Effective Complexity

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▶ 1. Definition of Effective Complexity

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- ► 4. Effective Complexity and Logical Depth

Existence of Complex Strings (

Algorithmic Information Content (AIC):

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If U is a universal computer, mapping binary strings $\{0,1\}^* = \{\lambda, 0, 1, 00, 01, ...\}$ to binary strings, then

 $C(x) := \min\{\ell(p) \mid U(p) = x\}$

is the "algorithmic information content" of *x*, also called "Kolmogorov complexity" of the string *x*.

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 then $K(x) \approx \log n$.

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then $K(x) \approx n \Rightarrow K$ is not really a complexity measure!

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Complexity and Depth

Effective Complexity (M. Gell-Mann & S. Lloyd)

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Idea: Instead of the AIC K(x), define the effective complexity of x as the AIC of its regularities (\rightarrow discard the random aspects).



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▶ Regularities in x: a computable ensemble E of strings, describing a process that possibly generated x.

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But: What to do if x is given without knowing the process that generated it? How to decide which ensemble \mathbb{E} to take? How to decide which ensemble \mathbb{E} to take for a given string x?



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Complexity and Depth

How to decide which ensemble \mathbb{E} to take for a given string x? There is a countably-infinite number of computable ensembles \mathbb{E} .



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E.g. \mathbb{E} :=uniform distribution on all strings of length 42



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Plotting all computable \mathbb{E} ...



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One of them is $\mathbb{E}_{x}(s) := \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } s = x, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$ $K(\mathbb{E})$ **E**₁₀ -H(E)

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Step 1: Allow only those \mathbb{E} with $\mathbb{E}(x) \stackrel{\approx}{\geq} 2^{-H(\mathbb{E})}$



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Observation: The remaining ensembles all have total information $\Sigma(\mathbb{E}) := \mathcal{K}(\mathbb{E}) + \mathcal{H}(\mathbb{E}) \geq \mathcal{K}(\mathbb{E}_x) - \mathcal{O}(1) = \mathcal{K}(x) - \mathcal{O}(1).$



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Step 2: Find the ensemble \mathbb{E}^* with minimal $\mathcal{K}(\mathbb{E})$ along this approximate line \rightarrow we are done: $\mathcal{E}(x) := \mathcal{K}(\mathbb{E}^*)$.



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Definition (Effective Complexity)

 $\mathcal{E}_{\delta,\Delta}(x)$ is defined as the minimal $K(\mathbb{E})$ of all ensembles \mathbb{E} with $\mathbb{E}(x) \geq 2^{-H(\mathbb{E})(1+\delta)}$ and $K(\mathbb{E}) + H(\mathbb{E}) \leq K(x) + \Delta$.



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A string x of length n is "random" or r-incompressible, if

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Theorem (after Gell-Mann and Lloyd 1996) There is a constant c > 0 such that

$$\mathcal{E}_{\delta,\Delta}(x) \leq \log n + \mathcal{O}(\log \log n)$$

for all r-incompressible strings x of length n, $\delta \ge 0$ and $\Delta \ge r + c$.

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Most strings are *r*-incompressible and have $\mathcal{E}(x) \leq \mathcal{O}(\log n)$.



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Most strings are *r*-incompressible and have $\mathcal{E}(x) \leq \mathcal{O}(\log n)$. Are there any effectively complex strings at all?



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• Are there strings x with $\mathcal{E}(x) \approx n$?



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Theorem (MM, A. Szkoła, N. Ay '08)

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Theorem (MM, A. Szkoła, N. Ay '08)

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Is also true for *E* with constraints: adding constraits makes effective complexity increase.

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Most strings are *r*-incompressible and have $\mathcal{E}(x) \leq \mathcal{O}(\log n)$. Are there any effectively complex strings at all?

- ► $\mathcal{E}_{\delta,\Delta}(x) = K(\mathbb{E}^*) \leq K(\mathbb{E}^*) + H(\mathbb{E}^*) \leq K(x) + \Delta \leq n + \mathcal{O}(1).$
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Open Problem: Find more intuitive examples, or give a better interpretation! (\rightarrow Gell-Mann, Lloyd: DNA?)

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Complexity and Depth

Effective Complexity and Logical Depth (informal)

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Bennett '88: The logical depth of a string x is the minimal number of time steps required by a universal computer to produce x from an almost-minimal program.

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- The Quark and the Jaguar: Gell-Mann discusses interrelations between algorithmic information content and effective complexity as well as logical depth.
 - \rightarrow relation between depth and complexity?

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Theorem (MM, A. Szkoła, N. Ay '08) If $f : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}$ is a strictly increasing, computable function and x is a string then

 $\mathcal{E}(x) > K(C(x)) + K(f) + \mathcal{O}(1)$

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- Holds also for effective complexity with constraints (under mild assumptions on the constraints).

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Existence of Complex Strings

Complexity and Depth

Effective Complexity and Logical Depth:



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Effective Complexity



► If
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▶ If x is incompressible, then $\mathcal{E}(x) \leq K(C(x)) + \mathcal{O}(1)$. But x is random hence shallow, so $Depth(x) = n + \mathcal{O}(1)$.

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► The "edge of depth" at K(C(x)). Happens also for E with constraints.

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 - ▶ shown that there exist effectively complex strings x with $\mathcal{E}(x) \ge n \mathcal{O}(\log n)$,
 - Found a relation between effective complexity and Bennett's logical depth: If E(x) > K(C(x)) + O(1), then Depth(x) is astronomically large. Otherwise, it can be arbitrarily small.