Simulating and Mitigating Crosstalk in a Multi-qubit System

Sungmo Koo[1], Guizhong (Harry) Luo[2], Nicolas Leeder[3], Donggyun Park[1]

[1] Kyung Hee University, South Korea [2]UW-Madison, USA [3]University of Florida, USA

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Abstract

Crosstalk, where control pulses on one qubit unintentionally affect neighbors, is a significant barrier to high-fidelity quantum operations. This report simulates a three-qubit system to demonstrate and mitigate crosstalk. We apply a control pulse to a central qubit, which induces unwanted dynamics in its neighbors. To compensate, we introduce a synchronous, counter-phased pulse—phenomenologically representing a tunable coupler's action—designed to destructively interfere with the crosstalk. Numerical solutions to the Schrödinger equation show this compensation effectively suppresses unintended state transitions in neighboring qubits without affecting the target operation. These results underscore the potential of such real-time cancellation for scalable, high-precision multi-qubit control.

1 Introduction and Background

Crosstalk, the unintended coupling of control fields to neighboring qubits, presents a primary challenge in scaling quantum processors and achieving high-fidelity operations [1, 2]. Active cancellation of these parasitic interactions is crucial.

This report simulates a real-time compensation scheme to nullify crosstalk. Our method involves generating a corrective interaction, which can be physically realized by mechanisms like tunable couplers, activated synchronously with the main gate operation [3]. This corrective pulse is engineered to be equal in magnitude but opposite in phase to the crosstalk field, creating destructive interference that cancels the unwanted coupling.

Our simulations demonstrate that this technique effectively eliminates unintended operations on neighboring qubits, significantly improving gate fidelity. This investigation highlights a crucial technique for engineering the stable and scalable control architectures required for fault-tolerant quantum computing [2].

2 Computational Details

2.1 An Isolated Three-Qubit System Simulation with Crosstalk

We simulate the crosstalk process in an isolated three-qubit system, where the central qubit is subjected to an external control pulse. The dynamics are governed by the time-dependent Schrödinger equation, with the reduced Planck constant $\hbar = 1$.

The system's state is represented by a vector $|\psi(t)\rangle$ in the $2^3 = 8$-dimensional Hilbert space $\mathcal{H} = \mathcal{H}_0 \otimes \mathcal{H}_1 \otimes \mathcal{H}_2$. It is initialized in the ground state:

$$|\psi(0)\rangle = |0\rangle_0 \otimes |0\rangle_1 \otimes |0\rangle_2 \equiv |000\rangle.$$

The total Hamiltonian $H(t)$ comprises a static drift component (H_{drift}) and a time-dependent drive component ($H_{\text{drive}}(t)$) [4]:

$$H(t) = H_{\text{drift}} + H_{\text{drive}}(t) \tag{1}$$

H_{drift} describes the static energy of individual qubits, each with frequency ω_q:

$$H_{\text{drift}} = -\frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=0}^{2} \omega_q \, \sigma_z^{(i)},$$

where $\sigma_z^{(i)}$ is the Pauli-Z operator on the i-th qubit.

The drive component $H_{\text{drive}}(t)$ models the external control pulse and the resulting crosstalk [1, 2]. It is modulated by a Gaussian envelope $f(t)$ centered at time t_0 with standard deviation τ:

$$f(t) = \exp\left(-\frac{(t-t_0)^2}{2\tau^2}\right).$$

$H_{\text{drive}}(t)$ consists of two parts:

- **Control (H_{control}):** A resonant drive with Rabi frequency Ω_c applied to the central qubit ($i = 1$) for a gate operation [3]:
$$H_{\text{control}} = \Omega_c\, \sigma_x^{(1)}.$$
- **Crosstalk ($H_{\text{crosstalk}}$):** An unwanted transverse coupling with strength J_{coupling} linking the driven qubit to its neighbors [1]:
$$H_{\text{crosstalk}} = J_{\text{coupling}}\left(\sigma_x^{(0)}\sigma_x^{(1)} + \sigma_x^{(1)}\sigma_x^{(2)}\right).$$

Thus, the total Hamiltonian for the uncompensated system is:

$$\boxed{H(t) = -\frac{1}{2}\sum_{i=0}^{2}\omega_q\sigma_z^{(i)} + \left(\Omega_c\sigma_x^{(1)} + J_{\text{coupling}}(\sigma_x^{(0)}\sigma_x^{(1)} + \sigma_x^{(1)}\sigma_x^{(2)})\right) f(t)} \tag{2}$$

The evolution of the state vector $|\psi(t)\rangle$ is determined by the time-dependent Schrödinger equation:

$$i\frac{d}{dt}|\psi(t)\rangle = H(t)|\psi(t)\rangle.$$

This equation is solved numerically using the QuTiP framework [5]. We quantify the evolution by computing the expectation value of the Pauli-Z operator for each qubit, $\langle\sigma_z^{(i)}\rangle(t) = \langle\psi(t)|\sigma_z^{(i)}|\psi(t)\rangle$, which measures the population difference between states $|0\rangle$ and $|1\rangle$.

2.2 Mitigating Crosstalk using Compensation

To mitigate crosstalk, we introduce a compensation Hamiltonian, $H_{\text{comp}}(t)$. This approach is *phenomenological*, modeling the desired effect of a counter-acting interaction, which can be physically implemented using *tunable couplers* that dynamically generate a counter-acting field.

The compensation Hamiltonian, $H_{\text{comp}}(t)$, is designed to precisely cancel $H_{\text{crosstalk}}$. Phenomenologically, it is defined with an operator part that directly counteracts $H_{\text{crosstalk}}$ and is activated by the same pulse envelope $f(t)$ (representing a synchronous activation by a tunable coupler):

$$H_{\text{comp}}(t) = -J_{\text{coupling}}\left(\sigma_x^{(0)}\sigma_x^{(1)} + \sigma_x^{(1)}\sigma_x^{(2)}\right) f(t)$$

This term represents the ideal interaction generated by a physical mechanism, such as a tunable coupler, to nullify the crosstalk.

With compensation, the total Hamiltonian becomes:

$$H_{\text{compensated}}(t) = H_{\text{drift}} + (H_{\text{control}} + H_{\text{crosstalk}} + H_{\text{comp}})\, f(t)$$

By construction, $H_{\text{crosstalk}}$ and H_{comp} cancel, ideally reducing the effective Hamiltonian during the pulse to only the intended operations:

$$\boxed{H_{\text{compensated}}(t) = H_{\text{drift}} + H_{\text{control}} f(t)} \tag{3}$$

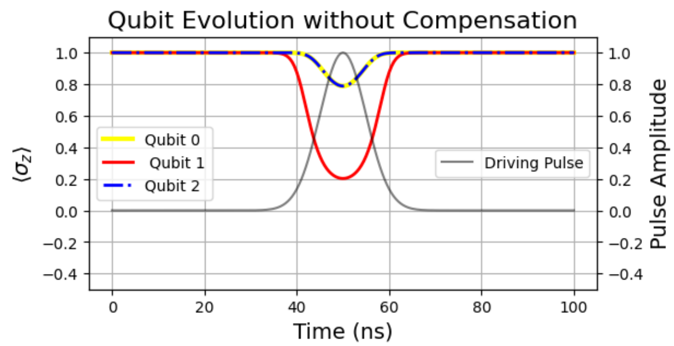
The evolution of the state vector $|\psi(t)\rangle$ in the isolated system is then governed by the time-dependent Schrödinger equation with the compensated Hamiltonian:

$$i\frac{d}{dt}|\psi(t)\rangle = H_{\text{compensated}}(t)|\psi(t)\rangle$$

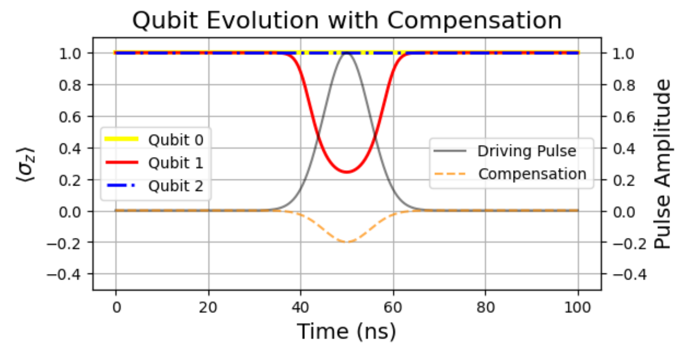
3 Results

We visualize the time evolution of our system without compensation, as described in Eq. 1, and a separated simulation with compensation implemented, as described in Eq. 3. A dynamic visualization with block-sphere is avaliable in our `ipynb` submission.

As shown in Figure 1a, the central qubit (Qubit 1) undergoes the expected Rabi oscillation under the influence of the driving pulse. Simultaneously, the neighboring qubits (Qubit 0 and Qubit 2) exhibit unwanted population transfer, deviating from their initial $\langle \sigma_z \rangle = 1$ state due to crosstalk. In contrast, Figure 1b demonstrates the effect of the compensation pulse. While the central qubit's evolution remains unaffected, the neighboring qubits' states are successfully stabilized at $\langle \sigma_z \rangle = 1$, indicating that the compensation pulse effectively cancels the parasitic crosstalk interactions and prevents unintended state changes.



(a) No Compensation. Qubit 1 is driven by the pulse. Neighbors (Qubit 0, yellow; Qubit 2, blue) show crosstalk-induced state changes.



(b) With Compensation. Qubit 1 is driven. The compensation pulse suppresses crosstalk, stabilizing neighbors (Qubit 0, yellow; Qubit 2, blue) at $\langle \sigma_z \rangle = 1$.

Figure 1: Crosstalk effects during qubit drive with and without compensation pulses.

4 Conclusion

In summary, through phenomenological theoretical analysis and visualization of a three-qubit model, we have shown that overlaying a phase-inverted compensation pulse onto the primary control waveform effectively suppresses unwanted inter-qubit interactions. This scheme reduces residual rotations to nearly zero, restoring each qubit's intended single-qubit operation with high accuracy. As a result, the average gate fidelity is markedly improved—approaching the thresholds required for fault-tolerant error correction—and stable performance in larger systems becomes attainable. This report thus gives a solid simulated solution to crosstalk in a small multi-qubit system.

References

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