Quantum advantages in nonequilibrium thermodynamics

Department of Applied Physics, The University of Tokyo Ken Funo

Collaborator: Hiroyasu Tajima (UEC, Japan)

Based on:

H. Tajima, **KF**, PRL **127**, 190604 (2021) **KF** & H. Tajima arXiv:2408.04280 (*accepted in PRL*)

2025 International Young Researchers Forum on Quantum Information Science Feb. 21-24, 2025



ERATO Sagawa Information-to-Energy Interconversion Project



- Review: Thermodynamics in small systems
- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- Application to quantum heat engines
- Conclusion

Thermodynamics in small systems



Thermodynamic laws out of equilibrium?

Fundamental cost of information erasure



Parrondo, Horowitz, & Sagawa, Nat. Phys. (2015)

D. H. Wolpert, et al., PNAS (2024)

Thermodynamics and energetic costs

Stochastic thermodynamics & Quantum thermodynamics

✓ Fundamental energetic costs



Information erasure



Thermodynamics of computation

1 0 1 0 1 1 0 0 b b · ·

0 0 1 0 1 1 0 0 b b · ·

0 1 1 0 0 1 1 b b b · ·

Heat transport

Kolchinsky and Wolpert (2020) Pekola and Karimi (2021)

Outline of this talk

Review: Thermodynamics in small systems

- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- Application to quantum heat engines
- > Conclusion

Quantum master equation and detailed balance

Quantum master equation

$$\partial_t \rho = \mathcal{L}_t[\rho] = -\frac{i}{\hbar} [H(t), \rho] + \mathcal{D}_t[\rho]$$
unitary time-evolution
(including external drive)
effect of the bath

Dissipator

$$\mathcal{D}_t[\rho] = \sum_{\omega_t} \gamma(\omega_t) \left(L_{\omega_t} \rho L_{\omega_t}^{\dagger} - \frac{1}{2} \left\{ L_{\omega_t}^{\dagger} L_{\omega_t}, \rho \right\} \right)$$

- L_{ω_t} : jump operator decay, thermal excitation, decoherence
- $\gamma(\omega_t)$: decay/excitation rate local detailed balance: $\gamma(\omega_t)/\gamma(-\omega_t) = \exp[\beta\omega_t]$

 \rightarrow steady-state = thermal equilibrium state i.e., $\mathcal{L}_t[\rho_t^{\text{th}}] = 0$, $\rho_t^{\text{th}} = e^{-\beta H(t)}/Z(t)$

- ✓ provides thermodynamically consistent dynamics
 - → allows us to study **nonequilibrium thermodynamics**





Work, heat and 1st law out of equilibrium

■ 1st law of thermodynamics (energy conservation)

$$\frac{\partial_t (\mathrm{Tr}[H\rho])}{\hbar} = \frac{\mathrm{Tr}[(\partial_t H)\rho]}{\hbar} + \frac{\mathrm{Tr}[H\partial_t \rho]}{\hbar}$$

internal energy change \dot{E} work flux \dot{W} heat flux J

Physical interpretation

Work flux: $\dot{W} = \text{Tr}[(\partial_t H)\rho]$

Heat flux:
$$J = \operatorname{Tr}[H\partial_t \rho]$$

= $-\sum_{\omega} \omega \gamma(\omega) \operatorname{Tr}\left[L_{\omega}^{\dagger}L_{\omega}\rho\right]$
substitute ME: $\partial_t \rho = -\frac{i}{\hbar}[H, \rho] + \mathcal{D}[\rho]$

energy from the external timedependent driving energy exchange with the **bath via** quantum jumps L_{ω}



Entropy production and 2nd law out of equilibrium

 $(\dot{S}_B = -\beta J)$

2nd law

entropy change of the bath

Entropy production rate

entropy of the entire system



■ 2nd law of thermodynamics

von Neumann entropy change of

the system $(S(\rho) = -\text{Tr}[\rho \ln \rho])$

- Spohn's representation [J. Math. Phys. 19, 1227, (1978)]

$$\dot{\sigma} = \lim_{dt \to 0} \frac{1}{dt} \left(D[\rho_t | |\rho_t^{\text{th}}] - D[\rho_{t+dt} | |\rho_t^{\text{th}}] \right) \ge 0$$

- $\rho_t^{\text{th}} = e^{-\beta H(t)}/Z(t)$: thermal equilibrium state
- $D[\rho||\sigma] = \text{Tr}[\rho(\ln \rho \ln \sigma)]$: relative entropy



- quantifies how a nonequilibrium state ρ_t becomes **closer** to the thermal equilibrium state ρ_t^{th}
- Measure of thermodynamic irreversibility (approach to equilibrium)
- Quantifies **energetic costs** (c.f. dissipated work $\sigma = \beta W_{dis}$)

 $\dot{\sigma}(\rho) = \dot{S}(\rho) - \beta J(\rho) \ge 0$

 $W_{\rm dis} = -\Delta \mathcal{F} - W_{\rm ext}$ \mathcal{F} : nonequilibrium free-energy

Outline of this talk

- Review: Thermodynamics in small systems
- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- > Application to quantum heat engines
- > Conclusion

Fundamental thermodynamic costs in finite-time

Second law of thermodynamics

equality is achieved by quasi-static (infinitely slow) processes

- However, we want to achieve high-speed operation with low energetic costs
- → fundamental limit in finite-time?

Thermodynamic speed limits



time duration

activity (average transition rate)

- fundamental *trade-off relation* between speed and energetic costs
- Classical master equation: N. Shiraishi, KF, K. Saito, PRL (2018)
- Quantum master equation: KF, N. Shiraishi, K. Saito, NJP (2019)
- Recent development using optimal transport theory: T. Van Vu, K. Saito, PRX (2023), and many more



Thermodynamic speed limit

Thermodynamic trade-off relations

Nonequilibrium and finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations

current (speed) \Leftrightarrow energetic costs

Thermodynamic uncertainty relations (TUR) precision of general current \Leftrightarrow entropy production

Barato, Seifert PRL (2015) Gingrich, et al., PRL (2016)

Current-dissipation trade-off relation

heat current \Leftrightarrow entropy production

N. Shiraishi, K. Saito, H. Tasaki, PRL (2016) H. Tajima & KF, PRL (2021)

Thermodynamic speed limits probability current (speed) \Leftrightarrow entropy production

N. Shiraishi, KF, K. Saito, PRL (2018) KF, N. Shiraishi, K. Saito, NJP (2019)

Quantum effects (coherence, entanglement)

→ Enhancing the operation speed while suppressing energetic costs?

Effect of coherence in open quantum systems

Setup: quantum master equation with detailed balance

$$\partial_t \rho = -i[H,\rho] + \sum_{a,\omega} \gamma_{a,\omega} \left[L_{a,\omega} \rho L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} - \frac{1}{2} \left\{ L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} L_{a,\omega}, \rho \right\} \right]$$



Bath destroys coherence between different energy levels

 $\dot{\sigma}(\rho_{\text{diag}}) \leq \dot{\sigma}(\rho)$

No energy level coherence With coherence

 Π_i :projection to *i*-th energy eigenspace

 $\rho_{\text{diag}} = \sum_{i} \prod_{i} \rho \prod_{i}$

decoherence

• energy level coherence \rightarrow larger $\dot{\sigma}$ (disadvantage)

J. P. Santos, et al., npj Quantum Information (2019); H. Tajima & KF, PRL (2021)

Coherence between degenerate states may not be destroyed

c.f. decoherence-free subspace, Review: D. A. Lidar, Adv. Chem. Phys. (2014)

 We show that coherence between degenerate states is useful based on thermodynamic trade-off relations



H. Tajima & **KF**, PRL (2021)

Thermodynamic trade-off: Quantum advantage

Quantum effect!

With degeneracy

 $\frac{J^2(\rho_{\rm coh})}{\dot{\sigma}(\rho_{\rm coh})} \le \frac{A_{\rm cl} + A_{\rm qm}}{2}$

coherence

Current-dissipation trade-off relation

- Without degeneracy coherence
 - $\frac{J^2(\rho_{\rm inc})}{\dot{\sigma}(\rho_{\rm inc})} \le \frac{A_{\rm cl}}{2}$
- J: heat current, $\dot{\sigma}$: entropy production rate
- Average transition rate (Activity-like quantity) $A = \sum_{\omega} \omega^{2} \sum_{a} \gamma_{a,\omega} \operatorname{Tr} \left[L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} L_{a,\omega} \rho \right] = A_{cl} + A_{qm}$ transition energy transition rate

(superposition of degenerate states) × (collective jumps)

Without superposition/ collective jump With superposition & collective jump Heat current J (speed)

H. Tajima, **KF**, PRL **127**, 190604 (2021) [*Editors' suggestion, featured in Physics*]

14

Quantum advantages based on universal thermodynamic trade-off relation

✓ Quantum superposition + collective jumps → higher speed & lower energetic cost

Example: Super-radiance

Identical N qubit system

- Hamiltonian: $H = \frac{\omega}{2} \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{z}$
- Initial state: symmetric Dicke state:

$$|\psi\rangle = N^{-\frac{1}{2}}(|e, g, \cdots, g\rangle + \dots + |g, \cdots g, e\rangle)$$



- □ Local jumps: $\{\sigma_i^-\}_{i=1}^N$ $\partial_t \rho = -i[H, \rho] + \Gamma_{\downarrow} \sum_i \left(\sigma_i^- \rho \sigma_i^+ - \frac{1}{2} \{\sigma_i^+ \sigma_i^-, \rho\}\right)$ • Average transition rate: $A = \omega^2 \Gamma_{\downarrow}$
- **Collective jumps:** $J^- = \sum_i \sigma_i^-$

$$\partial_t \rho = -i[H,\rho] + \Gamma_{\downarrow} \left(J^- \rho J^+ - \frac{1}{2} \{ J^+ J^-, \rho \} \right)$$

• Average transition rate: $A = \omega^2 N \Gamma_{\downarrow}$ (super-radiance) Dicke, Phys. Rev. (1954)





superposition + collective jumps $\rightarrow O(N)$ enhancement of average transition rate

Summary 1: Quantum advantages in quantum systems

Dicke super-radiance model and O(N) enhancement of A



fundamental limit of the average jump rate A?

→ Main result 2

Outline of this talk

- Review: Thermodynamics in small systems
- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- Application to quantum heat engines
- Conclusion

Fundamental limit and symmetry-based framework



fundamental limit of the effective jump rate A?

Symmetry and decoherence-free subspace

D. A. Lidar, Adv. Chem. Phys. (2014)

• Symmetric noise (same random phase ϕ)

$$|g\rangle_j \to |g\rangle_j, \ |e\rangle_j \to \underline{e^{i\phi}}|e\rangle_j$$

Symmetry-based frameworkKF & H. Tajima arXiv:2408.04280 (accepted in PRL)✓ General upper bound on the effective jump rate A

Setup

$$\partial_t \rho = \mathcal{L}(\rho) = -i[H,\rho] + \sum_{a,\omega} \gamma_{a,\omega} \left[L_{a,\omega} \rho L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} - \frac{1}{2} \left\{ L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} L_{a,\omega}, \rho \right\} \right]$$

• $H = \sum_k \epsilon_k \Pi_k$ ϵ_k : energy eigenvalues, Π_k : projection to k-th energy eigenspace $\mathcal{N}_k = \dim(\Pi_k)$: number of degeneracy for k-th energy level

D Symmetry of the Hamiltonian

 $[H, V_g] = 0$ for all $g \in G$



B. Buča, T. Prosen, NJP (2012)

Strong symmetry condition $[V_g, L_{a,\omega}] = 0, \quad [H, V_g] = 0$ for all $g \in G$ Time-evolution is block-decomposed into different symmetry sectors

\rightarrow analyze the average jump rate $A = \sum_{\omega} \omega^2 \sum_a \gamma_{a,\omega} \operatorname{Tr} \left[L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} L_{a,\omega} \rho \right]$

*We choose a "natural" V_g for given H for the sake of simplicity in this presentation. For general V_g , please see arXiv:2408.04280

General upper bound on A and optimal condition

KF & H. Tajima arXiv:2408.04280 (accepted in PRL)

20

For *any* density matrices ρ and jump operators $\{L_{a,\omega}\}$, we obtain

$$A(\rho, \{L_{a,\omega}\}) \leq \sum_{\omega} \omega^2 \sum_k p_k \mathcal{N}_k c_k(L_{a,\omega})$$

- A can be enhanced up to \mathcal{N}_k times the norm of jump operators c_k for each k-th subspace
- *Trivial rescaling $\sqrt{\gamma_{a,\omega}}L_{a,\omega} \rightarrow \sqrt{C\gamma_{a,\omega}}L_{a,\omega}$ leads to $A \rightarrow CA$. To exclude such effects, we introduce the norm c_k

Optimal condition

- □ Symmetric state ρ^{sym} $V_g \rho^{\text{sym}} = \rho^{\text{sym}} V_g^{\dagger} = \rho^{\text{sym}}$ for all $g \in G$ $U_g L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}} = L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}} V_g^{\dagger} = L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}}$ for all $g \in G$ $U_g L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}} = L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}} V_g^{\dagger} = L_{a,\omega}^{\text{sym}}$ for all $g \in G$
- ✓ Number of degeneracy \mathcal{N}_k sets the fundamental limit of *A*
- Optimal symmetry condition is identified

- \mathcal{N}_k : number of degeneracy
- $p_k = \text{Tr}[\Pi_k \rho]$: occupation probability of k-th state
- $c_k(L_{a,\omega}) \coloneqq \mathcal{N}_k^{-1} \sum_a \gamma_{a,\omega} \operatorname{Tr} \left[L_{a,\omega}^{\dagger} L_{a,\omega} \Pi_k \right]$ (Hilbert-Schmidt norm of $L_{a,\omega}$ in the k-th subspace divided by its dimension \mathcal{N}_k)

Example: Permutation-invariant N qubit systems

Permutation symmetry

- Hamiltonian $H = \frac{\omega}{2} \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{z}$
- Invariant under permutation of subsystem labels *i*
- $\mathcal{N}_k = {}_N C_k$: number of degeneracy (k-th energy level)



21



Optimal condition

Symmetric state $\rho_k^{\text{sym}} = |\psi_k^{\text{sym}}\rangle\langle\psi_k^{\text{sym}}|$

 $|\psi_k^{\text{sym}}\rangle = \mathcal{N}_k^{-1/2} \sum_g V_g |e\rangle^{\otimes k} \otimes |g\rangle^{\otimes N-k}$ superposition of all states with *k*-excitation

• symmetric Dicke states

\Box Symmetric jump operator L_{ω}^{sym}

$$L_{\omega}^{\text{sym}} = \sum_{n=0}^{\lfloor N/2 \rfloor - 1} \sum_{g \in S_N} V_g \sigma_1^- \cdots \sigma_{n+1}^- \sigma_{n+2}^+ \cdots \sigma_{2n+1}^+ V_g^+$$

(2n + 1)-body jump operators

• requires multi-qubit nonlinear and collective jump

Scaling of A for permutation-invariant system

Scaling of A for different jump operators

We consider a symmetric Dicke state with k = N/2(i.e., half of the qubits are excited)

 $\left|\psi_{N/2}^{\text{sym}}\right\rangle = \mathcal{N}_{N/2}^{-1/2} \sum_{g \in S_N} V_g \left|e\right\rangle^{\otimes N/2} \otimes \left|g\right\rangle^{\otimes N/2}$

Symmetric jump operator

 $L_{\omega}^{\text{sym}} = \sum_{m=0}^{N/2} \sum_{g \in S_N} V_g \sigma_1^- \cdots \sigma_{m+1}^- \sigma_{m+2}^+ \cdots \sigma_{2m+1}^+ V_g^\dagger$

multi-qubit nonlinear and collective jumps

 $ightarrow A/\omega^2 c_{N/2} = \mathcal{N}_{N/2} \sim 2^N/\sqrt{N}$ (optimal)

Three-body approximation

$$L_{\omega}^{3-ap} = \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{-} + \sum_{\substack{(i < j) \neq l}} \sigma_{i}^{-} \sigma_{j}^{-} \sigma_{l}^{+} \rightarrow A / \omega^{2} c_{N/2} = O(N^{3})$$

3-body jumps

One-body approximation

 $L_{\omega}^{1-ap} = \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{-} \rightarrow A / \omega^{2} c_{N/2} = O(N)$ (super-radiance)

Local jump operator

 $\left\{L_{a,\omega}^{loc}\right\} = \left\{\sigma_i^{-}\right\} \to \mathbf{A} / \boldsymbol{\omega}^2 \boldsymbol{c}_{N/2} = \mathbf{1}$



Plot of $A\left(|\psi_{N/2}^{\text{sym}}\rangle\langle\psi_{N/2}^{\text{sym}}|, \{L_{a,\omega}\}\right)$



Scaling of A and symmetry condition

Scaling of A for different jump operators

We consider a symmetric Dicke state with k = N/2(i.e., half of the qubits are excited)

 $\left|\psi_{N/2}^{\text{sym}}\right\rangle = \mathcal{N}_{N/2}^{-1/2} \sum_{g \in S_N} V_g \left|e\right\rangle^{\otimes N/2} \otimes \left|g\right\rangle^{\otimes N/2}$

Symmetric jump operator

 $L_{\omega}^{\text{sym}} = \sum_{m=0}^{N/2} \sum_{g \in S_N} V_g \sigma_1^- \cdots \sigma_{m+1}^- \sigma_{m+2}^+ \cdots \sigma_{2m+1}^+ V_g^\dagger$

multi-qubit nonlinear and collective jumps

 $ightarrow A/\omega^2 c_{N/2} = \mathcal{N}_{N/2} \sim 2^N/\sqrt{N}$ (optimal)

Three-body approximation

$$L_{\omega}^{3-ap} = \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{-} + \sum_{\substack{(i < j) \neq l}} \sigma_{i}^{-} \sigma_{j}^{-} \sigma_{l}^{+} \rightarrow A / \omega^{2} c_{N/2} = O(N^{3})$$

3-body jumps

One-body approximation

 $L_{\omega}^{1-ap} = \sum_{i} \sigma_{i}^{-} \rightarrow A / \omega^{2} c_{N/2} = O(N)$ (super-radiance)

Local jump operator

 $\left\{L_{a,\omega}^{loc}\right\} = \left\{\sigma_i^-\right\} \to A / \omega^2 c_{N/2} = 1$

 $L^{\rm sym}_{\omega_0}$ $O(2^N/\sqrt{N})$ 104 $A/(\omega^2 c_{N/2})$ 10³ L^{1-ap}_{μ} *O*(*N*³) $\{\sigma_i^-\}$ 10² O(N)10¹ O(1)10⁰ 10 15 Ν **Optimal symmetry condition** $V_a L^{sym}_{\omega} = L^{sym}_{\omega} V^{\dagger}_a = L^{sym}_{\omega}$ Strong symmetry $[V_q, L_{\omega}^{n-ap}] = 0$ Weak symmetry $\mathcal{L}(V_a x V_a^{\dagger}) = V_a \mathcal{L}(x) V_a^{\dagger}$

✓ Larger scaling when $\{L_{a,\omega}\}$ better respects the optimal symmetry condition

Outline of this talk

- Review: Thermodynamics in small systems
- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- Application to quantum heat engines

Conclusion

Finite-time quantum Otto engine



- Performance of heat engines
 - **Efficiency** : $\eta = W/Q_H$ Heat-to-work conversion efficiency
- Otto efficiency and Carnot efficiency

$$\eta = \eta_{\text{Otto}} = 1 - \frac{\omega_{C}}{\omega_{H}} \le \eta_{\text{Car}} = 1 - \frac{\beta_{H}}{\beta_{C}}$$
Otto efficiency
(ideal efficiency)

Power : $P = W/\tau$ Extracted work per unit time

 τ : time duration to complete one cycle

Note: The efficiency of *finite-time* quantum Otto engine is given by η_{Otto} if the adiabatic strokes (1 and 3) are ideal

Power-efficiency trade-off and quantum coherence

Power-efficiency trade-off relation

 $P \le b\bar{A}\eta(\eta_{\rm Car} - \eta)$

- constant factor: $b = 2(2 \eta_{Car})^2 / \beta_C$
- $\bar{A} = \tau^{-1} \int_0^\tau dt \, A(\rho(t), \{L_{a,\omega}\})$

time-average average jump rate

- Scaling analysis
- \bar{A} can be **enhanced** by considering the symmetry condition on the jump operator
- ⇒ Allows approaching close to the Carnot efficiency while maintaining high power



Power-efficiency trade-off relation







Scaling of the power and efficiency

Numerical calculation of N-qubit heat engine model

- Consider a protocol that asymptotically reaches the Carnot efficiency: $\eta_{Car} - \eta = O(1/N)$
- Super-radiant heat engine: $L^{1-ap} = \sum_i \sigma_i^-$ ۲
- 3-body jump approximation: L^{3-ap} •
- Symmetric jump operator: L_{ω}^{sym}

$$\bar{A} = O(N) \rightarrow P = O(1)$$
$$\bar{A} = O(N^3) \rightarrow P = O(N^2)$$
$$\bar{A} \& P \rightarrow$$

power saturates beyond super-radiant scaling

exponential scaling

(a) (b) $L^{sym}_{\omega_0}$ exponential Efficiency η/η_{Car} $P/\omega_{H}\gamma_{H}$ 3 – ap ·ω₀ 10^{-1} η_{Car} $\eta = O(1/N)$ 0.9 $L^{1-ap}_{\omega_0}$ 10^{-2} Power $\rightarrow O(N^2)$ 0.8 10-3 $\rightarrow O(1)$ 10 20 30 10 20 30 n Ν Ν

 $\checkmark O(N^2)$ to exponential power enhancement compared to super-radiant heat engines

Specifically, we choose (δ is a constant)

$$\omega_{C} = \left(\frac{\beta_{H}}{\beta_{C}} + \frac{\delta}{N}\right)\omega_{H} \to \eta = 1 - \frac{\omega_{C}}{\omega_{H}} = \eta_{Car} - \frac{\delta}{N}$$

Outline of this talk

- Review: Thermodynamics in small systems
- Review: Quantum master equation and laws of thermodynamics
- Main result 1: Finite-time thermodynamic trade-off relations and quantum advantages
- Main result 2: Symmetry-based framework and fundamental limit of quantum advantages
- Application to quantum heat engines
- Conclusion

Summary





Heat engine model asymptotically reaching the Carnot efficiency while exponential scaling of power



H. Tajima, **KF**, PRL **127**, 190604 (2021) **KF** & H. Tajima arXiv:2408.04280 (*accepted in PRL*)

O(N) improvement

With superposition

& collective jump

Heat current *J*

29



(speed)