

TECHNIQUES FOR PRODUCING QUANTUM AMPLIFIERS AND RELATED SYSTEMS AND METHODS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit under 35 U.S.C. §119(e) of U.S. Provisional Patent Application No. 62/126,381, filed February 27, 2015, titled “JOSEPHSON ‘FABRIC’ FOR IMPROVED AMPLIFIERS,” which is hereby incorporated by reference in its entirety.

FIELD

[0002] The present application relates generally to quantum information processing. More specifically, the present application relates to techniques for producing quantum amplifiers.

BACKGROUND

[0003] Amplifiers are ubiquitous components in experimental physics, and are typically used to raise the energy of a signal coming from a measurement device to a level sufficient to exceed the noise of the electronics used to read the signal. Conventional amplifiers are dissipative and generally generate a certain amount of noise in addition to an amplified output signal in response to an input signal applied to an input terminal.

[0004] Quantum information processing uses quantum mechanical phenomena, such as energy quantization, superposition, and/or entanglement, to encode and process information in a way not utilized by conventional information processing. It is expected that certain computational problems may be solved more efficiently using quantum computation rather than conventional classical computation. Due to the low energies used in a quantum circuit, measurements of a quantum circuit require amplification before they can be read at a macroscopic (non-quantum) scale. Conventional amplifiers are, however, unsuitable for use in quantum circuits as they introduce too much noise to

produce a useable output signal and exhibit poor sensitivity to the low energies of a quantum circuit.

SUMMARY

[0005] Some aspects are directed to a quantum circuit, comprising a plurality of non-linear circuit elements coupled together in series and in parallel, such that at least two of the circuit elements are coupled together in series and at least two of the circuit elements are coupled together in parallel, wherein the quantum circuit is configured to act as an amplifier.

[0006] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit elements are Josephson junctions.

[0007] According to some embodiments, N of the circuit elements are coupled together in series within a sub-circuit of the quantum circuit, and a plurality of said sub-circuits are coupled together in parallel M times within the quantum circuit.

[0008] According to some embodiments, N is at least 3 and M is at least 3.

[0009] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit further comprises a first capacitor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.

[0010] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit further comprises at least one inductor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.

[0011] According to some embodiments, the at least one inductor includes one or more of the circuit elements.

[0012] According to some embodiments, the at least one inductor includes one or more inductors distinct from the one or more circuit elements.

[0013] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit further comprises a plurality of second capacitors each coupled between neighboring pairs of the sub-circuits.

[0014] According to some embodiments, the plurality of non-linear circuit elements are substantially identical to one another.

[0015] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit is configured to operate the plurality of circuit elements in a hybrid common mode.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

[0016] Various aspects and embodiments will be described with reference to the following figures. It should be appreciated that the figures are not necessarily drawn to scale. In the drawings, each identical or nearly identical component that is illustrated in various figures is represented by a like numeral. For purposes of clarity, not every component may be labeled in every drawing.

[0017] FIG. 1 is a graph depicting the performance of an illustrative quantum amplifier;

[0018] FIG. 2 is a circuit diagram of a quantum amplifier circuit, according to some embodiments;

[0019] FIG. 3 is a circuit diagram of a quantum amplifier circuit that comprises Josephson junctions, according to some embodiments;

[0020] FIGs. 4A-4C illustrate reduced circuit representations of the circuit depicted in FIG. 3, according to some embodiments;

[0021] FIG. 5 is a graph illustrating the gain of a quantum amplifier, according to some embodiments;

[0022] FIG. 6 is a three-dimensional contour plot illustrating how the gain of a quantum amplifier changes based on an inductance and based on the number of quantum amplifier elements coupled together in series, according to some embodiments;

[0023] FIG. 7A is a graph of an infinite gain point of a quantum amplifier versus an inductance of the amplifier for two different measures of the parallelism of the circuit, according to some embodiments;

[0024] FIG. 7B is a graph of a first capacitance of a quantum amplifier versus an inductance of the amplifier for two different measures of the parallelism of the circuit, according to some embodiments;

[0025] FIG. 7C is a graph of shunt capacitance of a quantum amplifier versus an inductance of the amplifier for two different measures of the parallelism of the circuit, according to some embodiments;

[0026] FIG. 8 is a top view image of a portion of an illustrative quantum amplifier, according to some embodiments; and

[0027] FIG. 9 is a top view image of a portion of an illustrative quantum amplifier depicting multiple sub-circuits connected together in parallel, according to some embodiments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0028] An amplifier receives an input signal from an experimental object and increases the magnitude of the signal as output. The input signal typically includes a noise component from one or more noise sources, and an amplifier may increase the magnitude of this component while also introducing new sources of noise in its output. An efficient amplifier will perform the task of increasing the energy of the information-laden portion of its input (the signal from the experimental object) without introducing too much noise output that makes separation of the amplified signal from noise more difficult. The “gain” of an amplifier is the increase in amplitude of the output of an amplifier (including noise) relative to its input, and the “bandwidth” of an amplifier is the range of input frequencies over which the amplifier can produce an amplified output.

[0029] Quantum amplifiers are amplifiers that use quantum mechanical techniques to amplify a quantum signal in an information conserving manner. In some cases, a quantum signal might contain only a few quantum excitations (e.g., photons). Quantum amplifiers typically utilized Josephson junctions, which are non-linear and dissipationless circuit elements. While such elements can be operated as quantum amplifiers, the dynamic range of these devices can be limited. An amplifier’s dynamic range is the ratio between the largest and smallest input signals that can be effectively amplified, and it may be beneficial for a quantum amplifier to have a high dynamic range relative to its gain and bandwidth. For instance, a quantum amplifier with a relatively low dynamic range may only be able to amplify input signals that comprise energy corresponding to

between 3 and 5 photons, which would limit the usage of such a device in quantum circuits.

[0030] FIG. 1 depicts the performance of an illustrative quantum amplifier. In the example of FIG. 1, the horizontal axis 101 of the graph 100 represents the power input to the amplifier and the vertical axis represents the power output from the amplifier. The input power could include a measurement signal as well as one or more sources of noise. Below an input power P_{NF} , the amplifier output is dominated by only noise represented by a noise floor. In a quantum amplifier, the noise floor is due to the uncertainty of physical quantities that are inherent to quantum measurements, and an ideal quantum amplifier would not produce noise greater than the quantum noise floor. A quantum amplifier that adds only the minimum amount of noise due to the inherent uncertainty of quantum measurements is sometimes referred to as being “quantum-limited.”

[0031] In the example of FIG. 1, in a region 103 between input powers P_{NF} and P_C the amplifier produces output power that scales linearly with input power. The slope of this region of the graph 100 is the amplifier’s gain. Above an input power P_C , the amplifier begins to deviate from the linear gain in the compression region and finally the amplifier gain drops to unity (sometimes referred to as “failure”) above input power P_F , where the output power becomes constant independent of the input power. The dynamic range of the amplifier is, as shown, the difference in power between the point at which the amplifier produces output above the noise floor (input power P_{NF}) and the point at which compression begins (input power P_C). There are various ways to measure each of these points, and the illustrated figure is not intended to limit the definition of dynamic range to any particular technique. For example, P_C may be the so-called “1 dB compression point,” at which the output power drops to 1 dB below what the output power would be if the amplifier were producing output according to its gain. However, this is just one example of determining one edge of the dynamic range and generally any suitable technique may be used.

[0032] The inventors have recognized and appreciated that a quantum amplifier with improved dynamic range may be realized by producing a circuit in which multiple quantum circuit elements are arranged both in series and in parallel. The quantum circuit

elements may be able to be operated as an amplifier when used in isolation, yet may combine within the quantum circuit to produce amplification with a greater dynamic range than would be exhibited by an element individually. The particular arrangement of quantum circuit elements in series and in parallel may be tuned so that the quantum circuit can exhibit a desired dynamic range when acting as an amplifier, without sacrificing gain or bandwidth of the quantum circuit.

[0033] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit elements are non-linear circuit elements, such as Josephson junctions. Circuit elements typically used to produce macroscopic (non-quantum) amplifiers, such as inductors and capacitors, are linear components and therefore their combination in a circuit is generally predictable and straightforward to model. However, quantum elements that may be operated as an amplifier are typically non-linear in nature, and thus combining them in a circuit, whether in series and/or in parallel, is not as straightforward as with macroscopic circuits.

[0034] According to some embodiments, the quantum circuit elements in the quantum amplifier are substantially identical to one another. Reducing differences between the elements may improve the performance of the device since each portion of the device will function the same way as other portions. Since the quantum circuit elements are directly coupled to one another, however, this hybridizes them, which guards against variations in device parameters. Thus, while the quantum circuit elements may exhibit slight variations among themselves, the direct coupling in the circuit may guard against performance loss as a result.

[0035] Following below are more detailed descriptions of various concepts related to, and embodiments of, techniques for producing quantum amplifiers. It should be appreciated that various aspects described herein may be implemented in any of numerous ways. Examples of specific implementations are provided herein for illustrative purposes only. In addition, the various aspects described in the embodiments below may be used alone or in any combination, and are not limited to the combinations explicitly described herein.

[0036] In the illustrative circuit 200 shown in the circuit diagram of FIG. 2, a sub-circuit 210a includes a plurality of quantum circuit elements 211 coupled together in series. The sub-circuit 201a may include any number of quantum circuit elements 211 coupled in series, such as N quantum circuit elements. As used herein, elements arranged “in series” refers to elements connected such that there is only one path for a signal to flow through each of the elements. For instance, in the example of FIG. 2, there is only one path for a signal to flow between terminal 221 and terminal 222 through all the elements 211 inside sub-circuit 210a. In the non-limiting example in FIG. 2, $N = 4$ is shown. In the example of FIG. 2, the quantum circuit elements (e.g., element 211) serially coupled in the sub-circuit 210a are substantially the same as one another, although in some embodiments each quantum circuit element may be selectively tuned to have different quantum circuit characteristics for improving the performance of a quantum amplifier.

[0037] Although not shown, the sub-circuit 210a in FIG. 2 may, in addition to the quantum circuit elements shown, include any number of additional circuit elements that have impedances representing additional capacitances, inductances and/or resistances, which may be arranged in series and/or in parallel with the quantum circuit elements. The additional circuit elements in sub-circuit 210a may, for example, contribute an unintentional parasitic and/or stray impedance inside a sub-circuit and/or between a sub-circuit and elements outside the sub-circuit. In some embodiments, the additional circuit elements may be intentionally introduced with impedances selectively tuned for improving the performance of a quantum amplifier.

[0038] The circuit 200 in the example of FIG. 2 includes a source 230, which may include any suitable voltage and/or current source. Circuit 200 further includes a source impedance 220 (e.g., a resistor) connected in parallel to the sub-circuit 201a. As used herein, elements arranged “in parallel” refers to elements that are both connected in-between the same two terminals. For instance, in the example of FIG. 2, the sub-circuit 201a is connected in between the two terminals 221 and 222 of source 230.

[0039] The circuit 200 may amplify an input source signal provided by the source 230. For example, in some embodiments the source 230 may be a current source and

which may include an input current signal that, when applied to the rest of the circuit 200, is amplified proportionally by the circuit 200. The source 230 may additionally provide any suitable signals to power the operation of elements in sub-circuits such as 210a.

[0040] In the example of FIG. 2, a plurality of sub-circuits 210a, 210b, ... 210n are coupled together in parallel. Any number of sub-circuits 210 may be coupled together in parallel, such as M sub-circuits as shown in FIG. 2. In the example of FIG. 2, the sub-circuits are substantially the same with each other, although in general this need not necessarily be the case. Each of the M sub-circuits includes N quantum circuit elements connected in series such that a two dimensional network of $N \times M$ quantum circuit elements are hybridized together in the example of FIG. 2. Each sub-circuit is also coupled in parallel with the current source 230 and source impedance 220 in order to amplify the same input signal as well as to receive any suitable power supply signal from source 230. Although a two-dimensional network of $N \times M$ substantially identical quantum circuit elements are shown, the inventors have recognized that elements in each serial sub-circuit may be tuned to have different quantum circuit characteristics and that different number of serial elements may be provided in each parallel sub-circuit for improving the performance of a quantum amplifier.

[0041] FIG. 3 is a circuit diagram of a quantum amplifier circuit that comprises Josephson junctions, according to some embodiments. Circuit 300 shown in FIG. 3 is an example of circuit 200 shown in FIG. 2 in which the quantum circuit elements are Josephson junctions and in which numerous additional circuit elements comprising capacitors and inductors are also included within the circuit, some of which are included within a sub-circuit of circuit 300.

[0042] The circuit diagram in FIG. 3 shows an illustrative example of a sub-circuit 310a within circuit 300. The sub-circuit 310a includes an array of N identical Josephson junctions 311 as quantum circuit elements connected in series. Each Josephson junction has Josephson energy E_J and the gauge-invariant Josephson phase difference across each individual Josephson junction is φ/N in a 1st self-resonant mode, where φ is the total Josephson phase difference across the entire serial array of Josephson junctions. The

array of Josephson junctions 311 collectively provides a current $I = I_0 \sin(\frac{\varphi}{N})$ (not shown), where I_0 is the critical current of each Josephson junction. In some embodiments, the Josephson junctions may be non-dissipative.

[0043] In the example of FIG. 3, the sub-circuit 310a includes two inductances L 313 coupled in series to both ends of the array of N Josephson junctions. L may be stray inductance or in some embodiments intentional inductance with a value selected to tune the performance of a quantum amplifier. The sub-circuit 310a in FIG. 3 also includes a shunt capacitance C_s (314) with a value selected to shunt both ends of the serial array including the inductance L , the array of Josephson junctions and a second inductance L , in order to tune the resonance properties of the Josephson junctions in order to improve the performance of a quantum amplifier.

[0044] In the example of FIG. 3, two capacitances C_a 315 are used, each on one end of the serial array including the inductance L , the array of Josephson junctions and a second inductance L in the sub-circuit 310a to couple the sub-circuit in parallel to a current source $I(t)$ and a source resistance R . The current source $I(t)$ includes a component based on the input signal to be amplified, as well as pump signal components to parametrically adjust the amplifier gain of the non-linear Josephson junction oscillators in the sub-circuit 210a.

[0045] In the example of FIG. 3, M sub-circuits 310a, 310b, ... 310n are coupled together in parallel. Each of the M sub-circuits coupled in parallel includes N Josephson junctions connected in series such that a two dimensional network of $N \times M$ Josephson junctions are hybridized together. In the example of FIG. 3, each sub-circuit is coupled in parallel with the current source $I(t)$ and the source resistance R via a capacitance C_a on each side of the sub-circuit in order to amplify the same input signal as well as to receive any suitable pump signal from the source $I(t)$.

[0046] In the example of FIG. 3, each sub-circuit is coupled to an adjacent sub-circuit via two capacitances C_c . In some embodiments, C_c may be unintentional parasitic capacitance between sub-circuits spatially close to each other. In some cases, whether this is the case may depend on a fabrication method of the sub-circuits. In some embodiments, during an amplification process, C_c may serve to repel other modes from a

common mode operating in all Josephson junctions, when all the other modes are repelled to lower frequencies and are thus excluded from the amplification process.

[0047] Having described an illustrative circuit diagram of an embodiment of this invention in FIG. 3, FIG. 4 shows a sequence of reduced circuit representations of the circuit diagram in FIG. 3 for ease of analysis to illustrate some embodiments.

[0048] FIG. 4A is a reduced circuit representing circuit elements in the top half portion 316 in the circuit diagram in FIG. 3. FIG. 4A includes the same number of M sub-circuits in parallel, each sub-circuit includes $N/2$ Josephson junctions in series with only one inductance L , a shunt capacitance of value $2C_s$, and only one capacitance C_a further connecting a first end 431 of each sub-circuit to terminal 421 of a current source $I(t)$ and a source resistance $R/2$. The second end 432 of each sub-circuit is denoted ground and can be compared with a horizontal middle-plane 315 of the circuit in FIG. 3. Due to symmetry of the circuit diagram in FIG. 3 about the middle-plane 315, circuit parameters such as current and voltage for each of the elements in the portion 316 above the middle-plane in the example of FIG. 3 are identical to those in corresponding elements opposite the middle-plane. Therefore, it may be sufficient to analyze circuit parameters in the reduced circuit in FIG. 4A which essentially include elements, or in the case of C_s , R and $I(t)$ an equivalent split of elements, from one half of the circuit in FIG. 3, in order to analyze performance characteristics of the full circuit in FIG. 3. Analyzing the reduced circuit in FIG. 4A that include $(N/2) \times M$ Josephson junctions may reduce the complexity of the circuit analysis.

[0049] The M parallel sub-circuits in the reduced circuit representation in FIG. 4A can be further reduced. Because each one of the M parallel sub-circuits in the example of FIG. 4A is substantially the same as each other, the solutions for circuit parameters within each sub-circuit may be substantially identical as well, or in other words, each sub-circuit is in a common mode with the rest of the sub-circuits. An analysis of only one representative sub-circuit may present sufficient information to solve the entire circuit in FIG. 4A or FIG. 3. In the example of FIG. 4B, a reduced sub-circuit including only $N/2$ serially connected Josephson junctions, an inductance L , a shunt capacitance $2C_s$ and a connecting capacitance C_a is shown connected to an equivalent split of source

impedance $MR/2$. The source impedance is split such that when M of them are combined in parallel, the $R/2$ equivalent resistance in FIG. 4A will be reproduced.

[0050] FIG. 4C shows another example reduced circuit representing the single sub-circuit in FIG. 4B, by transforming impedances C_a , $2C_s$ and $MR/2$ into equivalent impedances C' and R' . The reduced circuit in FIG. 4C contains less number of elements and is simpler for analysis than the original circuit in the illustrative example in FIG. 3. Only $(N/2)$ serially coupled Josephson junctions in series with impedances L , C' and R' are present in FIG. 4C. Although not shown, the values for C' and R' depend on the measure of the parallelism M of the M parallel sub-circuits arranged in the original circuit in FIG. 3. To aid analysis of the circuit of FIG. 3 via the reduced representation of FIG. 4C, in some cases an input current source may be included in the circuit in FIG. 4C. By performing a non-linear quantum circuit analysis in the reduced single sub-circuit in FIG. 4C and combining the results M -times one can determine the complete quantum amplifier circuit response from N serial and M parallel Josephson junction arrays as shown in the embodiment in FIG. 3.

[0051] In some embodiments, determining a circuit Hamiltonian for a non-linear quantum circuit may allow quantification of how the quantum circuit can perform as an amplifier and how key amplifier properties may depend on the non-linearity of the quantum circuit as indicated by the circuit Hamiltonian. The non-linear effective circuit Hamiltonian for the reduced quantum circuit model shown in FIG. 4C can be derived using circuit analysis in combination with quantum mechanics as:

$$\mathcal{H} = \hbar\omega a^\dagger a - \beta(a + a^\dagger)^4 \quad (\text{Eqn. 1})$$

where the non-linearity factor

$$\beta = \frac{(\hbar\omega)^2}{24N^2\phi_0^2} \frac{\mathbb{L}_J p^2}{M} \quad (\text{Eqn. 2})$$

[0052] In Eqn. 1, $\hbar$ is the reduced Planck constant; ω is the frequency of the oscillatory mode of the circuit shown in FIG. 4C; $a^\dagger, a$ are creation and annihilation operators, respectively. In Eqn. 2, N and M are the number of serial Josephson junctions and parallel sub-circuits of Josephson junctions in the $N \times M$ network of Josephson junctions in the example of FIG. 3, ϕ_0 is the magnetic flux quantum, and $\mathbb{L}_J = L_J(N/2)$

is the total Josephson junction inductance of the serially coupled $N/2$ Josephson junctions in the reduced circuit diagram in FIG. 4C, where each Josephson junction has a Josephson junction inductance of $L_J = \phi_0^2/E_J$ and E_J is each junction's Josephson energy that can be tuned depending on the construction of each Josephson junction. p is a participation ratio of the inductance from the $N/2$ serially coupled Josephson junctions in the example circuit diagram in FIG. 4C, to the total inductance in the same circuit and is defined by:

$$p = \frac{\mathbb{L}_J}{L + \mathbb{L}_J} \quad (\text{Eqn. 3})$$

where L is the inductance shown in FIG. 4C.

[0053] The oscillator frequency of the reduced circuit in FIG. 4C is:

$$\omega = \sqrt{\frac{p}{\mathbb{L}_J C'}} \quad (\text{Eqn. 4})$$

based on the circuit Hamiltonian, where C' is the equivalent capacitance in the example of FIG. 4C.

[0054] The quality factor Q of the oscillator based on the circuit Hamiltonian is:

$$Q = 1/(\omega R' C') \quad (\text{Eqn. 5})$$

where R' is the effective resistance in the example of FIG. 4C. Both ω and Q are functions of C' and/or R' according to Eqns. 4 and 5. Since both C' and R' as shown in FIG. 4C are effective impedances transformed from the circuit containing two independent variables C_a and $2C_s$ as shown in FIG. 4B, adjusting each of the values of C_a and $2C_s$ during construction of a quantum circuit such as the quantum amplifier circuit in the example of FIG. 3 may allow independent tuning of ω and Q of the quantum amplifier to any suitable values for improving the performance of a quantum amplifier.

[0055] As described above, an amplifier's dynamic range is the difference between the largest and smallest input signals that can be effectively amplified, and it may be beneficial for a quantum amplifier to have a high dynamic range relative to its gain and bandwidth. In some embodiments, the power of input signals to a quantum amplifier

may be represented by the number of photons n_p in the signal input source, for instance in the pump signals in the current source $I(t)$ in the example of FIG. 3.

[0056] In some embodiments, gain from a non-linear parametric amplifier may depend on the power of the input signals. The curve 501 in FIG. 5 shows gain as a function of input power n_p in an illustrative non-linear Josephson junction quantum amplifier. As shown in FIG. 5, the non-linear quantum amplifier gain increases superlinearly with increasing n_p until n_p approaches an infinite gain point n_∞ , after which the gain- n_p relation ceases to apply. The infinite gain point for number of photons n_∞ represents the highest amount of input signal power that can be effectively amplified by a quantum amplifier in the example of FIG. 5 with a certain gain. Therefore, the input signal powers from 0 to n_∞ represent the dynamic range of the quantum amplifier and n_∞ may be used as the figure of merit to denote the dynamic range. Generally speaking, therefore, it may be desirable for a quantum amplifier to have a large n_∞ in order to have a large dynamic range, although as discussed below there may be a value of n_∞ (n_c discussed below) above which certain detrimental effects may outweigh the benefits.

[0057] In some embodiments, the value of n_∞ may be defined when the shift in oscillator resonance frequency ω equals a line width. For non-linear quantum amplifiers with circuit Hamiltonian in the form of Eqn. 1, n_∞ occurs when the following is satisfied:

$$1 - \frac{\partial_n E_n |_{n_\infty}}{\hbar\omega} = \frac{1}{4Q} \quad (\text{Eqn. 6})$$

where E_n is the resonance energy for a single harmonic oscillator eigenstate being pumped with photon number n as input signal energy, while $\hbar\omega_0$ is the energy of the fundamental mode of the oscillator.

[0058] Solving Eqn. 6 using the circuit Hamiltonian in Eqn. 1 yields:

$$n_\infty = \frac{MN^2\phi_0^2}{Q\hbar\omega_J p^2} - \frac{1}{2} \quad (\text{Eqn. 7})$$

Therefore, according to Eqn. 7 the serial junction number N and the measure of parallelism M , along with other circuit parameters such as L , C_a and $2C_s$ may be chosen to tune the value of n_∞ for improving the dynamic range of a quantum amplifier. As

discussed above, while the ultimate goal is to select suitable values of L , C_a , C_c and C_s for the circuit 300 of FIG. 3, the reduced representations shown in FIGs. 4A-4C are helpful to allow a simplified analysis, as described herein.

[0059] In some embodiments, there may be a particular input power value denoted by a photon number n_c , beyond which the non-linear quantum amplifier may enter a bistable state and become unsuitable for effective amplification. In the example of FIG. 5, signals with input power n_p larger than n_c would no longer be stably amplified. When $n_\infty < n_c$, dynamic range equals n_∞ ; when $n_\infty > n_c$, dynamic range is limited to n_c . Therefore, tuning a circuit as described herein may comprise both maximizing the dynamic range represented by n_∞ whilst also ensuring that n_∞ does not rise above n_c .

[0060] In the example circuit in FIG. 4C, n_c is reached when the average value of Josephson phase change across each one of the $N/2$ serial Josephson junction array $\langle \frac{2\Phi}{N\phi_0} \rangle = \pi/2$, where Φ is the total magnetic flux across the entire serial array of Josephson junctions. Solving the reduced circuit diagram in FIG. 4C yields:

$$n_c = \frac{(N\pi\phi_0)^2 M}{32\hbar\omega_L p} \quad (\text{Eqn. 8})$$

Therefore, according to Eqn. 8 the serial junction number N and the measure of parallelism M , along with other circuit parameters such as L , C_a and $2C_s$ may be chosen to tune the value of n_c . In some embodiments, in order to improve the dynamic range of a quantum amplifier, circuit parameters N , M , L , C_a , C_c and/or C_s may be collectively tuned so that the value of n_∞ is maximized without exceeding the value of n_c .

[0061] FIG. 6 illustrates a calculated three-dimensional contour plot for n_∞ as a function of both circuit inductance L as shown in the example circuit diagram in FIG. 4C and the serial junction number N , for an embodiment where $M = 1$ and the critical current for each Josephson junction $I_0 = 5 \mu\text{A}$. For each given array of N serial Josephson junctions, increasing L leads to an increase of n_∞ as a result of Eqns. 3 and 7. On the other hand, with the inductance L fixed, n_∞ and thus the dynamic range increases as N increases for L close to zero. For other values of L , however, n_∞ first decreases when N increases from 1 before increasing gradually with increasing N in the example of FIG. 6. Such as result illustrates the difference between serial coupling of conventional, linear

amplifiers and serial coupling of non-linear quantum amplifiers such as individual Josephson junctions. In a conventional circuit with a total load voltage V applied on N serially coupled identical linear amplifiers, each linear amplifier receives a reduced load portion V/N . If each individual linear amplifier has dynamic range from 0 to V_t , the dynamic range for N serially coupled linear amplifiers would be NV_t and would increase with the addition of higher number of N . On the other hand, in an array of N serially coupled non-linear Josephson junction amplifier array, even though the Josephson phase difference across each individual Josephson junction is φ/N , a portion of the total phase difference φ , the dynamic range of the array may increase or decrease with N as the foregoing analysis in the example of FIG. 6 illustrates, due to interplay between quantum Josephson junction inductances L_J and circuit inductance L (as represented by the inductive participation ratio p in Eqn. 7), which does not apply in classical linear circuits.

[0062] The $M = 1$ curve 701 in FIG. 7A corresponds to a cross-sectional view of the contour plot in FIG. 6. In this example, N is fixed at 5 serial junctions. A suitable value for inductance L may be selected based on the n_∞ versus L relationship illustrated in FIG. 7A. In some embodiments, multiple sub-circuits of serially connected Josephson junctions may be coupled in parallel to provide a higher range of values of n_∞ . In the example of FIG. 7A, the $M = 5$ curve 702 shows that by increasing the measure of parallelism M to 5 and coupling 5 arrays in parallel, forming a 5×5 network of Josephson junction amplifiers, the dynamic range or n_∞ may be tunable to up to 3.1×10^3 for inductance of $L = 2.0$ nH, higher than the $n_\infty = 0.6$ at $L = 2.0$ nH achieved when only 1 serial array of Josephson junction is used. Therefore tuning the value of M and/or N may lead to an improved dynamic range without n_∞ exceeding the value n_c .

[0063] In the example of FIG. 7B, the oscillator fundamental frequency is chosen at $\frac{\omega_0}{2\pi} = 10$ GHz with quality factor $Q = 100$, which sets specific constraints on values of C' and R' as defined in Eqns. 4 and 5 for the example circuit diagram in FIG. 4C and therefore sets specific constraints on choice of values for capacitances C_a and $2C_s$ as shown in FIG. 4B. The $M = 1$ curve 721 in the example of FIG. 7B shows the relation between choices of C_a and L , for an array of Josephson junction amplifiers with 5 junctions in series and 1 such serial junctions in parallel. The $M = 5$ curve 722 in the

example of FIG. 7B shows that expanding the measure of parallelism to include $M = 5$ parallel arrays would lead to a smaller value for C_a for a given L . Therefore in some embodiments, a smaller capacitor C_a value may be chosen when additional parallel sub-circuits are constructed. The inventors have recognized that small capacitors with capacitance values smaller for example 20 fF as shown in the shaded area in the example of FIG. 7B may be more difficult to fabricate in a device that includes quantum circuit elements. Although any suitable semiconductor manufacturing techniques may be used to fabricate structures with capacitance values tuned for improving the performance of quantum amplifiers.

[0064] Similar to the example of FIG. 7B, the example of FIG. 7C illustrates the relation between values of shunt capacitance C_s and inductance L for an oscillator with fundamental frequency $\frac{\omega_0}{2\pi} = 10$ GHz and quality factor $Q = 100$. The $M = 1$ curve 741 and $M = 5$ curve 742 in the example of FIG. 7C show that the choice of C_s for a given L is not as sensitive to the number of parallel junctions M as C_a as shown in the example of FIG. 7B. Since smaller C_s may be used when L becomes larger according to FIG. 7C, in some embodiments the use of shunt capacitors comprising silicon nitride may be eliminated by using an array of Josephson junctions with additional inductance.

[0065] Although not shown, adding an intrinsic junction capacitance C_J for each Josephson junction in the circuit diagram in FIG. 4C yields a very small variation to the calculated results in FIG. 7C. Therefore including intrinsic array capacitances C_J only affects the choice of shunt capacitance C_s by very little.

[0066] FIG. 8 shows a top view of an illustrative array of non-linear Josephson junction amplifiers 800 with $N = 5$, $M = 1$. According to the example of FIG. 8, each of the 5 Josephson junctions 811 in the serial Josephson junction array 810 may have a critical current $I_0 = 6$ μ A. The serial Josephson junction amplifiers 800 in FIG. 8 further include two meandering wire inductors 813 disposed above and below as inductance L . Shunt capacitors C_s 814 are placed in parallel to the serial array and inductors. Two shunt capacitors C_a 815 connect the serial junction array 810 and inductors 813 to two contact pads 816 disposed at the both ends of the circuit 800 in FIG. 8. Although a length of 700

μm is shown for the capacitor C_a , any suitable dimension may be used for constructing capacitances C_a and C_s .

[0067] FIG. 9 shows a top view of an illustrative array of non-linear Josephson junction amplifiers 900 with $M = 3$. According to the example of FIG. 9, adjacent sub-circuits such as 910a and 910b are spaced at a fixed distance from each other. Although $50\ \mu\text{m}$ is used, any suitable spacing may be used for constructing a coupling capacitance C_c for rejection of modes other than a common mode.

[0068] Having thus described several aspects of at least one embodiment of this invention, it is to be appreciated that various alterations, modifications, and improvements will readily occur to those skilled in the art.

[0069] Such alterations, modifications, and improvements are intended to be part of this disclosure, and are intended to be within the spirit and scope of the invention. Further, though advantages of the present invention are indicated, it should be appreciated that not every embodiment of the technology described herein will include every described advantage. Some embodiments may not implement any features described as advantageous herein and in some instances one or more of the described features may be implemented to achieve further embodiments. Accordingly, the foregoing description and drawings are by way of example only.

[0070] Various aspects of the present invention may be used alone, in combination, or in a variety of arrangements not specifically discussed in the embodiments described in the foregoing and is therefore not limited in its application to the details and arrangement of components set forth in the foregoing description or illustrated in the drawings. For example, aspects described in one embodiment may be combined in any manner with aspects described in other embodiments.

[0071] Also, the invention may be embodied as a method, of which an example has been provided. The acts performed as part of the method may be ordered in any suitable way. Accordingly, embodiments may be constructed in which acts are performed in an order different than illustrated, which may include performing some acts simultaneously, even though shown as sequential acts in illustrative embodiments.

[0072] Use of ordinal terms such as “first,” “second,” “third,” etc., in the claims to modify a claim element does not by itself connote any priority, precedence, or order of one claim element over another or the temporal order in which acts of a method are performed, but are used merely as labels to distinguish one claim element having a certain name from another element having a same name (but for use of the ordinal term) to distinguish the claim elements.

[0073] Also, the phraseology and terminology used herein is for the purpose of description and should not be regarded as limiting. The use of “including,” “comprising,” or “having,” “containing,” “involving,” and variations thereof herein, is meant to encompass the items listed thereafter and equivalents thereof as well as additional items.

CLAIMS

1. A quantum circuit, comprising:
a plurality of Josephson junctions coupled together in series and in parallel, such that at least two of the Josephson junctions are coupled together in series and at least two of the Josephson junctions are coupled together in parallel,
wherein the quantum circuit is configured to receive a plurality of pump signal components, each pump signal component parametrically adjusting a Josephson junction gain in such a manner that the quantum circuit acts as an amplifier.
2. The quantum circuit of claim 12, wherein the non-linear circuit elements are Josephson junctions.
3. The quantum circuit of claim 1, wherein N of the Josephson junctions are coupled together in series within a sub-circuit of the quantum circuit, and wherein a plurality of said sub-circuits are coupled together in parallel M times within the quantum circuit.
4. The quantum circuit of claim 3, wherein N is at least 3 and M is at least 3.
5. The quantum circuit of claim 3, further comprising a first capacitor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.
6. The quantum circuit of claim 3, further comprising at least one inductor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.
7. The quantum circuit of claim 3, further comprising a plurality of second capacitors each coupled between neighboring pairs of the sub-circuits.

8. The quantum circuit of claim 12, wherein the plurality of non-linear circuit elements are substantially identical to one another.
9. The quantum circuit of claim 1, wherein the quantum circuit is configured to operate the plurality of circuit elements in a hybrid common mode.
10. The quantum circuit of claim 1, wherein the quantum circuit is configured to receive an input signal component and to amplify said input signal component.
11. The quantum circuit of claim 10, wherein the quantum circuit is configured to receive a current source, and wherein the input signal component and the plurality of pump signal components are components of the current source.
12. A quantum circuit, comprising:
a network of a plurality of sub-circuits coupled in parallel, wherein each sub-circuit includes a plurality of non-linear circuit elements coupled in series,
wherein the network is configured to receive an input, across the plurality of sub-circuits, the input comprising a signal to be amplified and a plurality of pump signal components, each pump signal component parametrically adjusting a non-linear circuit element gain in such a manner that the network acts as an amplifier.
13. The quantum circuit of claim 12, wherein N of the non-linear circuit elements are coupled in series within each sub-circuit of the quantum circuit, wherein the network comprises M sub-circuits coupled in parallel, and wherein N is at least 3 and M is at least 3.
14. The quantum circuit of claim 12, further comprising a first capacitor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.
15. The quantum circuit of claim 12, further comprising at least one inductor within each of the plurality of sub-circuits.

16. The quantum circuit of claim 15, wherein the at least one inductor includes one or more inductors distinct from the one or more circuit elements.
17. The quantum circuit of claim 12, further comprising a plurality of second capacitors each coupled between neighboring pairs of the sub-circuits.