Electronic Colloquium on Computational Complexity, Report No. 59 (2001)

A Kolmogorov complexity characterization of constructive Hausdorff dimension

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KEYWORDS: Kolmogorov Complexity, Information Theory, Hausdorff Dimension, Theory of Computation

1 Introduction

Lutz [6] has recently developed a constructive version of Hausdorff dimension, using it to assign every sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$ a constructive dimension $\mathrm{cdim}(A) \in [0,1]$. Classical Hausdorff dimension [3] is an augmentation of Lebesgue measure, and in the same way constructive dimension augments Martin-Löf randomness. All Martin-Löf random sequences have constructive dimension 1, while in the case of non-random sequences a finer distinction is obtained. Martin-Löf randomness has a useful interpretation in terms of information content, since a sequence A is random if and only if there is a constant c such that $K(A[0..n-1]) \geq n - c$, where K is the usual self-delimiting Kolmogorov complexity. Here we characterize constructive dimension using Kolmogorov complexity.

Lutz [6] has proven that $\liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n} \leq \mathrm{cdim}(A) \leq \limsup_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}$. Staiger [7, 8] proves similar inequalities for classical Hausdorff dimension and a restricted class of sequences.

We obtain the following full characterization of constructive dimension in terms of algorithmic information content. For every sequence A, $\mathrm{cdim}(A) = \liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}$.

2 Preliminaries

We work in the Cantor space $\mathbf{C}$ consisting of all infinite binary sequences. The n-bit prefix of a sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$ is the string $A[0..n-1] \in \{0,1\}^*$ consisting of the first n bits of A. We denote by $u \sqsubset v$ the fact that a string u is a proper prefix of a string v.

The definition and basic properties of Kolmogorov complexity $K(x)$, can be found in the book by Li and Vitányi [4].

Definition 2.1. Let $f : D \to \mathbb{R}$ be a function, where D is $\{0,1\}^*$ or $\mathbb{N}$. f is *upper semicomputable* if its upper graph $Graph^+(f) = \left\{(x,s) \in D \times \mathbb{Q} \,\middle|\, s > f(x)\right\}$ is recursively enumerable. f

*This research was supported in part by Spanish Government MEC projects PB98-0937-C04-02 and TIC98-0973-C03-02. It was done while visiting Iowa State University.

ISSN 1433-8092

is *lower semicomputable* if its lower graph $Graph^-(f) = \left\{(x,s) \in D \times \mathbb{Q} \,\middle|\, s < f(x)\right\}$ is recursively enumerable.

We give a quick summary of constructive dimension. The reader is referred to [6] and [5] for a complete introduction and to Falconer [2] for a good overview of classical Hausdorff dimension.

Definition 2.2. Let $s \in [0, \infty)$.

- An *s-gale* is a function $d : \{0,1\}^* \to [0,\infty)$ that satisfies the condition $d(w) = \frac{d(w0)+d(w1)}{2^s}$ for all $w \in \{0,1\}^*$.
- We say that an s-gale d *succeeds* on a sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$ if $\limsup_{n\to\infty} d(A[0..n-1] = \infty$.
- The *success set* of an s-gale d is $S^\infty[d] = \left\{A \in \mathbf{C} \,\middle|\, d \text{ succeeds on } A\right\}$.

Definition 2.3. Let $X \subseteq \mathbf{C}$.

- $\mathcal{G}(X)$ is the set of all $s \in [0,\infty)$ such that there is an s-gale d for which $X \subseteq S^\infty[d]$.
- $\mathcal{G}_{\text{constr}}(X)$ is the set of all $s \in [0,\infty)$ such that there is a lower semicomputable s-gale d for which $X \subseteq S^\infty[d]$.
- The *Hausdorff dimension* of X is $\dim_{\mathrm{H}}(X) = \inf \mathcal{G}(X)$. This is equivalent to the classical definition by Theorem 3.10 of [5].
- The *constructive dimension* of X is $\text{cdim}(X) = \inf \mathcal{G}_{\text{constr}}(X)$.
- The *constructive dimension* of a sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$ is $cdim(A) = cdim(\{A\})$.

3 Main theorem

Theorem 3.1. For every sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$,

$$\text{cdim}(A) \le \liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}.$$

Proof. Let $A \in \mathbf{C}$. Let s and s' be rational numbers such that $s > s' > \liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}$.

Let $B = \left\{x \in \{0,1\}^* \,\middle|\, K(x) \le s'|x|\right\}$. Note that B is recursively enumerable. By Theorem 3.3.1 in [4] we have that $|B^{=n}| \le 2^{s'n-K(n)+c}$ for a constant c and for every $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

We define $d : \{0,1\}^* \to [0,\infty)$ as follows.

$$d(w) = 2^{(s-s')|w|} \left(\sum_{wu\in B} 2^{-s'|u|} + \sum_{v\in B, v\sqsubset w} 2^{(s'-1)(|w|-|v|)} \right)$$

It can be shown that d is well defined ($d(\lambda) \leq \sum_n 2^{-K(n)+c} \leq 2^c$ by the Kraft Inequality), d is an s-gale, and d is lower semicomputable (since B was recursively enumerable). For each $w \in B$, $d(w) \geq 2^{(s-s')|w|}$. There exist infinitely many n for which $A[0..n-1] \in B$, therefore $A \in S^{\infty}[d]$ and $\mathrm{cdim}(A) \leq s$.

Since this holds for each rational $s > \liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}$ we have proven the theorem.

□

Corollary 3.2. For every sequence $A \in \mathbf{C}$,

$$\mathrm{cdim}(A) = \liminf_{n\to\infty} \frac{K(A[0..n-1])}{n}$$

Proof. The proof follows from theorem 3.1 and theorem 4.13 in [6]. □

Using this characterization we generalize Chaitin's Ω construction [1] to obtain new examples of sequences of arbitrary dimension (provided that the dimension is a computable real number) that are computable relative to a recursively enumerable set.

Corollary 3.3. Let $s \in [0,1]$ be computable, let A be a recursively enumerable set of strings, let U be a universal Turing Machine. Let θ^s_A be the infinite binary representation of the real number $\sum_{U(p)\in A} 2^{-|p|/s}$. Then $\mathrm{cdim}(\theta^s_A) = s$.

Proof. (Sketch). Let A, s, and U be as above. Let $n \in \mathbb{N}$. It can be shown that the set $\left\{p \;\middle|\; |p| \leq sn, U(p) \in A\right\}$ can be computed from the string $\theta^s_A[0..n-1]$, and at least an $x \in A$ with $K(x) > sn$ can be computed from the same string. Therefore there is a constant c such that $K(\theta^s_A[0..n-1]) > sn - c$ for every n. □

Acknowledgement

I thank Jack Lutz for very helpful discussions.

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ECCC ISSN 1433-8092
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