

Short Proofs are Hard to Find

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Joint work w/ Toni Pitassi, Hao Wei

IAS, December 5, 2017

Proof complexity

*54·43. $\vdash : \alpha, \beta \in 1 \supset : \alpha \wedge \beta = \Lambda \equiv \alpha \vee \beta \in 2$

Dem.

$\vdash \cdot *54\cdot26 \supset \vdash : \alpha = t'x, \beta = t'y \supset : \alpha \vee \beta \in 2 \equiv \cdot x \neq y \cdot$

[*51·231] $\equiv \cdot t'x \wedge t'y = \Lambda \cdot$

[*13·12] $\equiv \cdot \alpha \wedge \beta = \Lambda \quad (1)$

$\vdash \cdot (1) \cdot *11\cdot11\cdot35 \supset$

$\vdash : (\exists x, y) \cdot \alpha = t'x, \beta = t'y \supset : \alpha \vee \beta \in 2 \equiv \cdot \alpha \wedge \beta = \Lambda \quad (2)$

$\vdash \cdot (2) \cdot *11\cdot54 \cdot *52\cdot1 \supset \vdash \cdot \text{Prop}$

From this proposition it will follow, when arithmetical addition has been defined, that $1 + 1 = 2$.

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Proof systems

Propositional proof system [Cook-Reckhow]

A *propositional proof system* is an onto map from proofs to tautologies checkable in polynomial time.

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A *propositional proof system* is an onto map from **refutations** to **unsatisfiable formulas** checkable in polynomial time.

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Polynomially-bounded PPS [Cook-Reckhow]

A PPS \mathcal{P} is *polynomially bounded* if for every unsatisfiable k -CNF τ with n variables and $\text{poly}(n)$ clauses ($k = O(\log n)$), there exists a \mathcal{P} -proof π such that $|\pi| \leq \text{poly}(n)$.

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Theorem (Cook-Reckhow)

$\text{NP} = \text{coNP}$ iff there exists a polynomially-bounded PPS.

Resolution

Axioms:

$$a \vee b \vee c$$

$$a \vee \bar{c}$$

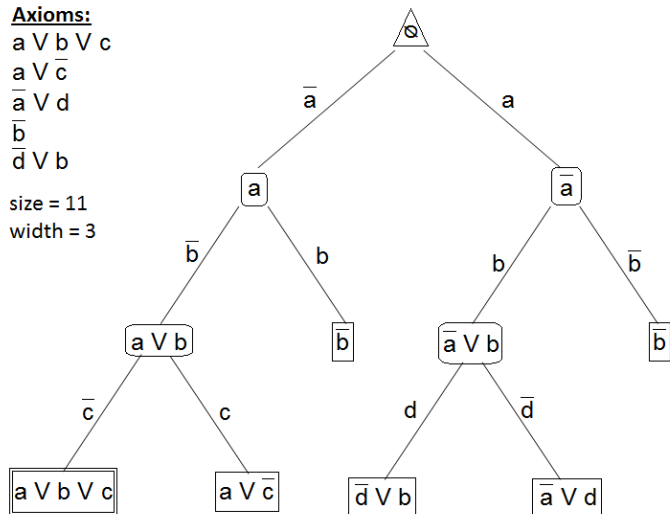
$$\bar{a} \vee d$$

$$\bar{b}$$

$$\bar{d} \vee b$$

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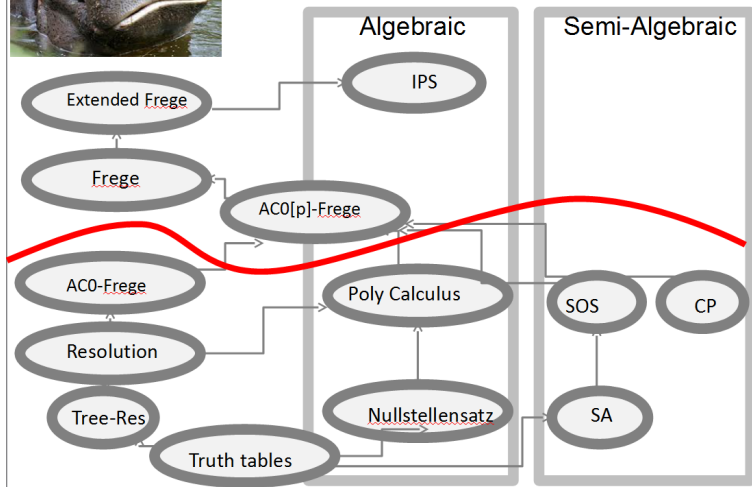
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Relations between proof systems



The Proof Complexity Zoo



Automatizability

Automatizability [Bonet-Pitassi-Raz]

A proof system \mathcal{P} is automatizable if there exists an algorithm $A : \text{UNSAT} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ that takes as input τ and returns a \mathcal{P} -refutation of τ in time $\text{poly}(n, S)$, where $S := S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau)$.

Automatizability

Automatizability [Bonet-Pitassi-Raz]

A proof system \mathcal{P} is f -automatizable if there exists an algorithm $A : \text{UNSAT} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}$ that takes as input τ and returns a \mathcal{P} -refutation of τ in time $f(n, S)$, where $S := S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau)$.

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Automatizability is connected to many problems in computer science...

- theorem proving and SAT solvers ([Davis-Putnam-Logemann-Loveland], [Pipatsrisawat-Darwiche])
- algorithms for PAC learning ([Kothari-Livni], [Alekhovich-Braverman-Feldman-Klivans-Pitassi])
- algorithms for unsupervised learning ([Bhattiprolu-Guruswami-Lee])
- approximation algorithms (many works...)

Known automatizability results

- any polynomially bounded PPS is not automatizable if $NP \not\subseteq P/poly$ ([Ajtai]; [Impagliazzo],[BPR])

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- approximating $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau)$ to within $2^{\log^{1-o(1)} n}$ is NP-hard ([Alekhnovich-Buss-Moran-Pitassi])
- lower bounds against strong (Frege/Extended Frege) systems under cryptographic assumptions ([Bonet-Domingo-Gavaldà-Maciel-Pitassi],[BPR],[Krajíček-Pudlák])

Known automatizability results

- first lower bounds against automatizability for Res, TreeRes by [Alekhnovich-Razborov]

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Rest of this talk: a new version of [AR] + [GL]

- simplified
- stronger lower bounds (near quasipolynomial)
- works for more systems (Res, TreeRes, Nullsatz, PC, Res(k))

Our results

Theorem (Main Theorem for GapETH)

Assuming GapETH, \mathcal{P} is not $n^{\tilde{O}(\log \log S)}$ -automatizable for $\mathcal{P} = \text{Res}, \text{TreeRes}, \text{Nullsatz}, \text{PC}$.

Theorem (Main Theorem for ETH)

Assuming ETH, \mathcal{P} is not $n^{\tilde{O}(\log^{1/7 - o(1)} \log S)}$ -automatizable for $\mathcal{P} = \text{Res}, \text{TreeRes}, \text{Nullsatz}, \text{PC}$.

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Known automatizability results

System	Assumption	Result	Ref
Any PPS	NP-hard	$2^{\log^{1-o(1)} n}$	[ABMP]
Any poly PPS	$\text{NP} \not\subseteq \text{P/poly}$	superpoly(n, S)	[A]; [I],[BPR]
AC^0 -Frege	Diffie-Hellman requires circuits of size 2^{n^ϵ}	superpoly(n, S)	[BDGMP]
Frege	Factoring Blum integers requires circuits of size $n^{\omega(1)}$	superpoly(n, S)	[BPR]
E. Frege	Discrete log is not in P/poly	superpoly(n, S)	[KP]
Res, TreeRes	$\text{W[P]} \neq \text{FPT}$	superpoly(n, S)	[AR]
Nullsatz, PC	$\text{W[P]} \neq \text{FPT}$	superpoly(n, S)	[GL]
Res, TreeRes, Nullsatz, PC	GapETH ETH	$n^{\tilde{\Omega}(\log \log S)}$ $n^{\tilde{\Omega}(\log^{1/7-o(1)} \log S)}$	this work

A note on width automatizability

Theorem (Observation)

If τ has a width d TreeRes or Res refutation, it can be found in time $n^{O(d)}$.

Proof: brute force (repeatedly resolve all pairs of available clauses)

A note on width automatizability

Theorem (Clegg-Edmonds-Impagliazzo)

If τ has a degree d Nullsatz or PC refutation, it can be found in time $n^{O(d)}$.

Proof: Groebner basis algorithm

A note on width automatizability

Theorem (Sherali-Adams; Shor, Parrilo-Lasserre)

If τ has a degree d SA or SoS refutation, it can be found in time $n^{O(d)}$.

Proof: linear/semidefinite programming

A note on width automatizability

Theorem (BP; CEI; SA; S, PL)

If τ has a width d TreeRes or Res refutation, it can be found in time $n^{O(d)}$. If τ has a degree d Nullsatz, PC, SA, or SoS refutation, it can be found in time $n^{O(d)}$.

Theorem (Bonet-Galesi; Lauria-Nordström, Atserias-Lauria-Nordström)

There exist τ such that $w_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau) = O(d)$ and $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau) = n^{\Omega(d)}$ for $\mathcal{P} = \text{TreeRes}, \text{Res}$.

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Important: does *not* mean that automatizability is resolved, because $S_{\mathcal{P}} = n^{O(d)}$ may not be tight.

A note on width automatizability

Theorem (Ben-Sasson-Wigderson)

$w(\tau) \leq \log S(\tau)$ for TreeRes and $w(\tau) \leq \sqrt{n \log S(\tau)}$ for Res.

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Theorem (BP)

TreeRes is $n^{O(\log S)}$ -*automatizable*.

Res is $n^{O(\sqrt{n \log S})}$ -*automatizable*.

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$w(\tau) \leq \log S(\tau)$ for TreeRes and $w(\tau) \leq \sqrt{n \log S(\tau)}$ for Res.

Theorem (BP)

TreeRes is $n^{O(\log S)}$ -automatizable.

Res is $n^{O(\sqrt{n \log S})}$ -automatizable.

Nullsatz is $n^{O(\log S)}$ -automatizable, no other upper bounds known.

Getting an automatizability lower bound

Recipe:

- (1) Hard gap problem G
- (2) Turn an instance of G into a tautology τ such that
 - “yes” instances have small proofs
 - “no” instances have no small proofs
- (3) Run automatizing algorithm Aut on τ and see how long the output is

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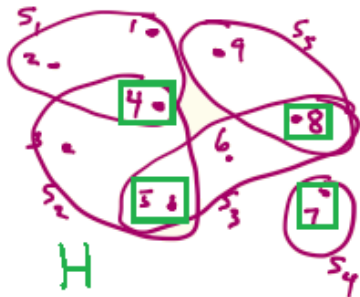
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Gap hitting set

- $\mathcal{S} = \{S_1 \dots S_n\}$ over $[n]$
- *hitting set*: $H \subseteq [n]$ s.t. $H \cap S_i \neq \emptyset$ for all $i \in [n]$
- $\gamma(\mathcal{S})$ is the size of the smallest such H
- **Gap hitting set**: given \mathcal{S} , distinguish whether $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) \leq k$ or $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) > k^2$



Theorem (CCKLMNT)

Assuming GapETH the gap hitting set problem cannot be solved in time $n^{o(k)}$ for $k = \tilde{O}(\log \log n)$

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From gap hitting set to automatizability

Theorem (Main Technical Lemma)

For $k = \tilde{O}(\log \log n)$, there exists a polytime algorithm mapping \mathcal{S} to $\tau_{\mathcal{S}}$ s.t.

- if $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) \leq k$ then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_{\mathcal{S}}) \leq n^{O(1)}$
- if $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) > k^2$ then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_{\mathcal{S}}) \geq n^{\Omega(k)}$

where $\mathcal{P} \in \{\text{TreeRes}, \text{Res}, \text{Nullsatz}, \text{PC}\}$.

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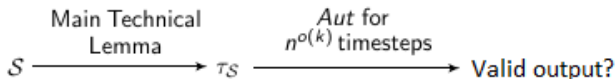
Proof: Let Aut be the automatizing algorithm for \mathcal{P} running in time $f(n, S) = n^{\tilde{o}(\log \log S)}$, and let $k = \tilde{\Theta}(\log \log n)$.

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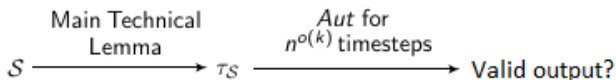


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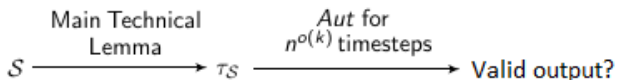
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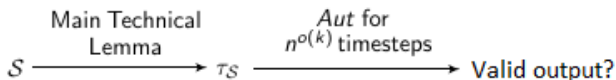
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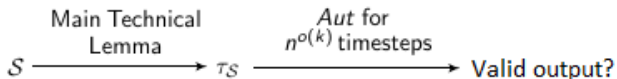
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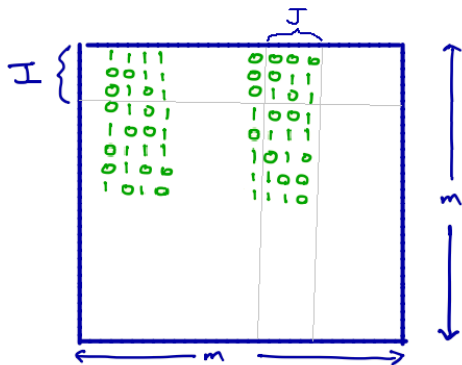
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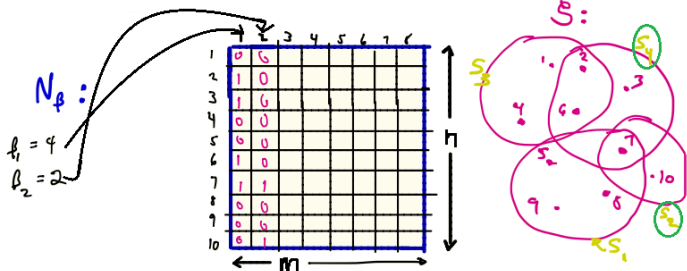
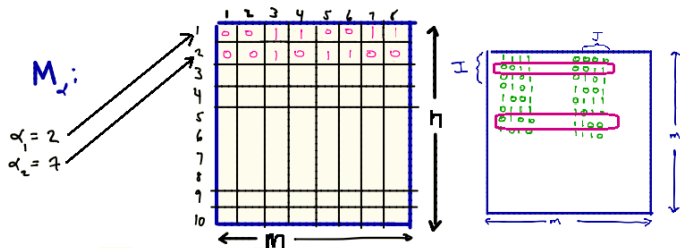
For the rest of the talk...

- fix $k = \tilde{\Theta}(\log \log n)$
- $m = n^{1/k}$ ($k \log m = \log n$)
- $k \leq \frac{\log m}{4}$

Detour: universal sets

- $A_{m \times m}$ is (m, q) -universal if for all $I \subseteq [m]$, $|I| \leq q$, all $2^{|I|}$ possible column vectors appear in A restricted to the rows I
- additional requirement: for all $J \subseteq [m]$, $|J| \leq q$, all $2^{|J|}$ possible row vectors appear in A restricted to the columns J
- fix some such A as a gadget (constructions like the *Paley graph* work for $q = \frac{\log m}{4}$)



Defining τ_S 

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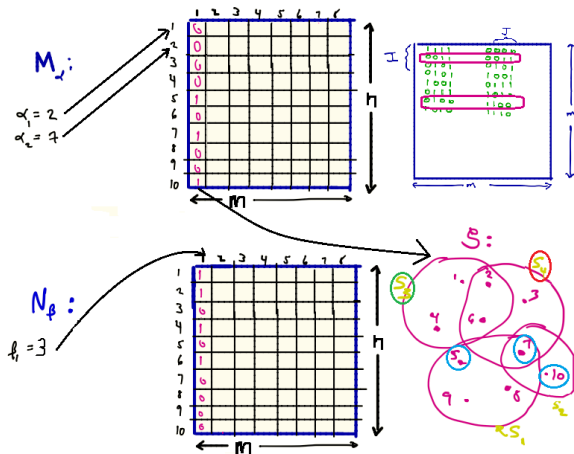
- $Mat(\mathcal{S})_{n \times n}$ is the matrix whose columns are the indicator vectors of \mathcal{S}
- $\vec{x} = x_1 \dots x_n$ where $x_i \in \{0, 1\}^{\log m}$ ($n \log m$ variables total),
 $\vec{y} = y_1 \dots y_m$ where $y_j \in \{0, 1\}^{\log n}$ ($m \log n$ variables total)
- $x_i = \alpha_i \rightarrow M_\alpha[i, j] = A[\alpha_i, j]$ (treat α_i as an element of $[m]$)
- $y_j = \beta_j \rightarrow N_\beta[i, j] = Mat(\mathcal{S})[i, \beta_j]$ (treat β_j as an element of $[n]$)

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τ_S will state that there exist $\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}$ such that there is no i, j where $M_{\alpha}[i, j] = N_{\beta}[i, j] = 1$

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- for every i, j, α_i, β_j such that $A[\alpha_i, j] = \text{Mat}(\mathcal{S})[i, \beta_j] = 1,$

$$\overline{x_i^{\alpha_i} \wedge y_j^{\beta_j}}$$

- all clauses have width $\log m + \log n$
- $nm2^{\log n}2^{\log m} = n^2m^2$ clauses

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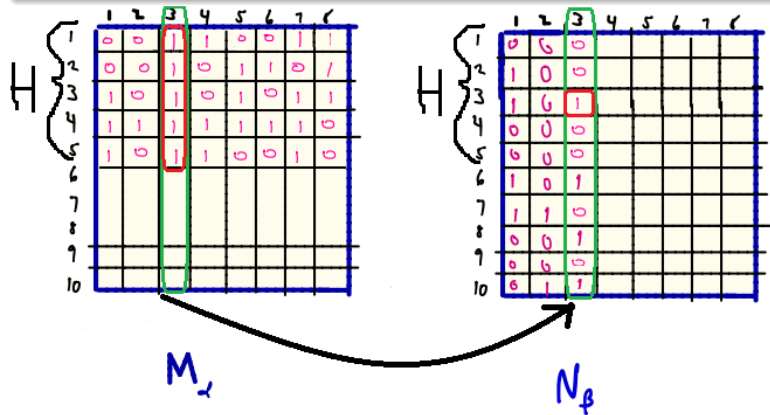
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Defining $\tau_{\mathcal{S}}$

Lemma

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Proof: Let $H = \{i_1 \dots i_\gamma\}$ be a hitting set of size $\gamma := \gamma(\mathcal{S})$.

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 $\{\alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_\gamma}\}$ is a set of at most $\frac{\log m}{4}$ rows from A ($\gamma \leq \frac{\log m}{4}$).

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$\{\alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_\gamma}\}$ is a set of at most $\frac{\log m}{4}$ rows from A ($\gamma \leq \frac{\log m}{4}$).

There exists some $j \in [m]$ such that $M_\alpha[i, j] = 1$ for all $i \in H$ (universal property of A).

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$\{\alpha_{i_1} \dots \alpha_{i_\gamma}\}$ is a set of at most $\frac{\log m}{4}$ rows from A ($\gamma \leq \frac{\log m}{4}$).

There exists some $j \in [m]$ such that $M_\alpha[i, j] = 1$ for all $i \in H$ (universal property of A).

There must be some $i \in H$ such that $N_\beta[i, j] = 1$ (H is a hitting set).

Defining τ_S

Lemma

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Therefore the axiom $\overline{x_i^{\alpha_i}} \wedge y_j^{\beta_j}$ is falsified.

Upper bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Lemma (Upper bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$)

If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) \leq k$, then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S) \leq n^{O(1)}$ for any \mathcal{P} which p -simulates TreeRes.

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Proof: TreeRes refutation of $\tau \leftrightarrow$
decision tree solving the search
problem on τ

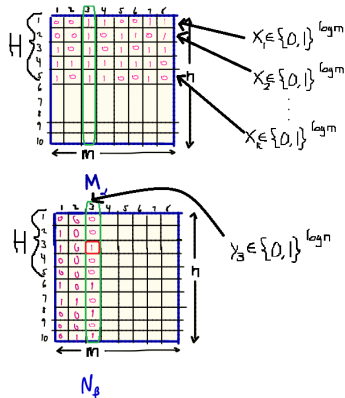
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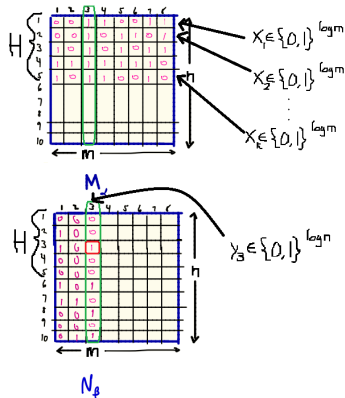
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Size of the proof:
 $2^{k \log m + \log n} = n^2$

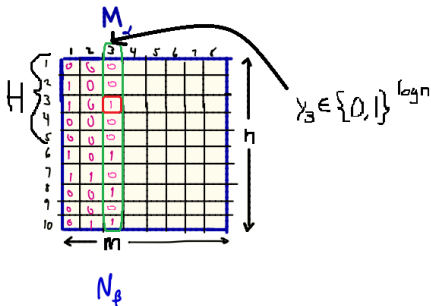
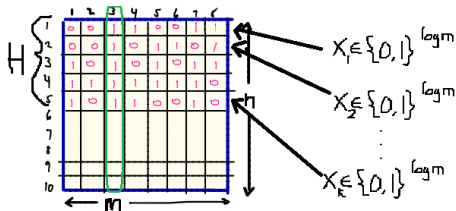


Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

- error-correcting codes:

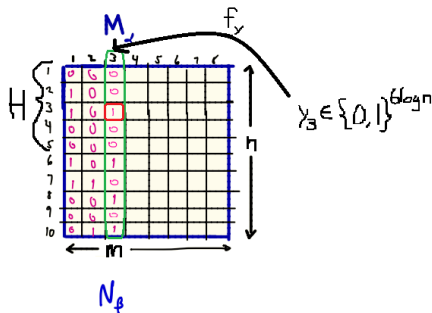
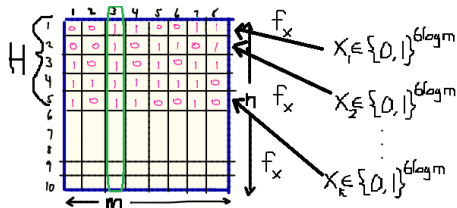
$$x_i \in \{0, 1\}^{6 \log m},$$

$$y_j \in \{0, 1\}^{6 \log n}$$



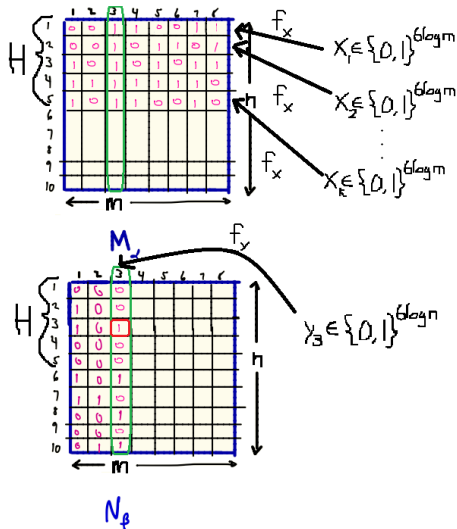
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- *error-correcting codes*:
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Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

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 $f_y : \{0, 1\}^{6 \log n} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}^{\log n}$ is $2 \log n$ -surjective
- high-level idea: π knows nothing about a row or column without setting lots of variables



Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Lemma (Upper bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$)

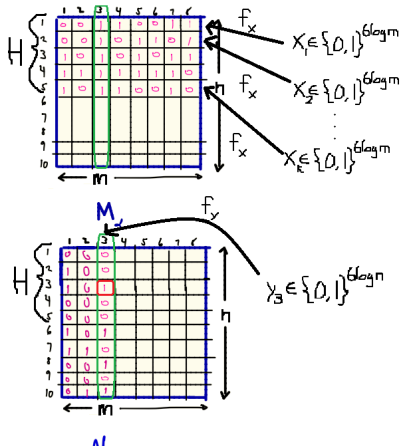
If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) \leq k$, then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S) \leq n^{O(1)}$ for any \mathcal{P} which p -simulates TreeRes.

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- query all vars in x_i for all $i \in H$
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Size of the proof:

$$2^{6k \log m + 6 \log n} = n^{12}$$



Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Lemma (Lower bound on $S(\tau_S)$)

If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) > k^2$, then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S) \geq n^{\Omega(k)}$.

Two steps:

- 1 Width/degree lower bound
- 2 Random restriction argument

Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Lemma (Lower bound on $S(\tau_S)$ for TreeRes)

If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) > k^2$, then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S) \geq n^{\Omega(k)}$ for $\mathcal{P} = \text{TreeRes}$.

One step:

- 1 Height lower bound

Lower bound on $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

To get height lower bounds, we play an adversarial game against π solving the search problem.

Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

To get height lower bounds, we play an adversarial game against π solving the search problem.

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Lemma (Row/column height lower bound for TreeRes)

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Corollary (Height lower bound for TreeRes)

If $\gamma(S) > k^2$, then for every TreeRes refutation π for τ_S , π has height at least $k \log n$.

Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

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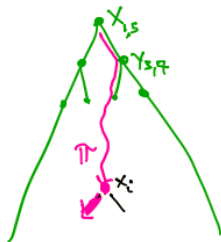
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Whenever π queries a variable in x_i :

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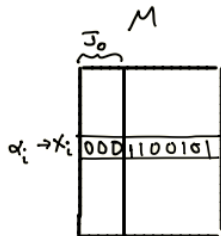
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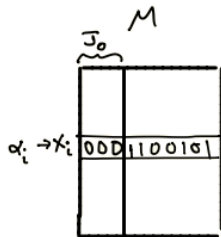
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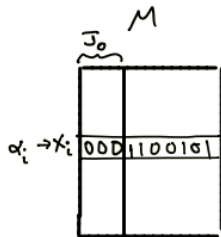
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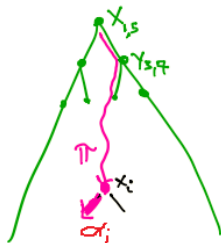
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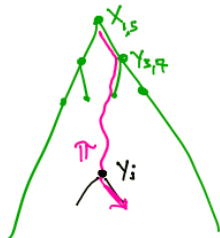
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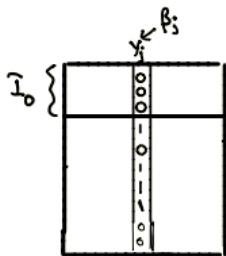
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 - $(S_j)_i = 0$ for all $i \in I_0(p)$
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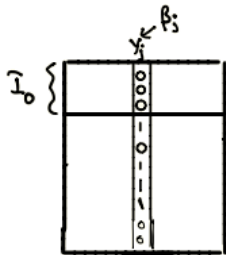
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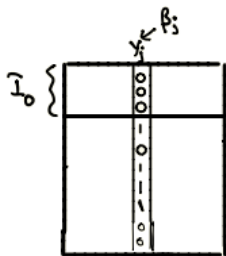
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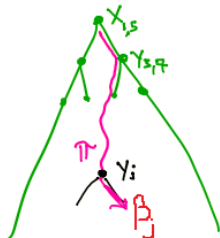
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Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

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If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) > k^2$, then $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S) \geq n^{\Omega(k)}$ for $\mathcal{P} = \text{Res}$.

Two steps:

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Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Lemma (Wide clause lemma for Res)

If $\gamma(\mathcal{S}) \geq k^2$, then for every Res refutation π for τ_S , π contains a clause D such that either $|I_0(D)| \geq k^2$ or $|J_0(D)| \geq k$.

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We play the exactly as in the TreeRes wide clause lemma, but now whenever i drops below the $\log m$ threshold we erase our stored α_i , and likewise for j .

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To get a contradiction we consider the *last* time i was added to I_0 and j was added to J_0 .

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Lower bound on $S_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

Other proof systems:

Lower bound on $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{P}}(\tau_S)$

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- Res - prover-delayer game [Pudlák, Atserias-Lauria-Nordström]

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Open problems

- extending to Sherali-Adams, Sum-of-Squares, Cutting Planes, ...

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- extending to Sherali-Adams, Sum-of-Squares, Cutting Planes, ...
- better hard k in gap hitting set \rightarrow better non-automatizability result (up to $k = \sqrt{\log n}$)
- different technique that doesn't work for TreeRes may give subexponential lower bounds

Thank you!

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