

Locality in Codes and Lifting

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Error-Correcting Codes

- (Linear) Code $C \subseteq \mathbb{F}_q^n$.
 - $n \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \text{block length}$
 - $k = \dim(C) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \text{message length}$
 - $R(C) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} k/n$: Rate of C (want as high as possible)
 - $\delta(C) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \min_{x \neq y \in C} \{\delta(x, y) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \Pr_i [x_i \neq y_i]\}$.
- Basic Algorithmic Tasks
 - **Encoding**: map message in \mathbb{F}_q^k to codeword.
 - **Testing**: Decide if $u \in C$
 - **Correcting**: If $u \notin C$, find nearest $v \in C$ to u .

Locality in Algorithms

- “Sublinear” time algorithms:
 - Algorithms that run in time $o(\text{input})$, $o(\text{output})$.
 - Assume **random access** to input
 - Provide **random access** to output
 - Typically probabilistic; allowed to compute output on approximation to input.
- LTCs: Codes that have sublinear time testers.
 - Decide if $u \in C$ probabilistically.
 - Allowed to accept u if $\delta(u, C)$ small.
- LCCs: Codes that have sublinear time correctors.
 - If $\delta(u, C)$ is small, compute v_i , for $v \in C$ closest to u .

LTCs and LCCs: Formally

- \mathcal{C} is a (ℓ, ϵ) -LTC if there exists a tester that
 - Makes $\ell(n)$ queries to u .
 - Accept $u \in \mathcal{C}$ w.p. 1
 - Reject u w.p. at least $\epsilon \cdot \delta(u, \mathcal{C})$.
- \mathcal{C} is a (ℓ, ϵ) -LCC if exists decoder D s.t.
 - Given oracle access u close to $v \in \mathcal{C}$, and i
 - Decoder makes $\ell(n)$ queries to u .
 - Decoder $D^u(i)$ usually outputs v_i .
 - $\Pr_i[D^u(i) \neq v_i] \leq \delta(u, v)/\epsilon$
- Often: ignore ϵ and focus on ℓ

Motivation – 1 (“Practical”)

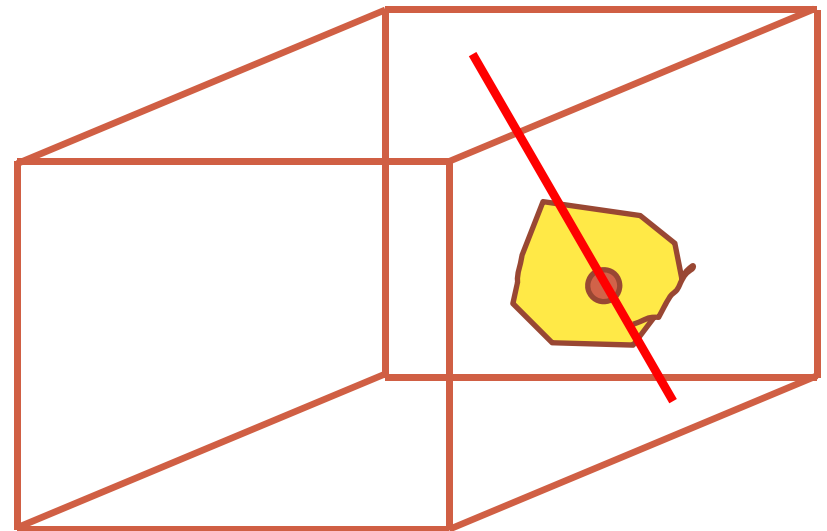
- How to encode massive data?
 - Solution I
 - Break data into small pieces; encode separately.
 - Pro: Recovery time $\sim |small|$
 - Con: $\Pr[failure] = \#pieces \times \Pr[failure\ of\ a\ piece]$
 - Solution II
 - Encode all data in one big chunk
 - Pro: $\Pr[failure] = \exp(-|big\ chunk|)$
 - Con: Recovery time $\sim |big\ chunk|$
 - Locality (if possible): Best of both Solutions!!

Motivation – 2 (“Theoretical”)

- (Many?) mathematical consequences:
 - Probabilistically checkable proofs:
 - Use specific LCCs and LTCs
 - Hardness amplification:
 - Constructing functions that are very hard on average from functions that are hard on worst-case.
 - Any (sufficiently good) LCC \Rightarrow Hardness amplification
 - Small set expanders (SSE):
 - Usually have mostly small eigenvalues.
 - LTCs \Rightarrow SSEs with many big eigenvalues [Barak et al., Gopalan et al.]

Example: Multivariate Polynomials

- Message = multivariate polynomial;
Encoding = evaluations everywhere.
 - $\text{RM}[m, d, q] \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \{ \langle f(\alpha) \rangle_{\alpha \in \mathbb{F}_q^m} \mid f \in \mathbb{F}_q[x_1, \dots, x_m], \deg(f) \leq d \}$
- Locality?
 - Restrictions of low-degree polynomials to lines yield low-degree (univ.) polys.
 - Random lines sample \mathbb{F}_q^m uniformly (pairwise ind'ly)



LDCs and LTCs from Polynomials

- Decoding ($d \leq q$):
 - Problem: Given $f \approx p$, $\alpha \in \mathbb{F}_q^m$, compute $p(\alpha)$.
 - Pick random β and consider $f|_L$ where $L = \{\alpha + t\beta \mid t \in \mathbb{F}_q\}$ is a random line $\ni \alpha$.
 - Find univ. poly $h \approx f|_L$ and output $h(\alpha)$
- Testing ($d \leq q$):
 - Verify $\deg(f|_L) \leq d$.
- Parameters:
 - $n = q^m$; $\ell = q = n^{\frac{1}{m}}$; $R(C) \approx \left(\frac{1}{m}\right)^m$

Decoding Polynomials

- $d < q$
 - Correct more errors (possibly list-decode)
 - can correct $\approx 1 - \sqrt{d/q}$ fraction errors [STV].
- $d > q$
 - Distance of code $\delta \approx q^{-d/(q-1)}$
 - Decode by projecting to $\approx \frac{d}{q-1}$ dimensions. “decoding dimension”.
 - Locality $\approx 1/\delta$.
 - Lots of work to decode from $\approx \delta$ fraction errors [GopalanKlivansZuckerman, G, BhowmickLovett].

Testing Polynomials

- $d \ll q$:
 - Even slight advantage on test implies correlation with polynomial. [RazSafra, AroraSudan, ...]
- $d > q$:
 - Testing dimension $t = \frac{d}{q - \frac{q}{p}}$; where $q = p^s$;
 - Project to t dimensions and test.
 - $(q^t, \min\{\epsilon_q, q^{-2t}\})$ -LTC.

Testing vs. Decoding dimensions

- Why is decoding dimension $d/(q - 1)$?
 - Every function on fewer variables is a degree d polynomial. So clearly need at least this many dimensions.
- Why is testing dimension $d/(q - q/p)$?
 - Consider $q = 2^s, d = \frac{q}{2}$ and $f = x^d y^d$.
 - On line $y = ax + b$,
 - $f = x^d (ax + b)^d = x^d (a^d x^d + b^d) = a^d x + b^d x^d$.
 - So $\deg(f) = q = 2d$, but f has degree $\leq d$ on every line!
 - In general if $q = p^s$ then powers of p pass through (...)
 - Aside: Using more than testing dimension has not paid dividend with one exception [RazSafra]

Other LTCs and LCCs

- Composition of codes yields better LTCs.
 - Reduces $\ell(\cdot)$ (to even 3) without too much loss in $R(C)$.
 - But till recently, $R(C) \leq \frac{1}{2}$
- LCCs
 - Till 2006, multivariate polynomials almost best known.
 - 2007+ [Yekhanin, Raghavendra, Efremenko] – great LDCs (weaker than LCCs) for $\ell(n) = O(1); n = \text{superpoly}(k)$.
 - 2010 [KoppartySarafYekhanin] - Multiplicity codes get $R(C) \rightarrow 1$ with $\ell(n) = n^\epsilon$
 - For $\ell(n) = \log n$; multiv. Polys are still best known.

Today

- New Locally Correctible and Testable Codes from “Lifting”.
 - $R(C) \rightarrow 1; \ell(n) = n^\epsilon$ for arbitrary $\epsilon > 0$.
 - 1 of 3 “LCCs” with this property
 - After Multiplicity codes [KoppartySarafYekhanin]
 - Also Expander based LCCs [HemmenwayOstrovksyWooters]
 - 1 of 2 “LTCs” with this property
 - After [Ben-SassonViderman]
 - \Rightarrow First “LTC + LCC” !
 - [Meir’14]: “LTC+LCCs” along the Singleton Bound!!

The codes

- Alphabet: \mathbb{F}_q
- Coordinates: \mathbb{F}_q^m
- Parameter: degree d
- Message space:
 $\{f: \mathbb{F}_q^m \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q \mid \deg(f|_L) \leq d, \forall \text{ lines } L\}$
- Code: Evaluations of message on all of \mathbb{F}_q^m
- And oh ... $q = 2^s; d = (1 - \epsilon)q; m = O(1)$

Recall: Bad news about \mathbb{F}_2^s

- Functions that look like degree d polynomials on every line \neq degree d m -variate polynomials.
- But this is good news!
 - Message space includes all degree d polynomials.
 - And has more.
 - So rate is higher!
 - But does this make a quantitative difference?
 - As we will see ... **YES!** Most of the dimension comes from the “illegitimate” functions.

Generalizing: Lifted Codes

- Consider $B \subseteq \{\mathbb{F}_Q^t \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q\}$.
 - \mathbb{F}_Q extends \mathbb{F}_q
 - Preferably B invariant under affine transformations of \mathbb{F}_Q^t .
- Lifted code $C \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \text{Lift}_m(B) \subseteq \{\mathbb{F}_Q^m \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q\}$
 - $C = \{f \mid f|_A \in B, \forall t\text{-dim. affine subspaces } A\}$.
- Previous example:
 - $B = \{f: \mathbb{F}_q \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q \mid \deg(f) \leq d\}$

Properties of lifted codes

- Distance:
 - $\delta(C) \geq \delta(B) - Q^{-t} + Q^{-m} \approx \delta(B)$
- Local Decodability:
 - Same decoding algorithm as for RM codes.
 - B is (ℓ, ϵ) -LDC implies C is $(\ell, \Omega(\epsilon))$ -LDC.
- Local Testability?

Local Testability of lifted codes

- Local Testability:
 - Test: Pick A and verify $f|_A \in B$.
 - “Single-orbit characterization”: (Q^t, Q^{-2t}) -LTC [KS]
 - (Better?) analysis for lifted tests: (Q^t, ϵ_Q) -LTC [HRS] (extends [BKSSZ,HSS])
- Musings:
 - Analyses not robust (test can't accept if $f|_A \approx B$.) [Work in progress]
 - Still: generalizes almost all known tests ... [Main exceptions – [ALMSS,PS,RS,AS]].
 - Key question: what is min K s.t. $f|_{A_1}, \dots, f|_{A_K} \in B \Rightarrow$ there exists an interpolator $g \in C$ s.t. $g|_{A_i} = f|_{A_i}$

Returning to (our) lifted codes

- Distance ✓
- Local Decodability ✓
- Local Testability ✓
- Rate?
 - No generic analysis; has to be done on case by case basis.
 - Just have to figure out which monomials are in \mathcal{C} .

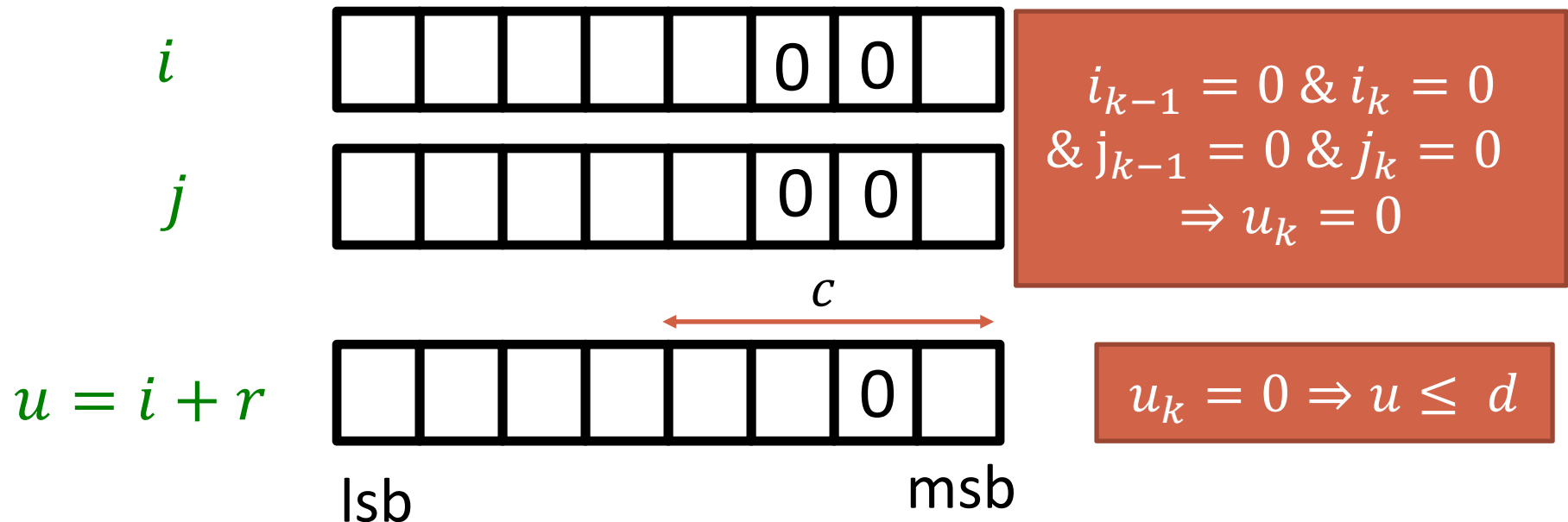
Rate of bivariate Lifted RS codes

- $B = \{f \in \mathbb{F}_q[x] \mid \deg(f) \leq d = (1 - \epsilon)q\}$; $q = 2^s$
 - Will set $\epsilon = 2^{-c}$ and let $c \rightarrow \infty$.
- $C = \{f: \mathbb{F}_q[x, y] \mid f|_{y=ax+b} \in B, \forall a, b\}$
 - When is $x^i y^j \in C$?
 - Clearly if $i + j \leq d$; But that is at most $\frac{q^2}{2}$ pairs.
 - Want $\approx \frac{q^2}{2}$ more such pairs.
 - When is every term of $x^i(ax + b)^j \bmod (x^q - x)$ of degree at most d ?

Lucas's theorem & Rate

- Notation: $r \leq_2 j$, if $r = \sum_i r_i 2^i$ and $j = \sum_i j_i 2^i$ ($r_i, j_i \in \{0,1\}$) and $r_i \leq j_i$ for all i .
- Lucas's Theorem: $x^r \in \text{supp} \left((ax + b)^j \right)$ iff $r \leq_2 j$.
- $\Rightarrow \text{supp}(x^i (ax + b)^j) \ni x^{i+r}$ iff $r \leq_2 j$
- So given i, j ; $\exists r \leq_2 j$ s. t. $i + r \pmod{q} > d$?

Binary addition etc.



$$\Pr_{i,j} [i_{\{k-1\}} \dots j_k \neq 0000] \leq 15/16$$

$$\Pr_{i,j} [i + r \pmod{q} > d] \leq \left(\frac{15}{16}\right)^{\frac{c}{2}} \rightarrow 0 \text{ as } c \rightarrow \infty$$

Other lifted codes

- Best LCC with $O(1)$ locality.
 - $B = \{f: \mathbb{F}_2^s \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_2 \mid \sum_a f(a) = 0\}$;
 - $s = \log_2 \ell = O(1)$
 - $C = \text{Lift}_m(B)$;
 - $n = 2^{sm}$; ℓ -LCC; $\dim(C) = (\log n)^\ell$
- Alternate codes for BGHMRS construction:
 - $B = \{f: \mathbb{F}_4^{m - \log 1/\epsilon} \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_2 \mid \sum_a f(a) = 0\}$
 - $C = \text{Lift}_m(B)$;
 - $\ell = \epsilon n$; $\dim(C) = n - \text{polylog}(n)$

Nikodym Sets

- $N \subseteq \mathbb{F}_q^m$ is a Nikodym set if it almost contains a line through every point:
 - $\forall a \in \mathbb{F}_q^m, \exists b \in \mathbb{F}_q^m$ s.t. $\{a + tb \mid t \in \mathbb{F}_q\} \subseteq N \cup \{a\}$
- Similar to Kakeya Set (which contain line in every direction).
 - $\forall b \in \mathbb{F}_q^m, \exists a \in \mathbb{F}_q^m$ s.t. $\{a + tb \mid t \in \mathbb{F}_q\} \subseteq K$
- [Dvir], [DKSS]: $|K|, |N| \geq \left(\frac{q}{2}\right)^m$

Proof (“Polynomial Method”)

- Find low-degree poly $P \neq 0$ s.t. $P(b) = 0, \forall b \in N$.
- $\deg(P) < q - 1$ provided $|N| < \binom{m+q-2}{m}$.
- But now $P|_{L_a} = 0, \forall$ Nikodym lines $L_a \Rightarrow P(a) = 0 \forall a$,
contradicting $P \neq 0$.
- Conclude $|N| \geq \binom{m+q-2}{m} \approx \frac{q^m}{m!}$.
- Multiplicities, more work, yields $|N| \geq \left(\frac{q}{2}\right)^m$.
- But what do we really need from P ?
 - P comes from a large dimensional vector space.
 - $P|_L$ is low-degree!
 - Using P from lifted code yields $|N| \geq (1 - o(1))q^m$
(provided q of small characteristic).

Conclusions

- Lifted codes seem to extend “low-degree polynomials” nicely:
 - Most locality features remain same.
 - Rest are open problems.
 - Lead to new codes.
- More generally: Affine-invariant codes worth exploring.
 - Can we improve on multiv. poly in polylog locality regime?

Thank You