8.1 Changing the Distribution of Bit-Guessing Problems

Goal: Show that the performance of a distinguisher for a bit-guessing problem does not change much if the distribution of the problem is changed only slightly.

a) Show that for any two random variables $X$ and $X'$ over some set $\mathcal{X}$, and any event $A \subseteq \mathcal{X}$, we have
$$\Pr[X \in A] - \Pr[X' \in A] \leq \delta(X, X').$$

b) State formally Exercise 4.4 from the lecture notes and prove the statement using the result from subtask a).

8.2 Amplifying the Performance of a Worst-Case Solver

Goal: Understand the bounds in Idea 4 of the reduction in the lecture notes.

Let $S$ be a solver with performance $\epsilon > 0$ on each instance of some bit guessing problem (i.e., $S$ has worst-case performance $\epsilon$). Let $q \in \mathbb{N}$ be odd and let $T$ be the solver that invokes $S$ (each time with fresh and independent randomness) $q$ times and then outputs the bit that was returned more often by $S$. Find for all $\delta \in (0, 1)$ a bound on $q$ such that the performance of $T$ is at least $1 - \delta$ whenever $q$ exceeds this bound.

Hint: Use a variant of Hoeffding’s inequality for Bernoulli random variables, which states the following: Let $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ and let $X_1, \ldots, X_q$ be independent and identically distributed random variables over $\{0, 1\}$ with $p := \Pr[X_i = 1]$. Then, $\Pr[\sum_{i=1}^{q} X_i \leq (p - \alpha)q] \leq e^{-2\alpha^2q}$.

8.3 The Next Bit Test

Goal: When you can predict the $i$-th bit from the first $i-1$ bits in a random bit-string, then you can distinguish this bit-string from the uniform string. Interestingly, the converse also holds. Therefore, unpredictable bit-strings are indistinguishable.

Let $X^\ell = (X_1, \ldots, X_\ell)$ be an arbitrarily distributed random variable on the set $\in \{0, 1\}^\ell$, for some $\ell \geq 1$. A predictor of the $i$-th bit of $X^\ell$ is a distinguisher for the following bit-guessing problem: given $X^{i-1} = (X_1, \ldots, X_{i-1})$, output a guess $Z \in \{0, 1\}$ for $X_i$. Prove that when $D$ is a distinguisher of $X^\ell$ from the uniformly distributed bitstring $U^\ell = (U_1, \ldots, U_\ell) \in \{0, 1\}^\ell$ with advantage $\epsilon$, then there is an $i \in \{1, \ldots, \ell\}$ and a predictor $P_i$ of the $i$-th bit of $X^\ell$ with advantage at least $\frac{\epsilon}{2}$.

Hint: You should use a result about the distinguishing advantage proven in Exercise 1.3 b).

Discussion of solutions:

23/24.4.2018 (Task 8.1 and Task 8.2)
30.4.2018 (Task 8.3)
(Note that there is no class on 1.5.2018)

The Monday and Tuesday sessions of each week cover the same material.