define the mathematical properties of  $\mathbf{U}(t)$ . Considering two initially different states  $|\Psi(0)\rangle$  and  $|\Phi(0)\rangle$ , since there exists an experiment capable of certainly distinguishing the states,  $|\Psi(0)\rangle$  and  $|\Phi(0)\rangle$  must be orthogonal:

$$\langle \Psi(0) | \Phi(0) \rangle = 0.$$

The minus first law assures that during the entire temporal evolution of the two systems, the state vectors  $|\Psi(t)\rangle$  and  $|\Phi(t)\rangle$  will continue to be distinguishable (orthogonal): *Conservation of Distinctions*

$$\langle \Psi(t) | \Phi(t) \rangle = 0 \quad \forall t \geq 0.$$

If we rewrite this equation using formula 1.12, we obtain:

$$\langle \Psi(0) | \mathbf{U}^\dagger(t) \mathbf{U}(t) | \Phi(0) \rangle = 0.$$

From this we can see that  $\mathbf{U}^\dagger(t) \mathbf{U}(t)$  must behave as the identity operator, that is:

$$\mathbf{U}^\dagger(t) \mathbf{U}(t) = \mathbf{I}. \quad (1.13)$$

An operator that behaves as  $\mathbf{U}$  is *unitary*.

**Principles 5.** *The temporal evolution of state vectors is unitary.*

From the unitarity of  $\mathbf{U}$  descends the *conservation of overlaps*: the overlap between two states (their inner product), subjected to the same temporal-development operator, is preserved over time.

<sup>14</sup> We will see in the next paragraph the reason for this name

### 1.4.3 The Hamiltonian

Often, in classical physics, a motion law is the result of a differential equation where we have exchanged a finite time interval with an infinite number of infinitesimal intervals.

In quantum mechanics we can follow the same path and consider time intervals  $\epsilon$  close to zero. In this scenario, after an  $\epsilon$  amount of time, the state vector will change slightly and “smoothly”, and the operator  $\mathbf{U}(\epsilon)$  will be very similar to the identity. We can rewrite  $\mathbf{U}(\epsilon)$  in order to highlight the difference with the identity  $\mathbf{I}$  as:

$$\mathbf{U}(\epsilon) = \mathbf{I} - i\epsilon\mathbf{H}. \quad (1.14)$$

For now,  $i$  is a mere scale factor that later will help us recognize in  $\mathbf{H}$  the quantum version of the classical Hamiltonian.

We can now express the infinitesimal evolution of a quantum system by combining equations 1.12 and 1.14:

$$|\Psi(\epsilon)\rangle = |\Psi(0)\rangle - i\epsilon\mathbf{H}|\Psi(0)\rangle.$$

Bringing to the left the time interval:

$$\frac{|\Psi(\epsilon)\rangle - |\Psi(0)\rangle}{\epsilon} = -i\mathbf{H}|\Psi(0)\rangle.$$

Now considering the limit for  $\epsilon \rightarrow 0$ , we can see in the left member the time derivative of the state vector:

$$\frac{\partial |\Psi(t)\rangle}{\partial t} = -i\mathbf{H}|\Psi(0)\rangle.$$

Before using  $\mathbf{H}$  as the quantum Hamiltonian, we have to verify the dimensional correctness. As in classical mechanics, the Hamiltonian is the mathematical construct that represents the energy. In our formula, however, ignoring the state vector, we have the inverse of time on the left and the energy on the right. To resolve this problem, let’s introduce an important physical constant: the reduced Planck constant,  $\hbar$ .

The equation becomes:

$$\hbar \frac{\partial |\Psi\rangle}{\partial t} = -i\mathbf{H}|\Psi\rangle \quad \text{or} \quad \frac{\partial |\Psi\rangle}{\partial t} = \frac{-i\mathbf{H}|\Psi\rangle}{\hbar}. \quad (1.15)$$

*Time-dependent  
Schrödinger equation*

The constant  $\hbar$  has units of  $\text{kg} \cdot \text{m}^2/\text{s}$  and resolves the incompatibility between the two members. This equation is fundamental and is called the *generalized Schrödinger equation*, or time-dependent Schrödinger equation. If we know the Hamiltonian of an undisturbed system, we can know the evolution of the state vector.

If  $\mathbf{H}$  represents the energy of the system, we should be able to measure it, so  $\mathbf{H}$  has to be an observable. If  $\mathbf{H}$  is an observable, it must be a Hermitian operator; let’s verify it. Starting from 1.13 and substituting  $\mathbf{U}$  with 1.14, we obtain:

$$(\mathbf{I} + i\epsilon\mathbf{H}^\dagger)(\mathbf{I} - i\epsilon\mathbf{H}) = \mathbf{I}.$$

Expanding to first order in  $\epsilon$ , we find:

$$\mathbf{H}^\dagger - \mathbf{H} = 0 \Rightarrow \mathbf{H}^\dagger = \mathbf{H}.$$

We have concluded that  $\mathbf{H}$  is an Hermitian operator that represents an observable: the energy of the system. Eigenvalues of  $\mathbf{H}$  are the results of all possible direct measurements of the energy of the system. Quantum Hamiltonian

#### 1.4.4 Commutators

In a system that evolves with time, we expect that the expectation values for a certain observable  $\mathbf{L}$  will also change. Thanks to equation 1.11 on page 15, we can write explicitly the time dependence of expectation values:

$$\langle \mathbf{L} \rangle = \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle.$$

The time derivative<sup>15</sup> is:

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle = \langle \dot{\Psi}(t) | \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle + \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} | \dot{\Psi}(t) \rangle.$$

Substituting bra and ket with the time-dependent Schrödinger equation 1.15 (namely  $|\dot{\Psi}(t)\rangle = \frac{-i}{\hbar} \mathbf{H} |\Psi(t)\rangle$ ), we obtain:

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle = \frac{i}{\hbar} \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{H} \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle - \frac{i}{\hbar} \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} \mathbf{H} | \Psi(t) \rangle.$$

That can be rewritten as:

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \Psi(t) | \mathbf{L} | \Psi(t) \rangle = \frac{i}{\hbar} \langle \Psi(t) | [\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{L}] | \Psi(t) \rangle.$$

The quantity  $\mathbf{H} \mathbf{L} - \mathbf{L} \mathbf{H}$  is called the *commutator*, and since, in general, the product between operators (matrices) is not commutative, the commutator is not zero (when it is zero, we say that  $\mathbf{H}$  and  $\mathbf{L}$  commute). Commutators are important in physics, and the commutator between two operators, in this case  $\mathbf{H}$  and  $\mathbf{L}$ , is denoted by:

$$\mathbf{H} \mathbf{L} - \mathbf{L} \mathbf{H} = [\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{L}].$$

With the commutator we can express concisely the derivative of the expectation value for the observable  $\mathbf{L}$ :

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \mathbf{L} \rangle = \frac{i}{\hbar} \langle [\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{L}] \rangle \quad (1.16)$$

or equivalently:

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \mathbf{L} \rangle = -\frac{i}{\hbar} \langle [\mathbf{L}, \mathbf{H}] \rangle. \quad (1.17)$$

This equation links variations of the expectation values of an observable ( $\mathbf{L}$ ) to the expectation values of another physical observable ( $-\frac{i}{\hbar} [\mathbf{L}, \mathbf{H}]$ )<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>15</sup> Derivative of a product:  $\mathbf{L}$  doesn't depend on time and the dot denotes the time derivative (Newton notation).

<sup>16</sup> It is possible to demonstrate that if  $\mathbf{L}$  and  $\mathbf{H}$  are Hermitian, then  $[\mathbf{L}, \mathbf{H}]$  is also Hermitian.

### 538 1.4.5 Conservation of Energy

539 In quantum mechanics, when we say that a quantity is conserved, we mean  
540 that the expectation value of that quantity doesn't change. If we look at  
541 equation 1.17, the condition for the expectation value not to change is that  
542 the commutator between this quantity and the Hamiltonian is zero. It is  
543 possible to demonstrate that:

544 **Theorem 3.** *Having an observable  $\mathbf{Q}$ , if  $[\mathbf{Q}, \mathbf{H}] = 0$ , then every power satisfies*  
545  *$[\mathbf{Q}^n, \mathbf{H}] = 0$ . This means that the expectation value  $\langle \mathbf{Q} \rangle$  is conserved, and any*  
546 *power of the expectation value  $\langle \mathbf{Q}^n \rangle$  does not change with time.*

547 The most obvious quantity that is conserved is the Hamiltonian  $\mathbf{H}$  and,  
548 since every operator commutes with itself, we always have:

$$[\mathbf{H}, \mathbf{H}] = 0.$$

549 We can conclude that, under very general conditions, energy is conserved  
550 in quantum mechanics.

## 551 1.5 CONCLUSIONS

552 We conclude this chapter with a recap of what we have discovered in these  
553 pages, trying to put everything together to answer the question that opened  
554 this chapter: what are the physical limits of quantum computing, and why  
555 must our algorithms be reversible?

556 We started the chapter with an experiment that shows that quantum me-  
557 chanics is not deterministic. We can, however, make some predictions if we  
558 consider the expectation value of a measurement instead of a single result.

559 We have built state vectors and understood their mathematical meaning,  
560 focusing on the fact that knowing the state vector doesn't allow us to know  
561 the result of a measurement. We have defined the inner product between  
562 state vectors, observed that it is a measure of the overlap between states,  
563 and concluded that two distinguishable states must be orthogonal.

564 We have linked a state vector to the result of a measurement –to be precise,  
565 to the average of the results of multiple measurements– with machines, Her-  
566 mitian operators that represent observables. We have built the spin operator  
567 and used it to predict the result of a simple experiment, showing how the  
568 theory we have built so far is in accordance with experimental results.

569 Our introduction continues with the analysis of the temporal evolution of  
570 a quantum system. We have described the evolution of a state vector with an  
571 unitary operator; the application of this operator to a state vector produces  
572 the new state in which the system will be. We understood that the tempo-  
573 ral evolution of the state vector is deterministic and that indeterminacy is  
574 caused only by the act of measuring.

575 Considering infinitesimal time intervals, we have deduced the time-dependent  
576 Schrödinger equation and, thanks to this equation, we have shown how to  
577 describe the temporal evolution of expectation values for a certain observ-  
578 able. During this analysis, we also introduced the Hamiltonian of the system,  
579 a Hermitian operator that describes the energy of the system.



580 The discussion ends with a comforting result: as in classical physics, the  
 581 energy of a closed system is conserved. We have obtained this result by pre-  
 582 senting the commutator and linking the temporal evolution of an observable  
 583 with the commutator between the observable and the Hamiltonian (energy)  
 584 of the system. The commutator of the Hamiltonian with itself is trivially  
 585 zero, so the expectation value for the energy doesn't change.

586 All the information that we have learned allows us to understand the con-  
 587 straint of writing only reversible algorithms for quantum-gate-based quan-  
 588 tum computers. Quantum gates operate on qubits through physical transfor-  
 589 mations<sup>17</sup>. These transformations, like all transformations in quantum me-  
 590 chanics, are described by unitary operators that are intrinsically reversible.  
 591 This means that all quantum gates are reversible.

592 In other words, we can build only quantum gates that, having as input  
 593 different (distinguishable) states, return orthogonal states; also, due to the  
 594 conservation of overlaps, the inner product between input states is conserved  
 595 during the quantum gate transformation.

596 Reversibility doesn't mean that we can go forward and backward in time  
 597 as we please, but that all quantum gates express injective functions: if we  
 598 know the output, we can know the input, or in more physical terms, if  
 599 we know the final state of qubits<sup>18</sup> and the transformations applied to this  
 600 system (i.e., those implemented by the quantum gates), we can determine  
 601 the initial state.

602 Since every quantum algorithm has to be implemented as a path through  
 603 quantum gates, and every quantum gate is reversible, the algorithms as a  
 604 whole must also be reversible.

---

17 How depend strongly on the particular physical implementation.

18 This is a complex system (composed of more than one qubit); to fully understand these systems, we should take into account entanglement. Since our discussion is already quite long, and the temporal evolution of an entangled system is still unitary (reversible), we exclude entanglement from our introduction.



## 2 | QUANTUM GATE

605



# 3 | QUANTUM ANNEALING

606



608 In this chapter we explain what kind of knowledge base (KB) an ontology  
609 is, how to build an ontology, and why this knowledge representation is  
610 important. To clarify and demonstrate why ontologies are useful, we present  
611 an example of a foundational ontology, briefly discussing its utility.

612 The rest of the chapter is about reasoning on ontologies; we discuss the  
613 semantics of the formal language used to represent knowledge, what we  
614 mean when saying interpretation of a KB, and the complexity of finding an  
615 interpretation.

## 616 4.1 KNOWLEDGE BASE

617 In the field of information technologies, an ontology is a structured represen-  
618 tation of knowledge about a certain domain of interest; however, the study  
619 of knowledge began much before informatics. To better understand what an  
620 ontology is, let's start with the philosophical definition and then point out  
621 the differences between this vision and the IT one.

### 622 4.1.1 Ontology in philosophy

623 Ontology was born as a branch of philosophy. In this context it is the sci-  
624 ence of what is, of the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events,  
625 processes, and relations in every area of reality[1].

626 The goal of an ontology is to give a definitive and exhaustive classification  
627 of entities in all spheres of being. With the term "definitive" we mean that  
628 an ontology should answer questions such as: "What classes of entities are  
629 needed for a complete description and explanation of all the goings-on in the  
630 universe?" With the term "exhaustive", instead, we mean that all types of  
631 entities and relations between these entities are included in our ontology[1].

### 632 4.1.2 Ontology in computer science

633 Thanks to the advent of the internet and the development of bigger and  
634 bigger software used by bigger and bigger groups of users, what we might  
635 call the Tower of Babel problem emerged. Each research group develops  
636 its KB with terms and concepts shared and accepted only inside the group.  
637 For example, different databases may use identical labels but with different  
638 meanings, and the same meaning may be expressed with different names[1].

639 To address the incompatibility problem between software, databases, and  
640 research groups, ontologies have become an important research topic in com-  
641 puter science where the goal is to define standards for data exchange, infor-  
642 mation integration, and interoperability[2].

643 In this field the term ontology gains a new meaning:

644 **Definition 1.** *Ontologies represent a formal and explicit specification of a shared*  
 645 *conceptualization[3].*

646 In this definition the keywords are:

647 CONCEPTUALIZATION an ontology creates an abstract model identifying  
 648 and defining only the relevant concepts;

649 EXPLICIT the types of concepts and constraints on their use are explicitly  
 650 defined;

651 FORMAL an ontology should be machine-readable;

652 SHARED the knowledge represented by the ontology has to be accepted  
 653 by a group of people, ideally by everyone.

654 When we use an ontology to represent knowledge we are describing a  
 655 graph where entities are bound together through relationships, and classi-  
 656 fied according to a formal description of the world[4]. Knowledge bases  
 657 expressed with this formalism are divided into two components[5]:

658 T-BOX stores a set of universally quantified assertions (inclusion asser-  
 659 tions) stating general properties of concepts and roles;

660 A-BOX contains assertions on individual objects (instance assertions).

661 We can see some similarities between an ontology and a database: the T-  
 662 Box can be seen as the Entity-Relation schema and the A-Box as the set of all  
 663 entries of the database. There is, however, a logical difference between the  
 664 world represented by an ontology and the world represented by a database.

665 Databases make the *closed world assumption*: everything that is not present  
 666 in the database is automatically false; for example, if a person does not  
 667 appear in a bank registry it means that that person is not a client of the  
 668 bank.

669 Ontologies, on the other hand, make the *open world assumption*[6], which  
 670 means, for example, that we can assert that a certain person is a parent even  
 671 if we have not specified any son or daughter.

### 672 4.1.3 OWL Language

673 OWL 2 Web Ontology Language is an ontology language for the Semantic  
 674 Web with a formally defined meaning[7]. Thanks to OWL we can model  
 675 classes and relations between classes (T-Box) and individuals with their spe-  
 676 cific properties and relations between individuals (A-Box). The T-Box is the  
 677 conceptualization of the world, while the A-Box is a certain instance of the  
 678 world we have modelled in the T-Box.

679 OWL is a declarative language and defines the state of the world in a  
 680 logical way. In particular, we are interested in OWL DL where the meaning  
 681 of ontologies expressed with this language is assigned in a Description Logic  
 682 style. OWL DL is, therefore, decidable and an appropriate tool (so-called



reasoner) can then be used to infer further information about that state of the world[7].

OWL per se doesn't specify any syntax, it states only what can or cannot be expressed in an ontology. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) standardizes various syntaxes, some inspired by functional languages, others more suitable for storing on web pages. The only syntax that must be implemented by all tools to be compliant with the OWL standard is the RDF/XML syntax[7] (examples of this syntax are provided in 4.2.1).

#### 4.1.4 Importance of ontologies

Ontologies are important in various fields, from interoperability to machine learning.

In the Semantic Web context, ontologies are a main vehicle for data integration, sharing, and discovery[8]. Different research groups can use the same ontology to share a unified vocabulary that helps build common knowledge and helps to better integrate the results obtained by each group.

In a more commercial scenario, an ontology can be used as a translation layer between different databases or software that are built by different teams and use different vocabularies.

In the machine learning field an ontology could be used to support the sharing and reuse of formally represented knowledge among neuro-symbolic AI systems[3].

## 4.2 EXAMPLE ONTOLOGIES

To help understanding the structure of ontologies and to show a practical example of ontology, we present two ontologies: a simple ontology about family relationships and DOLCE, a foundational ontology.

### 4.2.1 Simple ontology

This simple ontology about parental relationships shows the basic structure of an ontology, helping to understand the graph structure of these KBs and the relations between the T-Box and A-Box.

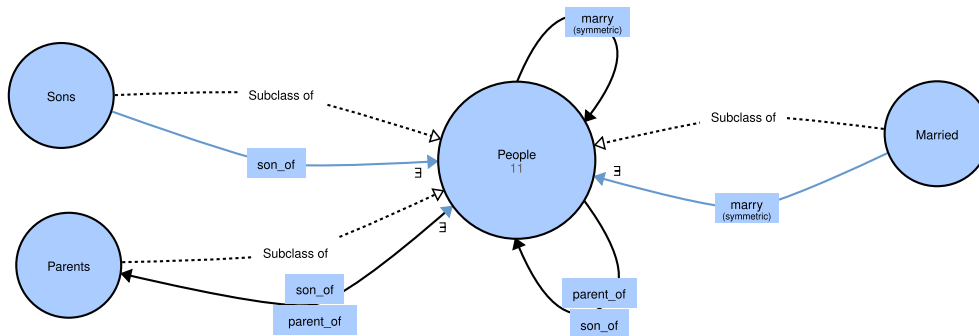


Figure 4.1: Graph for T-Box

In figure 4.1, we can see the T-Box of the ontology: this structure specifies what our domain of interest is, and what entities could possibly populate our world. This ontology is about people, so the main class/concept is `People`: this class has several subclasses that represent parents, children, and married people. We can assert that a person belongs to the married class without specifying the partner (open world assumption) but we can also infer that a person belongs to the parents class because we have created a relationship of type `parent_of` between that person and another person.

OWL allows us to express rules to infer when a member of a class belongs also to another class. The following code shows (in the RDF/XML syntax) the definition of the class `Parent`<sup>1</sup>:

```

1 <owl:Class rdf:about="http://people#Parent">
2   <owl:equivalentClass>
3     <owl:Restriction>
4       <owl:onProperty rdf:resource="http://people#parent_of"/>
5       <owl:someValuesFrom rdf:resource="http://people#Person"/>
6     </owl:Restriction>
7   </owl:equivalentClass>
8   <rdfs:subClassOf rdf:resource="http://people#Person"/>
9 </owl:Class>

```

Listing 1: Definition of parents

At line 8 we can see that `Parent` is a subclass of `People`, and at lines 4 and 5 it is specified that a parent is a person that is `parent_of` another person.

From figure 4.1 we can also see some properties of the relations:

- relation `marry` is symmetric;
- relation `parent_of` is the inverse of `son_of`;
- we can specify a domain and a range for relations.

OWL gives us constructs for all of these specifications (and other more complex ones).

Now we can populate the ontology by adding individuals and relations between individuals. For this small example we take inspiration from the Simpson family, and in the family tree (Figure 4.2 on the right) we can see the small portion of the family represented. To show what we mean by open world assumption we have asserted that Jackie is a married person even if in our representation there is no husband.

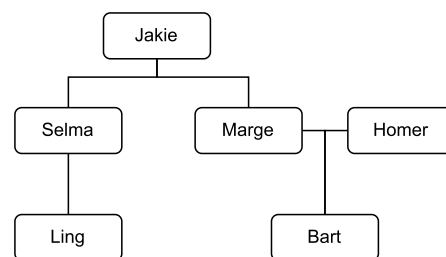


Figure 4.2: Simpson family tree

Our ontology covers a small domain, the types of entities that populate our model are very limited; the next example shows the commitment of engineering an ontology to represent virtually anything in the universe.

<sup>1</sup> The complete code of the ontology can be seen at [url](#).

## 4.2.2 DOLCE ontology

DOLCE (Descriptive Ontology for Linguistic and Cognitive Engineering) is a top-level (foundational) ontology[9]; this means that this ontology describes fundamental aspects of reality and should be used as a base for constructing an ontology about a particular domain of interest. For this reason DOLCE defines only the T-Box; the user will then expand the T-Box with specific classes and relations of interest, and lastly will populate the A-Box.

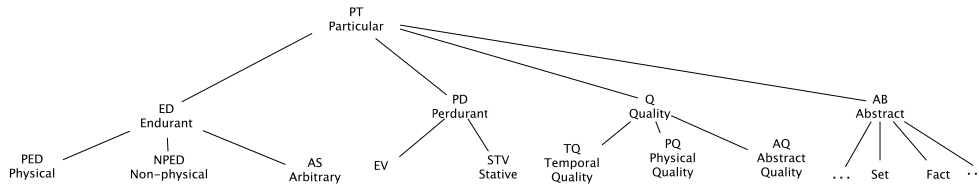


Figure 4.3: First layer of DOLCE taxonomy

**STRUCTURE OF DOLCE:** in DOLCE we can model the modification of objects during time; for this reason DOLCE distinguishes between endurants and perdurants. Endurants may acquire and lose properties and parts through time, perdurants are fixed in time[9]. With a simplification we can see endurants as the physical entities that are modified by the passing of time (like objects, animals, and people) and perdurants as events that, once they have passed, cannot be changed anymore (like a tennis match or a conference).

The relation connecting endurants and perdurants is called participation. A physical entity can be in time by participating in a perdurant, and perdurants happen in time by having endurants as participants[9].

Another important aspect of DOLCE is the way we attribute a property to an entity; this is done by using qualities, which are what can be perceived and measured. To do so we can assert that a certain entity has a specific quality and then, when it is possible, quantify that quality.

**IMPORTANCE OF DOLCE:** foundational ontologies can be useful in several fields, from conceptual modeling to natural language processing. DOLCE, today, is used in a variety of domains where it provides the general categories and relations needed to give a coherent view of reality[9].

## 4.3 REASONING ON ONTOLOGY

In 4.1.3 we have introduced the standard language to encode an ontology; in order to infer new information, starting from the one we already have, we need to better specify the semantics of OWL DL.

### 4.3.1 SROIQ DL

The semantics of OWL DL extends the semantics of the description logic (DL) SROIQ to provide support for datatypes and punning[10]. For con-

777 structs available both in OWL DL and in *SRIOQ* the semantics correspond  
 778 exactly.

779 Description logics allow the modeling of the domain of interest with three  
 780 kinds of entity: concepts, roles, and individual names. These entities cor-  
 781 respond to unary predicates, binary predicates, and constants in first-order  
 782 logic[6]. From the point of view of ontology and OWL, concepts are classes,  
 783 roles are relationships, and individual names are the individuals that can  
 784 belong to one or more classes.

785 *SRIOQ* is one of the most expressive description logics where we have  
 786 constructors for:

- 787 • transitive roles:  $\mathcal{S}$
- 788 • role inclusions, local reflexivity, universal role, symmetry, asymmetry,  
 789 role disjointness, reflexivity, and irreflexivity:  $\mathcal{R}$ ;
- 790 • nominals:  $\mathcal{O}$ ;
- 791 • inverse roles:  $\mathcal{I}$ ;
- 792 • qualified number restrictions:  $\mathcal{Q}$ .

793 For example, we can construct the ontology shown in figures 4.1 and 4.2  
 794 with a set of assertions like:

795 `person(selma)            married(jackie)            parent_of(marge, bart)`

796 Each of these statements is called an axiom and the set of all axioms consti-  
 797 tutes our KB.

#### 798 4.3.2 Interpretation of a knowledge base

799 An interpretation  $I$  consists of a domain  $\Delta^I$  and an interpretation function  $\cdot^I$   
 800 that maps:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{concept } A &\rightarrow A^I \subseteq \Delta^I \\ \text{role } R &\rightarrow R^I \subseteq \Delta^I \times \Delta^I \\ \text{named individual } a &\rightarrow a^I \in \Delta^I \end{aligned}$$

801 In other words  $I$  assigns a fixed meaning to all entities in the KB[6]. By  
 802 having a fixed meaning, we can say if an axiom  $\alpha$  holds in  $I$  or not; in the  
 803 first case we say that  $I$  satisfies  $\alpha$  and we write  $I \models \alpha$ .

804 If all axioms in an ontology are satisfied by  $I$  we say that  $I$  is a *model* of the  
 805 ontology. An ontology is consistent if it accepts at least one model.

806 A reasoner should at least be capable of saying if an ontology is consistent,  
 807 but we are also interested in querying knowledge to retrieve new informa-  
 808 tion.

809 **QUERY INTERPRETATION:** Considering a KB  $K$ , a query  $q$  consists of ax-  
 810 iom templates where *SRIOQ* axioms are composed of concept names, role  
 811 names, and individual names, but also of concept variables, role variables,  
 812 and individual variables. A solution for the query is an interpretation  $\mu$  that

allows us to rewrite all variables in  $q$  with names; we denote with  $\mu(q)$  the result of the substitution.

The evaluation of  $q$  over  $K$  is a set of solutions  $\mu$  with:[11]

$$\{ \mu | K \cup \mu(q) \text{ is a } \mathcal{SROIQ} \text{ knowledge base and } K \models \mu(q) \}$$

In other words  $\mu$  binds all free variables of  $q$  to names present in  $K$ [11].

A naive approach to find the solution to a query is to simply test for each possible solution mapping  $\mu$ , if  $K \models \mu(q)$ ; however, in the worst case, the number of mappings that have to be tested is exponential in the number of variables in the query[11].

### 4.3.3 Complexity of reasoning

Since presenting an actual algorithm for reasoning on ontologies is out of the scope of this work, we only give some hints about the reasons for the complexity and then present the theoretical results.

It is easy to convince oneself that the more axioms there are in an ontology, the fewer interpretations exist that satisfy all axioms. On the other hand, if an ontology has fewer models, the more axioms hold in all of them and the more logical consequences follow from the ontology.

We can rephrase these two statements by saying that the semantics of description logics are *monotonic*: the more knowledge we embed in an ontology, the more results it returns[6].

A more formal view is given in [12], where two *sources of complexity* are identified:

- OR-branching: the presence of disjunctive constructors;
- AND-branching: the presence of qualified existential and universal quantifiers.

The AND-branching is responsible for the exponential size of a single interpretation, and the OR-branching is responsible for the exponential number of different interpretations.

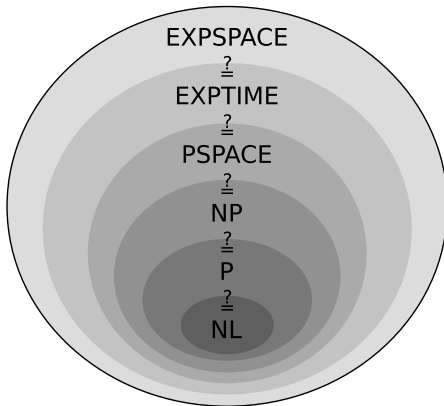


Figure 4.4: Complexity classes

To discuss the complexity of reasoning we take into account the description logic  $\mathcal{ALC}$ ; this DL is a restriction of  $\mathcal{SROIQ}$ [6], so its complexity is a lower bound for  $\mathcal{SROIQ}$ . It is possible to prove the PSpace-hardness of satisfiability in  $\mathcal{ALC}$ [12], therefore also  $\mathcal{SROIQ}$  DL is at least PSpace-hard.

This result shows that, unless  $\text{PSpace} = \text{PTime}$ , the exponential time complexity of any algorithm that makes inference on an ontology cannot be improved.

For those interested in some numerical examples to better understand what this class of complexity means in a real context, [13] presents the reasoner HermiT and evaluates its performance on some real ontologies.

## 858 4.4 CONCLUSIONS

859 In this chapter we have explained what an ontology is and we have moti-  
860 vated the interest in this field. We have shown both theoretically and with  
861 examples what can be expressed in an ontology and what cannot. We have  
862 formally defined what the interpretation of a KB is and showed what a query  
863 and its results are.

864 Lastly, we have characterized the complexity of reasoning on ontologies.  
865 This complexity is what motivated us to search for other paradigms to infer  
866 new knowledge starting from an ontology. In the next chapters we will build  
867 the tools necessary to achieve this goal.

868

## Part II

869

## TOOLS





870

## 5

## ENVIRONMENT SETUP

871 In this chapter we describe the environment, libraries and tools we use to  
872 execute our tests.

873 In the following sections we install the SDKs to develop and interact with  
874 quantum computers from IBM and D-Wave. We also present two other use-  
875 ful tools to easily write optimization problems.

## 876 5.1 PYTHON ENVIRONMENT

877 The language used to interface with quantum computers is usually Python.  
878 In this section we create a virtual environment in Python in order to commu-  
879 nicate with the IBM quantum computer and the D-Wave quantum computer.

880 For our tests we manage Python environments with conda. Let's start by  
881 creating the virtual environment named `quantum` and activating it with:

```
1 conda create --name quantum python=3.12 pip
2 conda activate quantum
```

882 For our tests and to follow the various examples presented both by IBM and  
883 D-Wave, it is also useful to be able to run a Jupyter notebook. We can install  
884 Jupyter with:

```
1 pip install jupyter
```

## 885 5.2 IBM QISKIT

886 To program a gate-based architecture and to access IBM quantum computers  
887 we use the *Qiskit* software stack. The name Qiskit is a general term referring  
888 to a collection of softwares for executing programs on quantum computers.

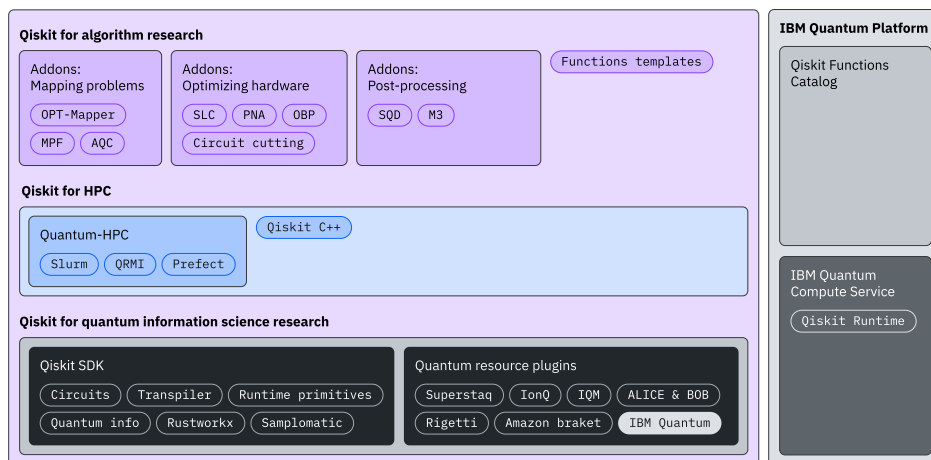


Figure 5.1: Qiskit software stack

The core components are *Qiskit SDK* and *Qiskit Runtime*. The first one is completely open source and allows the developer to define his circuit; the second one is a cloud-based service for executing quantum computations on IBM quantum computers.

### 5.2.1 Hello World

Following the IBM documentation<sup>1</sup> we can install the SDK and the Runtime with:

```
1 pip install qiskit matplotlib qiskit[visualization]
2 pip install qiskit-ibm-runtime
3 pip install qiskit-aer
```

Line 3 installs Aer, which is a high-performance simulator for quantum circuits written in Qiskit. Aer includes realistic noise models, and we will use it later to test our circuit.

Sometimes the Qiskit stack suffers from incompatibilities between the various software components that compose the environment. At the moment of writing, the latest packages seem to work without any problem. For our tests we will use `qiskit: 2.2.3`, `qiskit-ibm-runtime: 0.43.1` and `qiskit-aer: 0.17.2`.

If the setup is successful we are now able to run a small test to build a Bell state (two entangled qubits). The following code assembles the gates, shows the final circuit and uses a sampler to simulate on the CPU the result of 1024 runs of the program.

```
1 from qiskit import QuantumCircuit
2 from qiskit.primitives import StatevectorSampler
3
4 qc = QuantumCircuit(2)
5 qc.h(0)
6 qc.cx(0, 1)
7 qc.measure_all()
8
9 sampler = StatevectorSampler()
10 result = sampler.run([qc], shots=1024).result()
11 print(result[0].data.meas.get_counts())
12 qc.draw("mpl")
```

Listing 2: Building Bell state

### 5.2.2 Transpilation

Each Quantum Processing Unit (QPU) has a specific topology. We need to rewrite our quantum circuit in order to match the topology of the selected device on which we want to run our program. This phase of rewriting, followed by an optimization, is called transpilation.

<sup>1</sup> <https://quantum.cloud.ibm.com/docs/en/guides/install-qiskit>

913 Considering, for now, a fake hardware (so we do not need an API key)  
 914 we can transpile the quantum circuit `qc`, from the code above, to match the  
 915 topology of a specific QPU:

```

1  from qiskit_ibm_runtime.fake_provider import FakeWashingtonV2
2  from qiskit.transpiler import generate_preset_pass_manager
3
4  backend = FakeWashingtonV2()
5  pass_manager = generate_preset_pass_manager(backend=backend)
6
7  transpiled = pass_manager.run(qc)
8  transpiled.draw("mpl")

```

Listing 3: Transpilation

916 The following picture shows (5.2a) the quantum circuit that builds a Bell  
 917 state, and (5.2b) the transpiled version where the Hadamard gate is replaced  
 to match the actual topology of the QPU.

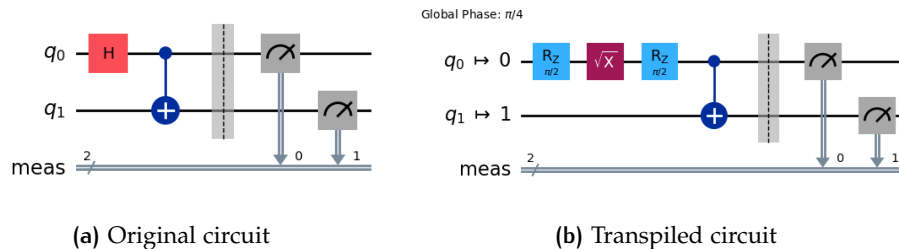


Figure 5.2: Transpilation example

918

### 919 5.2.3 Execution

920 To test our transpiled circuit we use Aer, which allows us to simulate also  
 921 the noise of real quantum hardware. We can execute our program with:

```

1  from qiskit_aer.primitives import SamplerV2
2
3  sampler = SamplerV2.from_backend(backend)
4  job = sampler.run([transpiled], shots=1024)
5  result = job.result()
6  print(f"counts for Bell circuit : {result[0].data.meas.get_counts()}")

```

Listing 4: Simulated execution

922 If we look at the results of the execution we can observe that some answers  
 923 present non-entangled qubits; this is caused by the (simulated) noise of the  
 924 quantum device. A typical output of the execution could be:

```

1  > counts for Bell circuit : {'00': 504, '11': 503, '01': 10, '10': 7}

```

925 Where states `01` and `10` should not be present in an ideal execution with no  
 926 errors.

## 5.2.4 A complete example on real hardware

## 5.3 D-WAVE OCEAN

To define an optimization problem that can be solved on a D-Wave quantum computer we use the Ocean software stack. Ocean also allows us to interact with D-Wave hardware, submit a problem, and simulate the execution on a classical CPU.

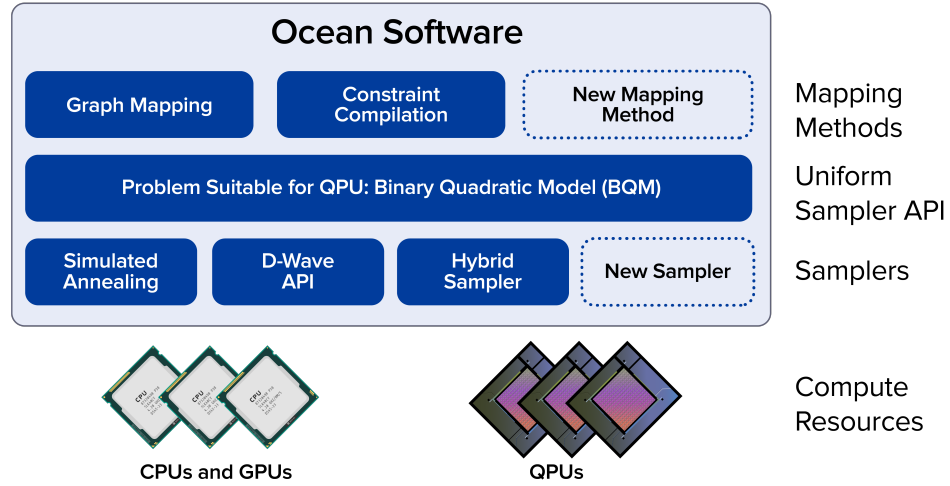


Figure 5.3: Ocean software stack

All tools that implement the steps needed to solve your problem on a CPU, a D-Wave quantum computer, or a quantum-classical hybrid solver can be installed with:

```
1 pip install dwave-ocean-sdk
```

After the installation, running the command `dwave setup` will start an interactive prompt that guides us through a full setup. During the setup it is also possible to add an API token or connect to the D-Wave account to import a key directly to use the quantum hardware.

### 5.3.1 Hello World

To present a simple optimization program we consider the minimum vertex cover (MVC) problem. Given a graph  $G = (V, E)$ , the problem asks to find a subset  $V' \subseteq V$  such that, for each edge  $\{u, v\} \in E$ , at least one of  $u$  or  $v$  belongs to  $V'$ , and the number of nodes in  $V'$  ( $|V'|$ ) is the lowest possible.

The reduction from MVC to an Ising formulation is well known. The cost function that we want to minimize can be expressed by:

$$\text{cost} = \sum_{i=1}^{|V|} v_i + 2 \cdot \sum_{\{i,j\} \in E} (1 - v_i - v_j + v_i v_j)$$

where  $v_i \in \{-1, 1\}$  and  $v_i = 1$  means that  $v_i \in V'$ , otherwise  $v_i = -1$ .

Like all problems in Ising form we can express the cost as a symmetric matrix, so our function becomes

$$\text{cost} = \mathbf{v}^T \times \mathbf{M} \times \mathbf{v}$$

where  $\mathbf{v}$  is the vector containing the binary variables  $v_i$ .

The figure shows an example graph (5.4a) and the corresponding matrix (5.4b) expressing the cost function.

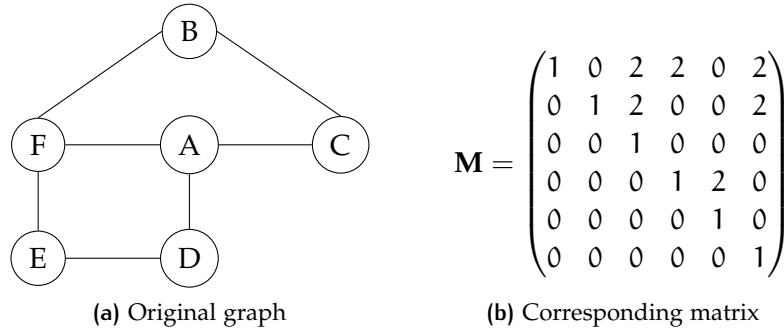


Figure 5.4: Ising formulation

The following code presents a possible implementation of the Ising model described above. We have defined two dictionaries to store the matrix coefficients. The last line of code finds ten possible answers to the problem using the simulated annealing function implemented by D-Wave.

```
1 from dwave.samplers import SimulatedAnnealingSampler
2 linear = {'A': 1, 'B': 1, 'C': 1, 'D': 1, 'E': 1, 'F': 1}
3 quadratic = {('B', 'C'): 2, ('B', 'F'): 2, ('C', 'A'): 2, ('D', 'A'): 2,
4             ↪ ('E', 'D'): 2, ('E', 'F'): 2, ('F', 'A'): 2}
5 sampler = SimulatedAnnealingSampler()
6 result = sampler.sample_ising(linear, quadratic, num_reads=10)
```

Listing 5: Ising example

If we print the results with `print(result.aggregate())` we can observe something similar to this:

```
1  A B C D E F energy num_oc.
2  0 -1 -1 +1 +1 -1 +1 -14.0      6
3  1 +1 +1 -1 -1 +1 -1 -14.0      4
4  ['SPIN', 2 rows, 10 samples, 6 variables]
```

The two different results represent the two correct answers to our particular instance of the MVC problem.

### 5.3.2 Example on real hardware

### 5.3.3 Minor embedding

## 5.4 PYQUBO AND QUBOVERT

In listing 5 we have manually built the matrix representing the function that we want to minimize. It can be useful to have some tools that allow us to

work at a higher level, defining cost functions like ?? that we defined in the section about quantum annealing (??).

Considering again the MVC problem, the objective function tends to minimize the number of nodes in our subset, while the penalty increases the cost if we leave out some edges. This interpretation allows us to transform the Ising model into the more familiar —from the point of view of a computer scientist— QUBO model, where all variables  $x_i \in \{0, 1\}$ . Let's see how PyQUBO and qubover help us in this task.

#### 5.4.1 PyQUBO

Reading from the documentation on the PyQUBO site<sup>2</sup>, PyQUBO allows us to create QUBOs or Ising models from flexible mathematical expressions easily. Some of the features of PyQUBO are:

- Python based (C++ backend);
- Fully integrated with Ocean SDK;
- Automatic validation of constraints;
- Placeholder for parameter tuning.

We can install PyQUBO with `pip install pyqubo` and rewrite our MVC problem by defining the Hamiltonian that we want to minimize.

```

1  from pyqubo import Binary, Placeholder, Constraint
2  from dwave.samplers import SimulatedAnnealingSampler
3
4  A, B, C, D, E, F = Binary('A'), Binary('B'), Binary('C'), Binary('D'),
   ↪ Binary('E'), Binary('F')
5
6  H_objective = (A + B + C + D + E + F)
7  H_penalty = Constraint(((1 - A - C + A*C) + \
8  (1 - A - D + A*D) + \
9  (1 - A - F + A*F) + \
10 (1 - B - C + B*C) + \
11 (1 - B - F + B*F) + \
12 (1 - D - E + D*E) + \
13 (1 - E - F + E*F)) ,label='cnstr0')
14
15 L = Placeholder('L')
16 H = H_objective + L*H_penalty
17 H_internal = H.compile()
18 bqmc = H_internal.to_bqm(feed_dict={'L': 2})
19
20 sampler = SimulatedAnnealingSampler()
21 result = sampler.sample(bqmc, num_reads=10)

```

Listing 6: Rewriting MVC with pyQUBO

<sup>2</sup> <https://pyqubo.readthedocs.io/en/latest/>

Listing 6 presents a possible re-implementation of listing 5, where we also see how PyQUBO interfaces with the Ocean SDK (line 17), and how to create (lines 14–16) and instantiate (line 17) a parametric Hamiltonian.

## 5.4.2 qubovert

As written in the documentation<sup>3</sup>, qubovert is the one-stop package for formulating, simulating, and solving problems in boolean and spin form. Using our nomenclature, boolean and spin form are respectively QUBO and Ising form.

Qubovert allows us to define various types of optimization problems that can be solved by brute force, with qubovert’s simulated annealing, or with D-Wave’s solver. Models defined in qubovert are:

- QUBO: Quadratic Unconstrained Boolean Optimization;
- QUSO: Quadratic Unconstrained Spin Optimization (Ising model);
- PUBO: Polynomial Unconstrained Boolean Optimization;
- PUSO: Polynomial Unconstrained Spin Optimization;
- PCBO: Polynomial Constrained Boolean Optimization;
- PCSO: Polynomial Constrained Spin Optimization.

In addition to generic models, qubovert has a library of famous NP-complete problems mapped to QUBO and Ising forms.

```
1 from qubovert import boolean_var
2 from dwave.samplers import SimulatedAnnealingSampler
3
4 A, B, C, D, E, F = boolean_var('A'), boolean_var('B'),
   ↪ boolean_var('C'), boolean_var('D'), boolean_var('E'),
   ↪ boolean_var('F')
5
6 model = A + B + C + D + E + F
7 model.add_constraint_OR(A, C, lam=2)
8 model.add_constraint_OR(A, D, lam=2)
9 model.add_constraint_OR(A, F, lam=2)
10 model.add_constraint_OR(B, C, lam=2)
11 model.add_constraint_OR(B, F, lam=2)
12 model.add_constraint_OR(D, E, lam=2)
13 model.add_constraint_OR(E, F, lam=2)
14
15 qubo = model.to_qubo()
16 dwave_qubo = qubo.Q
17
18 sampler = SimulatedAnnealingSampler()
19 result = sampler.sample_qubo(dwave_qubo, num_reads=10)
```

Listing 7: Rewriting MVC with qubovert

<sup>3</sup> <https://qubovert.readthedocs.io/en/latest/index.html>

1003 Listing 7 shows a possible implementation of the MVC problem using the  
1004 tools provided by qubover. Qubover allows us to express our problem as a  
1005 PCBO; we use this formulation to express constraints in a more natural way.  
1006 In our example we ensure that each edge is covered simply by enforcing that  
1007 at least one of the nodes linked by the edge is present in the solution. This  
1008 constraint is repeated for each edge in the graph (lines 7–13). To specify the  
1009 Lagrange multiplier (equation ??) we use the keyword `lam`.

1010 Qubover, like PyQUBO, can interface with the Ocean SDK, transforming  
1011 a PCBO problem into a QUBO problem (line 15) and then rewriting it in the  
1012 format accepted by the D-Wave solver (or sampler).

## 1013 5.5 CONCLUSION

1014 In this chapter we have set up an environment to run our future experiments  
1015 and tests. We have also shown some small examples to present the main  
1016 characteristics and test the tools we will use in our work.

1017 Following this setup allows anyone to recreate exactly the same configura-  
1018 tion we use, avoiding (for what we know and test) incompatibilities between  
1019 Python packages.



QA-Prolog is a tool that allows to write a program in a logic programming language and execute it on a quantum annealer, QA-Prolog also retrieve the results returned by the quantum annealer and present them in a natural and comprehensible way.

In this chapter we describe the pipeline of transformations that permit to start from a Prolog code and end with a Hamiltonian  $H_f$  like as we have described in ??.

We will show the changes we have made to the original QA-Prolog code to restore the compatibility with the modern framework to interface with the D-Wave quantum annealer and to support the latest version of the library used in the project.

The chapter end with some pointer to related works that evaluate the project (the whole pipeline or only some steps), expand the compatibility of the pipeline to other language, or are in some way similar to this work.

## 6.1 THE PROJECT

QA-Prolog is a project developed by Scott Pakin<sup>1</sup> in 2017 – 2019, it starts from the question: “Can one express constraint logic programming in the form accepted by quantum-annealing hardware?”[14].

The hope is that even if today we live in the NISQ<sup>2</sup> era of quantum computer quantum annealer are more easily scalable than quantum gate based computer[15] and QA-Prolog could improve Prolog program execution by replacing backtracking with fully parallel annealing into a solution state[16].

### 6.1.1 Reason

As we have shown in ?? and ?? programming a quantum computer is not an easy task. We express our algorithm in a very low level way.

On quantum annealer we have to define a cost function, without constraint (that must be transformed in a penalty function), even if there are libraries that allow us to express these functions in an easier way we need at least find a QUBO representation of our problem.

Even worse is the situation on quantum gate based computer. The programmer has to build a quantum circuit gate by gate, an approach similar to what is done with FPGAs (Field Programmable Gate Arrays)[17], we can indeed see a strong analogy:

<sup>1</sup> Los Alamos National Laboratory: [pakin@lanl.gov](mailto:pakin@lanl.gov).

<sup>2</sup> Noisy intermediate-scale quantum computing.

- 1054 • programmable logic blocks which implement logic functions → quantum gate;  
1055
- 1056 • programmable routing that connects these logic functions → possibility  
1057 to define the order of gates;
- 1058 • I/O blocks connected to logic → input *qubit* and output *qubit* that we  
1059 can measure.

1060 FPGAs are components that the majority of computer scientist are not used  
1061 to and probably is out of the interest for a programmer. In the same way the  
1062 hardness of programming a quantum computer could be a big distinctive-  
1063 ness to attract new researcher in the field.

1064 In conclusion even if there exist some sort of abstraction with “high level  
1065 gates” that wrap multiple low level gates in useful pattern and exist both for  
1066 quantum gate based computer and quantum annealer some template of well  
1067 known problem that need only a fine-tuning to be useful for a specific prob-  
1068 lem programming a quantum computer is, today, very near to the machine  
1069 language.

1070 The goal of QA-Prolog is to fill the gap between the high level description  
1071 with a powerful logic programming language and the promising quantum  
1072 computers.

### 1073 6.1.2 Prolog

1074 We can see QA-Prolog as a compiler from Prolog to  $\mathbf{H}_f$  where the ground  
1075 state of  $\mathbf{H}_f$  is the solution of our Prolog program. Before starting with the  
1076 compilation process is useful to understand the main characteristics of Pro-  
1077 log, because it is not an imperative programming language like c or java, but  
1078 a declarative one. For more information about Prolog lecture of [18] and [19]  
1079 are recommended.

1080 In Prolog we do not specify step by step an algorithm that resolve our  
1081 problem; instead we describe the formal relationship between the object in  
1082 our problem and what relation has to be true in our solution[18].

1083 Programming in Prolog consist in:

- 1084 • listing *facts* about objects and relationship between objects;
- 1085 • specify *rules* to derive new facts from the ones already asserted;
- 1086 • asking question (*query*) about objects and their relationship.

1087 From these characteristics we can understand what means “declarative”:  
1088 the program is a list of statements about our problem (our domain of inter-  
1089 est); the relation between a Prolog program and an ontology is very strict,  
1090 in Prolog we encode a knowledge base made of facts and rules, in ?? we  
1091 can see a complete example of rewriting from an OWL ontology in a Prolog  
1092 KB. Moreover, Prolog is a logic programming language, this means that the  
1093 core of programming is not tell to the computer what to do, but telling it  
1094 what is true and asking it to try and draw conclusion[18]. The idea behind  
1095 logic programming are very interesting, for more details [20] and [21] are  
1096 recommended.

1097 **EXAMPLE:** In the following listing, adapted from [19], we present a basic Prolog program in order to show the syntax and the usage of query.

```

1  sings(mia).
2  listens2Music(yolanda).
3  party.
4
5  dance(yolanda):- listens2Music(yolanda).
6  happy(yolanda):- dance(yolanda).
7  happy(mia):- sings(mia).
8
9  smile(X) :- happy(X).
```

Listing 8: text

1098  
1099 The first three lines are facts, we are asserting that Yolanda is listening  
1100 to music, Mia is singing and there is a party. Other lines are rules, we can  
1101 identify rules by the :- sign that divides the *head* of the rule, on the left, from  
1102 the *body* on the right. The head of a rule is true if the body is true.

1103 For example rule at line seven can be read as: “If Mia is singing, therefore  
1104 Mia is happy”. Line nine shows the usage of variable, variables starts with  
1105 uppercase letter and are placeholders for information; we can read this rule  
1106 as “if someone is happy, he smiles”.

1107 We can query our KB asking for example if Yolanda is happy. In SWI-  
1108 Prolog[22] we can interact with the interpreter and the query we evaluate is:  
1109 ?- happy(yolanda). (the full stop is part of the syntax and tell to the inter-  
1110 preter that the query is complete). Prolog will answer *yes.*, this is because  
1111 Yolanda is listening to music, but if she is listening to music she dances end  
1112 if she dances she is happy.

1113 For analogous reasoning it should be clear why the result of ?- smile(X). is  
1114 X = mia; X = yolanda. where ; means logical distinction: *or*.

### 1115 6.1.3 Feature of QA-Prolog

1116 QA-Prolog doesn’t support all the feature of Prolog, but enough to make it  
1117 possible basic logic programming[14].

1118 QA Prolog supports atoms and positive integers but not floating point  
1119 numbers, strings or lists. It supports arithmetic and relational operation  
1120 and rules can reference other rules but not recursively. QA-Prolog supports  
1121 unification, backtracking, and predicates comprising multiple clauses[14].

1122 QA-Prolog support also some feature not presents in the basic version of  
1123 Prolog, In particular, operations can be performed on variables even before  
1124 they are ground[14], this mean that QA-Prolog is more powerful in manipu-  
1125 lating free variables.

## 1126 6.2 PIPELINE

1127 We are now ready to describe the pipeline of transformation that bring us  
1128 from a Prolog program to a Hamiltonian  $H_f$ .

The chain of transformations is shown in Figure 6.1, where the last step (in orange) is the quantum annealer capable of finding the ground state of  $H_f$ . In purple we can see the various file format through the pipeline and in yellow the software that make the rewrite. Some of these software are made ad hoc for the QA-Prolog pipeline other are also used in very different field.

From a high level point of view the pipeline rewrite the initial knowledge base expressed in Prolog in different objects. The logical meaning of the entities we will build during the pipeline are:

1. Prolog program (KB);
2. High level digital circuit in Verilog;
3. Low level digital circuit in EDIF;
4. Symbolic Hamiltonian;
5. Physical Hamiltonian.

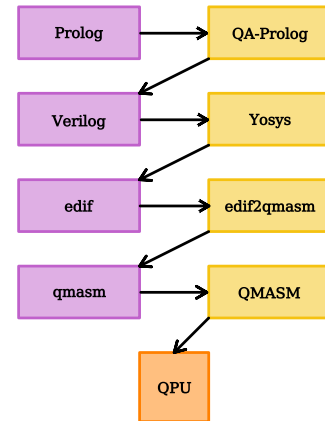


Figure 6.1: QA-Prolog pipeline

Let's start analyzing the pipeline starting from the last step, the one nearest to the QPU.

### 6.2.1 QMASM

QMASM is a quantum macro assembler[23], it processes a symbolic Hamiltonian and assemble a physical Hamiltonian that can be immediately embedded on a D-Wave quantum annealer. It is developed by Scott Pakin with the goal of filling a gap in tools for creation of D-Wave programs. QMASM is an abstraction layer that allows the programmer to not care about manually setting specific point weights and coupler strengths on the physical topology.

This software can be considered an assembler in the sense that maps a symbolic representation of the operation (assembly language) to the machine language. QMASM is not only an assembler, but extends its functionalities by including macro: named blocks of assembly language, parameterized, that a program can instantiate multiple times[23].

**FEATURE:** QMASM provides a number of features to simplify low-level D-Wave programming[23], but not only, we can also use QMASM to assemble a physical Hamiltonian that we can later manipulate or solve both using classical method or other quantum system.

Some of the most useful and interesting features of QMASM are:

- *qubits* are referenced symbolically, not numerically, both in the source code and when QMASM reports execution results;
- *qubits* can be pinned to `true` or `false`;
- *qubit* patterns can be encapsulated into macros and instantiated repeatedly;

- groups of macros can be encapsulated into libraries and reused across multiple programs;
- QMASM can automatically exclude from the results the solution known to be incorrect;
- the programmer can select the “interesting” *qubits* and these are the only ones reported in the results.

Thanks to this set of features QMASM is already a useful abstraction layer that simplifies the development of programs that target an annealer classical or quantum.

**EXAMPLE:** Let’s consider an example that shows the potentiality of QMASM and that is useful also for the following steps of the pipeline. The satisfiability problem is well known to be an NP-complete problem [bibid], so is a good candidate for our example. We take in account the simple formula:

$$y = x_1 \wedge \neg(x_2 \vee x_3) \quad (6.1)$$

Thanks to QMASM we can define macros for every logical operator needed to represent the formula and then assemble the final formula calling the macros.

```
# Y = A AND B
!begin_macro AND
!assert Y = A&B
A -0.5
B -0.5
Y 1

A B 0.5
A Y -1
B Y -1
!end_macro AND
```

```
# Y = NOT A
!begin_macro NOT
!assert Y = !A
A Y 1.0
!end_macro NOT
```

```
# Y = A OR B
!begin_macro OR
!assert Y = A|B
A 0.5
B 0.5
Y -1

A B 0.5
A Y -1
B Y -1
!end_macro OR
```

Listing 9: Logical operators

## 6.3 UPDATE TO THE PROJECT

## 6.4 RELATED WORK

## 6.5 CONCLUSION



Part III

EXPERIMENTS





# 7 | A QUANTUM ONTOLOGY

1191 7.1 ONTOLOGY STRUCTURE

1192 7.2 PROLOG VERSION

1193 7.3 INFERENCE ON THE ONTOLOGY

1194 7.4 CONCLUSION



## 1195 8 | QAOA

### 1196 8.1 QAOA

### 1197 8.2 FROM QUBO TO PAULI OPERATOR

### 1198 8.3 EXPERIMENTS

### 1199 8.4 CONCLUSION







## 1201 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1202 [1] Barry Smith. "Ontology". In: (2012).
- 1203 [2] Gian Piero Zarri. "Ontologies and Their Practical Implementation". In:  
1204 *Encyclopedia of Database Technologies and Applications*. IGI Global Scien-  
1205 tific Publishing, 2005, pp. 438–449.
- 1206 [3] Thomas R Gruber. "A translation approach to portable ontology spec-  
1207 ifications". In: *Knowledge acquisition* 5.2 (1993), pp. 199–220.
- 1208 [4] Marco Fossati, Emilio Dorigatti, and Claudio Giuliano. "N-ary relation  
1209 extraction for simultaneous T-Box and A-Box knowledge base augmen-  
1210 tation". In: *Semantic Web* 9.4 (2018), pp. 413–439.
- 1211 [5] Giuseppe De Giacomo, Maurizio Lenzerini, et al. "TBox and ABox  
1212 reasoning in expressive description logics." In: *KR* 96.316–327 (1996),  
1213 p. 10.
- 1214 [6] Markus Krötzsch, Frantisek Simancik, and Ian Horrocks. "A descrip-  
1215 tion logic primer". In: *arXiv preprint arXiv:1201.4089* (2012).
- 1216 [7] Pascal Hitzler et al. *OWL 2 Web Ontology Language Primer (Second Edi-  
1217 tion)*. W3C Recommendation REC-owl2-primer-20121211. World Wide  
1218 Web Consortium (W3C), Dec. 2012. URL: [https://www.w3.org/TR/  
1219 2012/REC-owl2-primer-20121211/](https://www.w3.org/TR/2012/REC-owl2-primer-20121211/).
- 1220 [8] Pascal Hitzler. "A review of the semantic web field". In: *Communica-  
1221 tions of the ACM* 64.2 (2021), pp. 76–83.
- 1222 [9] Stefano Borgo et al. "DOLCE: A descriptive ontology for linguistic and  
1223 cognitive engineering". In: *Applied ontology* 17.1 (2022), pp. 45–69.
- 1224 [10] Boris Motik, Peter F. Patel-Schneider, and Bernardo Cuenca Grau. *OWL  
1225 2 Web Ontology Language: Direct Semantics (Second Edition)*. W3C Rec-  
1226 ommendation REC-owl2-direct-semantics-20121211. World Wide Web  
1227 Consortium (W3C), Dec. 2012. URL: [https://www.w3.org/TR/2012/  
1228 REC-owl2-direct-semantics-20121211/](https://www.w3.org/TR/2012/REC-owl2-direct-semantics-20121211/).
- 1229 [11] Ilianna Kollia, Birte Glimm, and Ian Horrocks. "Query answering over  
1230 SROIQ knowledge bases with SPARQL". In: *Proceedings of the 24th In-  
1231 ternational Workshop on Description Logics, Barcelona, Spain*. 2011, pp. 13–  
1232 16.
- 1233 [12] Franz Baader. *The description logic handbook: Theory, implementation and  
1234 applications*. Cambridge university press, 2003.
- 1235 [13] Birte Glimm et al. "HermiT: an OWL 2 reasoner". In: *Journal of auto-  
1236 mated reasoning* 53.3 (2014), pp. 245–269. URL: [http://www.hermit-  
1237 reasoner.com/](http://www.hermit-reasoner.com/).
- 1238 [14] Scott Pakin. "Performing fully parallel constraint logic programming  
1239 on a quantum annealer". In: *Theory and Practice of Logic Programming*  
1240 18.5-6 (2018), pp. 928–949.

- 1241 [15] William M Kaminsky, Seth Lloyd, and Terry P Orlando. “Scalable su-  
1242 perconducting architecture for adiabatic quantum computation”. In:  
1243 *arXiv preprint quant-ph/0403090* (2004).
- 1244 [16] Los Alamos National Laboratory / Scott Pakin. *QA-Prolog: Quantum*  
1245 *Annealing Prolog*. Accessed: 2026-02-13, GitHub repository. URL: <https://github.com/lanl/QA-Prolog>.  
1246
- 1247 [17] Umer Farooq, Zied Marrakchi, and Habib Mehrez. “FPGA architec-  
1248 tures: An overview”. In: *Tree-Based Heterogeneous FPGA Architectures:*  
1249 *Application Specific Exploration and Optimization* (2012), pp. 7–48.
- 1250 [18] William F Clocksin and Christopher S Mellish. *Programming in PRO-*  
1251 *LOG*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2003.
- 1252 [19] Patrick Blackburn, Johan Bos, and Kristina Striegnitz. *Learn Prolog Now!*  
1253 *– Free Online Version*. Accessed: 2026-02-13. 2012. URL: <https://lpn.swi-prolog.org/lpnpage.php?pageid=online>.  
1254
- 1255 [20] Robert Kowalski and Steve Smoliar. “Logic for problem solving”. In:  
1256 *ACM SIGSOFT Software Engineering Notes* 7.2 (1982), pp. 61–62.
- 1257 [21] Christopher John Hogger. *Introduction to logic programming*. Academic  
1258 Press Professional, Inc., 1984.
- 1259 [22] Jan Wielemaker et al. “SWI-Prolog”. In: *Theory and Practice of Logic*  
1260 *Programming* 12.1-2 (2012), pp. 67–96. ISSN: 1471-0684.
- 1261 [23] Scott Pakin. “A quantum macro assembler”. In: *2016 IEEE High Perfor-*  
1262 *mance Extreme Computing Conference (HPEC)*. IEEE. 2016, pp. 1–8.