

GENERALIZED SYNDROME DECODING PROBLEM AND ITS APPLICATION TO POST-QUANTUM CRYPTOGRAPHY

PhD thesis in theoretical computer science

28 June 2023, Paris

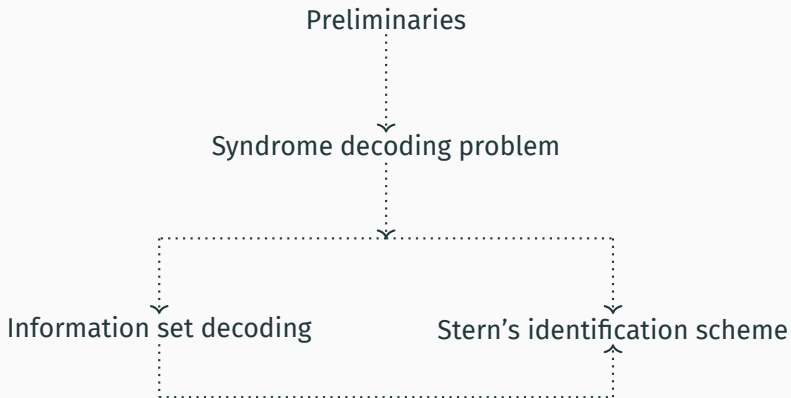
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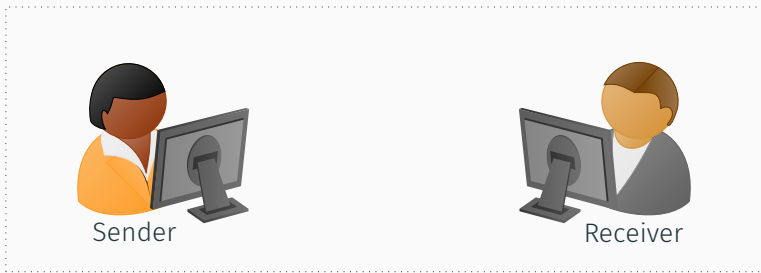
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OUTLINE



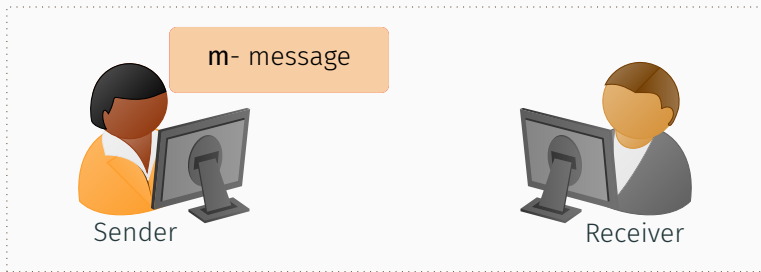
PRELIMINARIES

CODING THEORY



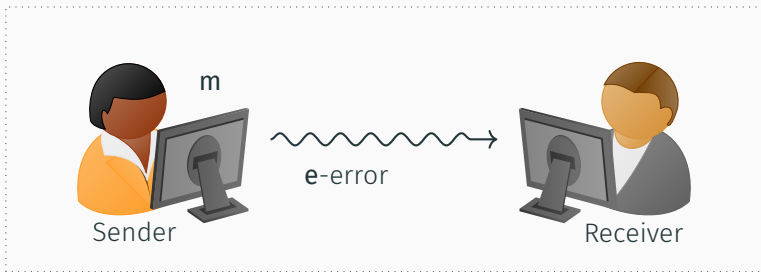
Basic setting

CODING THEORY



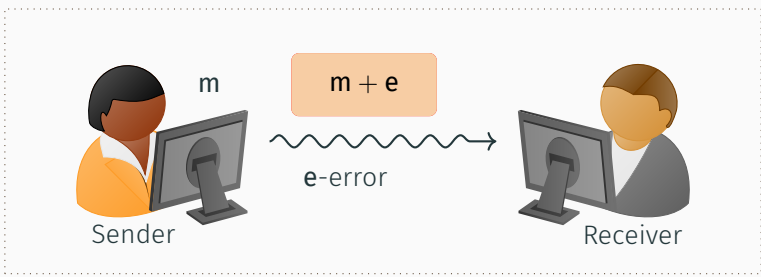
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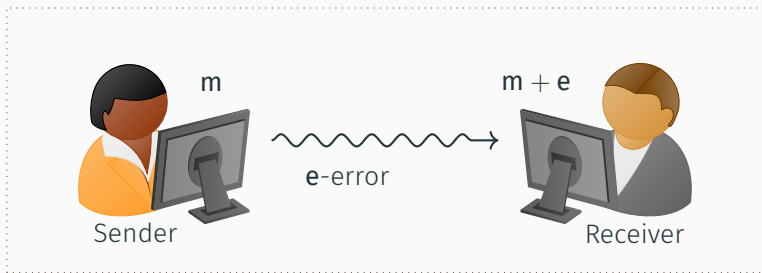
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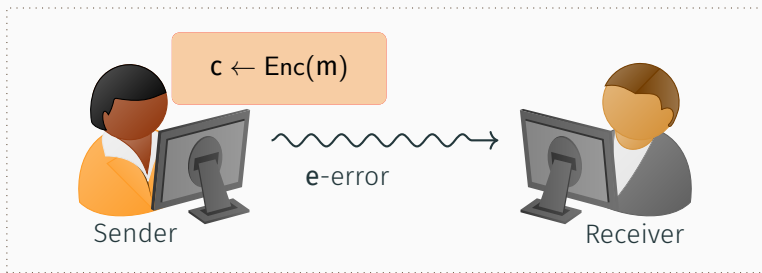
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CODING THEORY



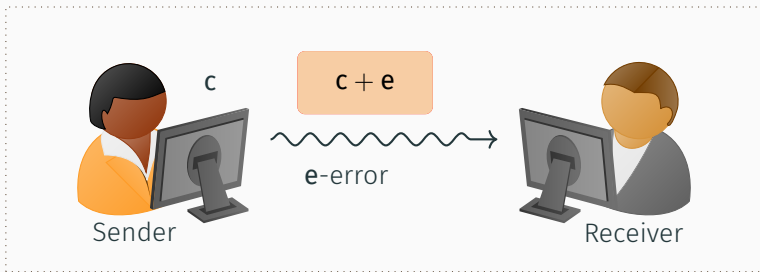
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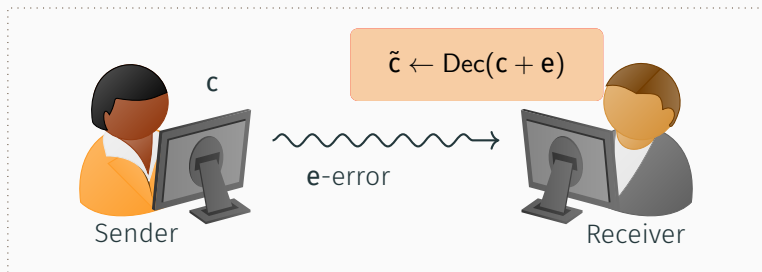
Basic setting

CODING THEORY



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Basic setting

MESSAGE ENCODING

- message \mathbf{m} of length k , with symbols from alphabet of size q

$$\rightarrow \mathbf{m} \in \mathbb{F}_q^k$$

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- codeword \mathbf{c} of length n , with symbols from alphabet of size q

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- encoding algorithm Enc that maps message into codeword

$$\rightarrow \text{Enc} : \mathbb{F}_q^k \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q^n$$

MESSAGE ENCODING

Encoding is commonly defined via a **generator matrix**, $G \in \mathbb{F}_q^{k \times n}$:

$$\forall \mathbf{m} \in \mathbb{F}_q^k, \quad \text{Enc}(\mathbf{m}) := \mathbf{m}^T \mathbf{G}.$$

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A **code**, \mathcal{C} , is then defined as:

$$\mathcal{C} := \{\mathbf{c} \in \mathbb{F}_q^n \mid (\exists \mathbf{m} \in \mathbb{F}_q^k) \mathbf{c} = \text{Enc}(\mathbf{m})\}.$$

MESSAGE ENCODING

Equivalently, linear code can be defined via a **parity check matrix**, $\mathbf{H} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}$, which is a matrix of maximal rank that satisfies:

$$\mathbf{HG}^T = \mathbf{0}.$$

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- decoding algorithm Dec that maps noisy codeword, $\tilde{\mathbf{c}}$, into codeword $\mathbf{c} \in \mathcal{C}$

$$\rightarrow \text{Dec} : \mathbb{F}_q^n \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q^n$$

HAMMING WEIGHT

Hamming distance, $\text{dist}_H(\cdot)$

$$\forall \mathbf{c} = (c_0, \dots, c_{n-1}) \in \mathbb{F}_q^n, \quad \forall \tilde{\mathbf{c}} = (\tilde{c}_0, \dots, \tilde{c}_{n-1}) \in \mathbb{F}_q^n,$$
$$\text{dist}_H(\mathbf{c}, \tilde{\mathbf{c}}) = |\{i \in [n] : c_i \neq \tilde{c}_i\}|$$

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Hamming weight, $\text{wt}_H(\cdot)$

$$\forall \mathbf{e} = (e_1, \dots, e_n) \in \mathbb{F}_q^n, \quad \text{wt}_H(\mathbf{e}) := \text{dist}_H(\mathbf{e}, \mathbf{0}).$$

MESSAGE DECODING

Decoding methods:

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- **minimum distance decoding** - given the noisy codeword, \tilde{c} , find the codeword, c , at smallest **Hamming distance**;
- **syndrome decoding**: calculate the syndrome, $s \in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k}$, defined as:

$$s := H\tilde{c} = H(c + e) = He,$$

find the error, e , of the smallest **Hamming weight** that corresponds to s .

SYNDROME DECODING PROBLEM (SDP)

Computational problem derived from the **syndrome decoding** method.

Syndrome Decoding Problem, SDP

Input – A parity check matrix $\mathbf{H} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}$, a syndrome $\mathbf{s} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k}$, and a weight $w \in \mathbb{N}$.

Goal – Find an error $\mathbf{e} \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$ such that $\mathbf{s} = \mathbf{H}\mathbf{e}$ and $\text{wt}(\mathbf{e}) = w$.

SYNDROME DECODING PROBLEM

An **NP-complete** problem.¹

¹Elwyn R. Berlekamp, Robert J. McEliece, and Henk C. A. van Tilborg. “On the inherent intractability of certain coding problems (Corresp.)”. In: (1978), pp. 384–386. DOI: [10.1109/TIT.1978.1055873](https://doi.org/10.1109/TIT.1978.1055873).

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For conveniently chosen parameters, the problem is exponentially hard for the best known **classical** and **quantum** algorithms.

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⇒ It is believed to be **post-quantum**.

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An **NP-complete** problem.

For conveniently chosen parameters, the problem is exponentially hard for the best known **classical** and **quantum** algorithms.

Used as basis of different cryptographic protocols.^{1,2}

¹R. J. McEliece. “A Public-Key Cryptosystem Based On Algebraic Coding Theory”. In: Deep Space Network Progress Report 44 (Jan. 1978), pp. 114–116.

²Jacques Stern. “A New Identification Scheme Based on Syndrome Decoding”. In: 1993, pp. 13–21. DOI: [10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2).

Generalized Syndrome Decoding Problem, GSDP

Input – A parity check matrix $\mathbf{H} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}$, a syndrome $\mathbf{s} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k}$, and a weight $w \in \mathbb{N}$.

Goal – Find an error $\mathbf{e} \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$ such that $\mathbf{s} = \mathbf{H}\mathbf{e}$ and

$$\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}) = w .$$

Elementwise weight functions, $\text{wt}_M : \mathbb{F}_q^n \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$

$$\forall \mathbf{e} = (e_0, \dots, e_{n-1}) \in \mathbb{F}_q^n, \quad \text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}) = \sum_i \text{dist}(e_i, 0),$$

where $\text{dist} : \mathbb{F}_q \times \mathbb{F}_q \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ is a distance function (metric).

EXAMPLES OF ELEMENTWISE WEIGHT FUNCTIONS

Hamming distance, $\text{dist}_H(\cdot, \cdot)$

$$\forall a, b \in \mathbb{F}_q, \quad \text{dist}_H(a, b) = \begin{cases} 0, & a = b \\ 1, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} .$$

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EXAMPLES OF ELEMENTWISE WEIGHT FUNCTIONS

Lee distance, $\text{dist}_L(\cdot, \cdot)$

$$\forall a, b \in \mathbb{F}_q, \quad \text{dist}_L(a, b) = \min(|a - b|, q - |a - b|).$$

EXAMPLES OF ELEMENTWISE WEIGHT FUNCTIONS

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Lee weight, $\text{wt}_L(\cdot)$

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OUR GOALS

Estimate the **asymptotic complexity** of the generalized syndrome decoding problem.

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Apply the generalized syndrome decoding problem to a **concrete cryptographic setting**.

INFORMATION SET DECODING (ISD)

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Exploit the **linear structure** of the linear codes.

Algorithm Information set decoding

Input : $\mathbf{H} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}$, $\mathbf{s} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k}$, $w, \mathbf{d}, l \in \mathbb{N}$.

Output: $\mathbf{e} \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$ s.t. $\mathbf{H}\mathbf{e} = \mathbf{s}$ and $\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}) = w$.

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test step: checks if any solution from the list \mathcal{L} yields a solution to the original problem

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$$\mathbf{U}\mathbf{H}_\pi = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{I} & \mathbf{H}_1 \\ \mathbf{0} & \mathbf{H}_2 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \mathbf{U}\mathbf{s} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{s}_1 \\ \mathbf{s}_2 \end{pmatrix} \Rightarrow \begin{cases} \mathbf{e}_1 + \mathbf{H}_1\mathbf{e}_2 = \mathbf{s}_1 \\ \mathbf{H}_2\mathbf{e}_2 = \mathbf{s}_2 \end{cases}.$$

where $\mathbf{e}_{\pi^{-1}} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{e}_1 \\ \mathbf{e}_2 \end{pmatrix}$ is a permuted solution to the problem

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test step: for each $\mathbf{e}_2 \in \mathcal{L}$, calculate $\mathbf{e}_1 \leftarrow \mathbf{s}_1 - \mathbf{H}_1\mathbf{e}_2$ and verify if

$$\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}_1) = w - d$$

DIFFERENT (CLASSICAL) ISD VARIANTS

ISD algorithms differ primarily in the last two steps of the algorithm, namely, **Multi-solution SDP step** and **Test step**.

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Prange's algorithm^a takes $\mathbf{e} \leftarrow \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{s}_1 \\ \mathbf{0} \end{pmatrix}$ and verify if $\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}) = w$.

^aE. Prange. "The use of information sets in decoding cyclic codes". In: IRE Transactions on Information Theory (1962), pp. 5–9. DOI: 10.1109/TIT.1962.1057777.

DIFFERENT (CLASSICAL) ISD VARIANTS

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Lee-Brickel's algorithm^a, for each \mathbf{e}_2 of weight d , calculates

$$\mathbf{e}_1 \leftarrow \mathbf{s}_1 - \mathbf{H}_1 \mathbf{e}_2$$

and verify if $\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}_1) = w - d$.

^aPil Joong Lee and Ernest F. Brickell. "An Observation on the Security of McEliece's Public-Key Cryptosystem". In: 1988.

DIFFERENT (CLASSICAL) ISD VARIANTS

ISD algorithms differ primarily in the last two steps of the algorithm, namely, **Multi-solution SDP step** and **Test step**.

Stern's/Dumer's algorithm^a, merges two lists of elements of weight $d/2$ to obtain a list, \mathcal{L} , of elements of weight d .

For each \mathbf{e}_2 in \mathcal{L} , the algorithm calculates

$$\mathbf{e}_1 \leftarrow \mathbf{s}_1 - \mathbf{H}_1 \mathbf{e}_2$$

and verify if $\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}_1) = w - d$.

^aJacques Stern. "A New Identification Scheme Based on Syndrome Decoding". In: 1993, pp. 13–21. DOI: [10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2).

DIFFERENT (CLASSICAL) ISD VARIANTS

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Wagner's algorithm^a, for a chosen a , merges 2^a lists of elements of weight $d/2^a$ to obtain a list, \mathcal{L} , of elements of weight d .

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OUR CONTRIBUTIONS: PART 1

Generalized ISD framework solving the generalized syndrome decoding problem.

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Numerical results on the asymptotic analysis of the running time of ISD when solving GSDP over q -ary Hamming and Lee weight.

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- $l = 0$, $d = 0$, $a = 1 \Rightarrow$ Prange's algorithm³;

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³Pil Joong Lee and Ernest F. Brickell. "An Observation on the Security of McEliece's Public-Key Cryptosystem". In: 1988.

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- $l \geq 0$, $d \geq 0$, $a = 1 \Rightarrow$ Stern's/Dumer's algorithm³;

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- $l \geq 0$, $d \geq 0$, $a \geq 1 \Rightarrow$ Wagner's algorithm³.

³David A. Wagner. "A Generalized Birthday Problem". In: ed. by Moti Yung. 2002, pp. 288–303. DOI: [10.1007/3-540-45708-9_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/3-540-45708-9_19).

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while e is not found **do**

permutation step: permutes columns of H

poly(n)

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T_{SUB}

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$|\mathcal{L}| \text{ poly}(n)$

end

return e

Running time of classical ISD algorithms

$$T_C(n, l, d, a) = \frac{\text{poly}(n) + T_{\text{SUB}}(n, l, d, a) + |\mathcal{L}| \text{poly}(n)}{p(n, l, d, a)},$$

where $p(\cdot, \cdot, \cdot, \cdot)$ is the probability of success in the test step.

Probability of success

$$p(n, l, d, a) = \min \left(1, \frac{\text{surf}_M(q, n - k - l, w - d)}{\max(q^{n-k}, \text{surf}_M(q, n, w))q^{-l}|\mathcal{L}|} \right).$$

where

- $\text{surf}_M(q, n, w)$ is the surface area of a sphere of radius w in \mathbb{F}_q^n ,
- $\text{surf}_M(q, n - k - l, w - d)$ is the surface area of a sphere of radius $w - d$ in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k-l} .

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- $\text{surf}_M(q, n, w)$ is the surface area of a sphere of radius w in \mathbb{F}_q^n ,
- $\text{surf}_M(q, n - k - l, w - d)$ is the surface area of a sphere of radius $w - d$ in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k-l} .

Major obstacle: calculating the surface area of a sphere in a vector space endowed with arbitrary elementwise weight function.

QUANTUM WAGNER'S ALGORITHM

A hybrid classical-quantum algorithm was obtained as a combination of:

- classical Wagner's algorithm,
- Grover's search⁴,
- amplitude amplification⁵.

⁴Lov K. Grover. "A Fast Quantum Mechanical Algorithm for Database Search". In: 1996, pp. 212–219. DOI: [10.1145/237814.237866](https://doi.org/10.1145/237814.237866).

⁵Gilles Brassard, Peter Høyer, et al. Quantum amplitude amplification and estimation. 2002.

QUANTUM WAGNER'S ALGORITHM

Definition: Grover's algorithm⁴

Let $f : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ has an efficient classical description.

Grover's algorithm can find i such $f(i) = 1$ in time $O(\text{poly}(n)2^{n/2})$ if such an i exists and output 'no solution' otherwise.

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QUANTUM WAGNER'S ALGORITHM

Definition: Amplitude amplification⁴

Let $f : \{0, 1\}^n \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ has an efficient classical description.

Consider an algorithm \mathcal{A} that outputs i such that $f(i) = 1$ with probability p , and $f(i) = 0$ with probability $1 - p$.

Using amplitude amplification, one can find i such that $f(i) = 1$ by making $O(\frac{1}{\sqrt{p}})$ calls to \mathcal{A} .

⁴Gilles Brassard and Peter Hoyer. "An Exact Quantum Polynomial-Time Algorithm for Simon's Problem". In: 1997, pp. 12–23. DOI: [10.1109/ISTCS.1997.595153](https://doi.org/10.1109/ISTCS.1997.595153).

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The difference appears only in the **multi-solution GSDP step** and **test step**:

- in the **multi-solution GSDP step**, the algorithm returns a **description of a function** $f : [|\mathcal{L}|] \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q^n$
- in the **test step** the algorithm checks if any output of $f(\cdot)$ yields a solution to the original problem using **Grover's search**

QUANTUM WAGNER'S ALGORITHM

Input : $\mathbf{H} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}$, $\mathbf{s} \in \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k}$, $w, d, l, a \in \mathbb{N}$.

Output : $\mathbf{e} \in \mathbb{F}_q^n$ s.t. $\mathbf{H}\mathbf{e} = \mathbf{s}$ and $\text{wt}_M(\mathbf{e}) = w$.

while \mathbf{e} is not found **do**

permutation and partial Gaussian elimination step: permute columns of \mathbf{H} and create a GSDP subinstance

$\text{poly}(n)$

multi-solution GSDP step: returns a **description** of $f : [|\mathcal{L}|] \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_q^n$ that outputs solutions to the GSDP subinstance

T_{SUB}

test step: using **Grover's search**, checks if any output of $f(\cdot)$ yields a solution to the original problem

$\sqrt{|\mathcal{L}|} \text{poly}(n)$

end

return \mathbf{e}

QUANTUM WAGNER'S ALGORITHM

Running time

$$T_Q(n, l, d, a) = \frac{\text{poly}(n) + T_{\text{SUB}}(n, l, d, a) + \sqrt{|\mathcal{L}|} \text{poly}(n)}{\sqrt{p}(n, l, d, a)},$$

where p is the probability of success in the test step.

NUMERICAL RESULTS

The asymptotic running time is evaluated when parameters l , d , and a are optimized to yield the shortest running time.

NUMERICAL RESULTS

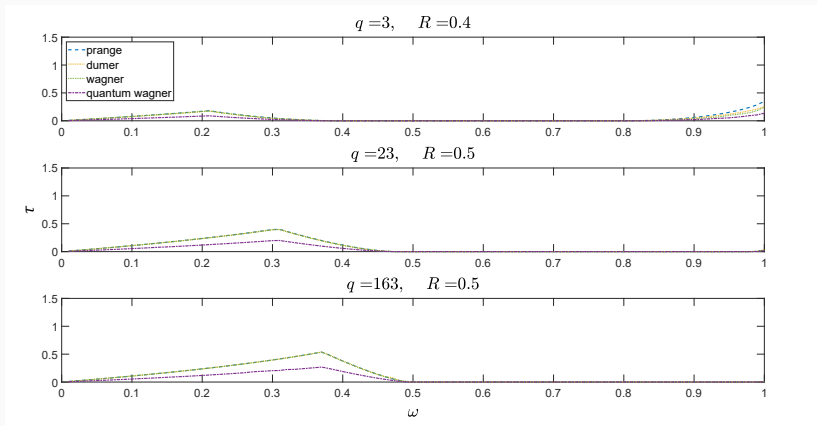
The asymptotic running time is evaluated when parameters l , d , and a are optimized to yield the shortest running time.

Exponent of the asymptotic running time, τ

$$\tau(q, R, \omega) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{n} \log_2 T(n),$$

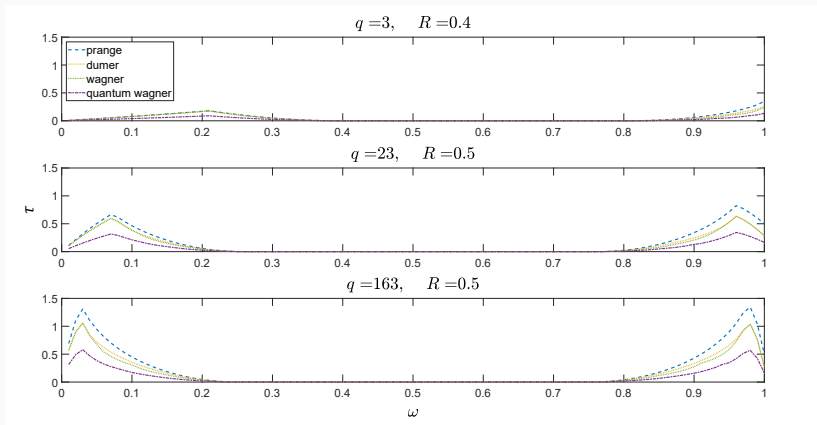
where $R := \frac{k}{n}$ and $\omega := \frac{w}{n}$.

NUMERICAL RESULTS



Hamming weight setting: $\tau(q, R, \omega) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{n} \log_2 T$, $R := \frac{k}{n}$, and $\omega := \frac{w}{n}$

NUMERICAL RESULTS



Lee weight setting: $\tau(q, R, \omega) = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{n} \log_2 T$, $R := \frac{k}{n}$, and $\omega := \frac{w}{n}$

SUMMARY OF THE FIRST PART

The asymptotic complexity of the **hardest instances** of GSDP problem is in the **Lee weight** setting is at least as long as in the Hamming weight case.

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SUMMARY OF THE FIRST PART

The asymptotic complexity of the **hardest instances** of GSDP problem is in the **Lee weight** setting is at least as long as in the Hamming weight case.

For the **quantum setting**, our algorithms have almost a **quadratic improvement** over the classical setting.

The **GSDP problem** remains **exponentially hard** for conveniently chosen parameters both in the classical and quantum setting.

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

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Belongs to the class of so-called **sigma** or **three-round** protocols.

⁴Jacques Stern. "A New Identification Scheme Based on Syndrome Decoding". In: 1993, pp. 13–21. DOI: [10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/3-540-48329-2_2).

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The protocol is unbroken for almost 30 years now, but suffers from rather **high communication costs**.

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SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL

A two-party, public-key protocol.



Prover



Verifier

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL

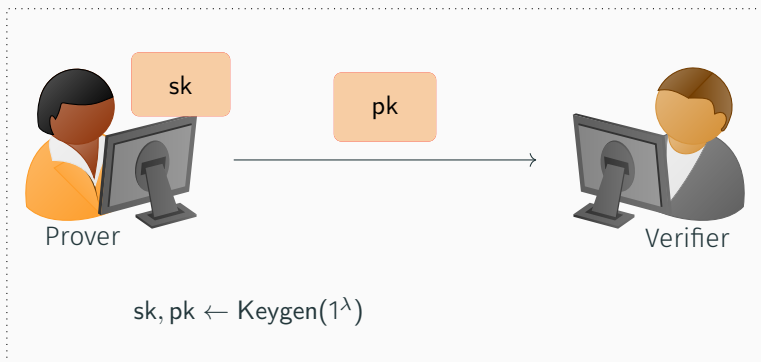


Prover

$sk, pk \leftarrow \text{Keygen}(1^\lambda)$

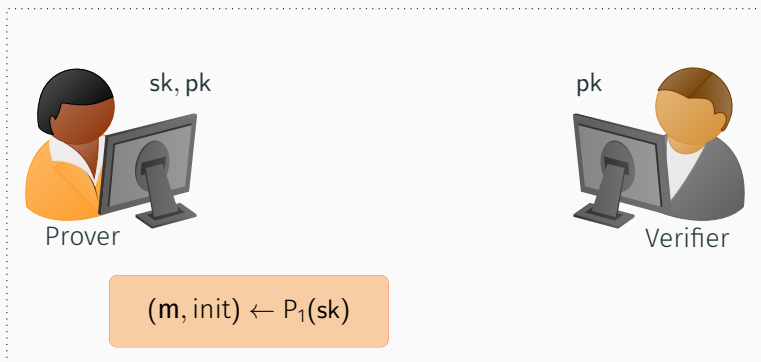
Key generation

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL



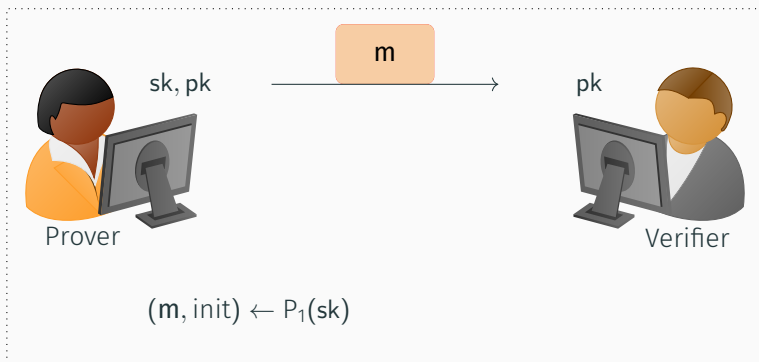
Key generation

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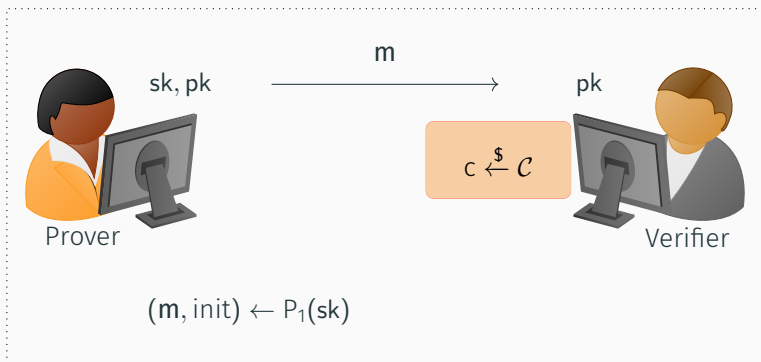
Interaction

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL



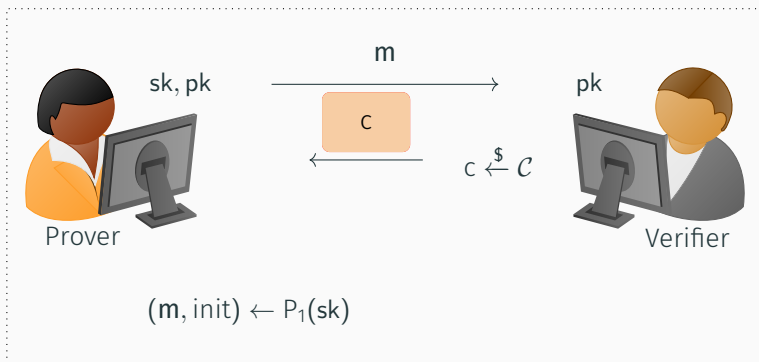
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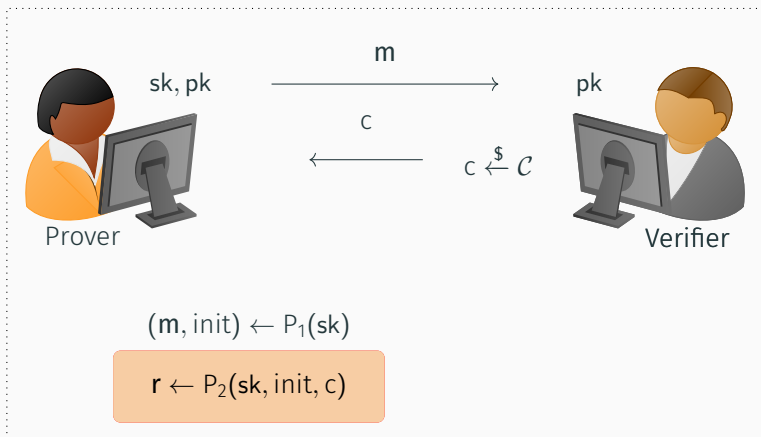
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SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL



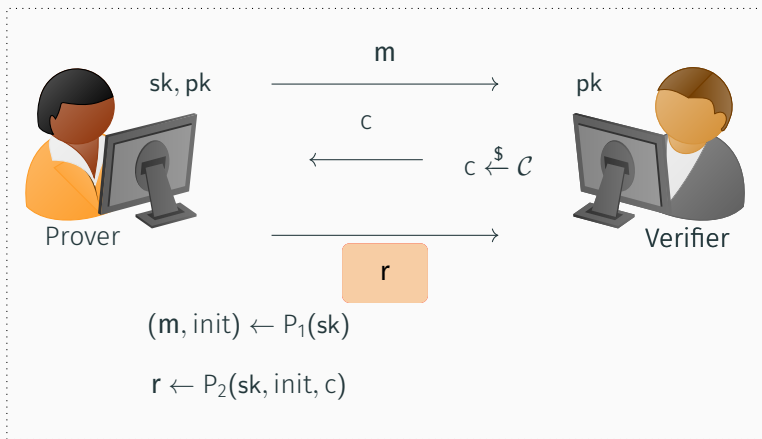
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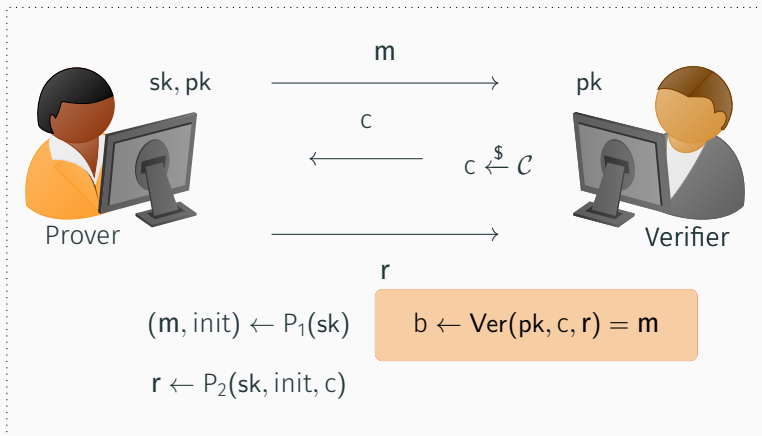
Interaction

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL



Interaction

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL



Verifying

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL

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- **soundness**: dishonest prover is not able to convince verifier it knows sk with probability 1;

SIGMA (3-ROUND) PROTOCOL

Basic properties:

- **completeness**: honest prover needs to be able to convince verifier it knows sk ;
- **soundness**: dishonest prover is not able to convince verifier it knows sk with probability 1;
- **zero-knowledge**: communication reveals only if prover knows sk and nothing else.

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL



Prover

$$H \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}, \quad e \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{F}_q^n, \quad s = He$$

Key generation

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL



Prover

$$H \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{F}_q^{(n-k) \times n}, \quad e \stackrel{\$}{\leftarrow} \mathbb{F}_q^n, \quad s \leftarrow He$$

$$pk \leftarrow (H, s), \quad sk \leftarrow e$$

Key generation

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL



$$\pi \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Perm}[n], \mathbf{y} \xleftarrow{\$} \mathbb{F}_q^n, \mathbf{t} \leftarrow H\mathbf{y},$$

Interaction

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

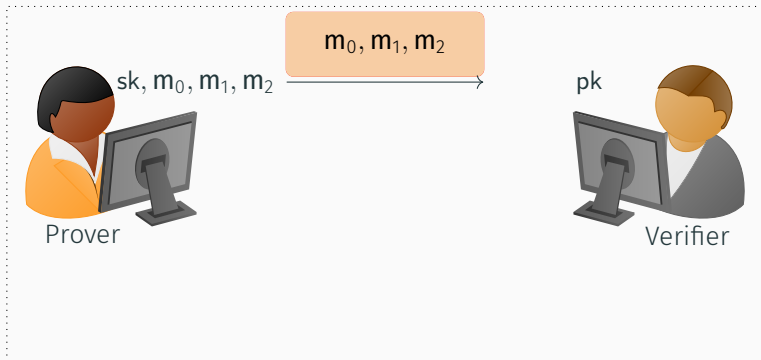


$$\pi \xleftarrow{\$} \text{Perm}[n], \mathbf{y} \xleftarrow{\$} \mathbb{F}_q^n, \mathbf{t} \leftarrow \mathcal{H}\mathbf{y},$$

$$\mathbf{m}_0 \leftarrow \mathcal{H}(\pi, \mathbf{t}), \mathbf{m}_1 \leftarrow \mathcal{H}(\pi(\mathbf{y})), \mathbf{m}_2 \leftarrow \mathcal{H}(\pi(\mathbf{y} + \mathbf{e}))$$

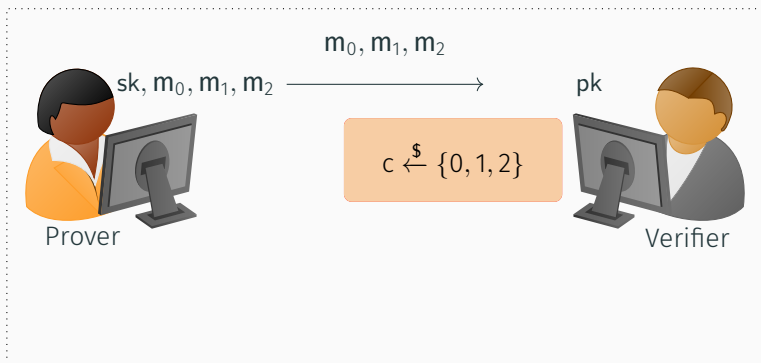
Interaction

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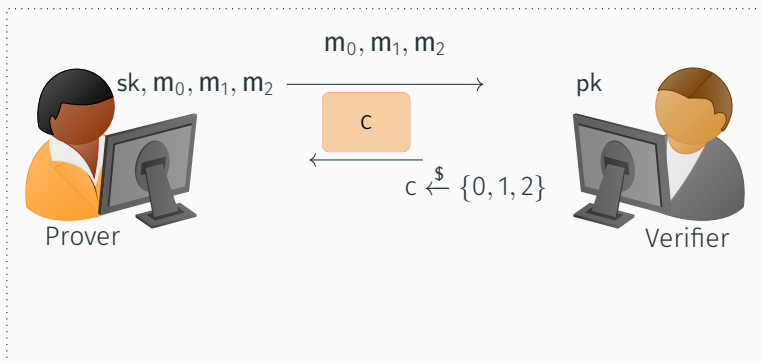
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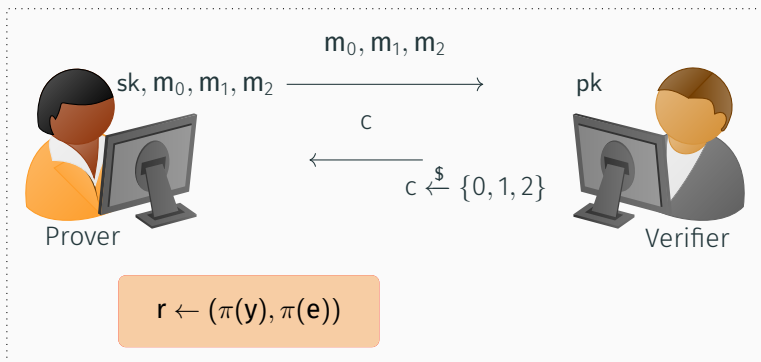
Interaction

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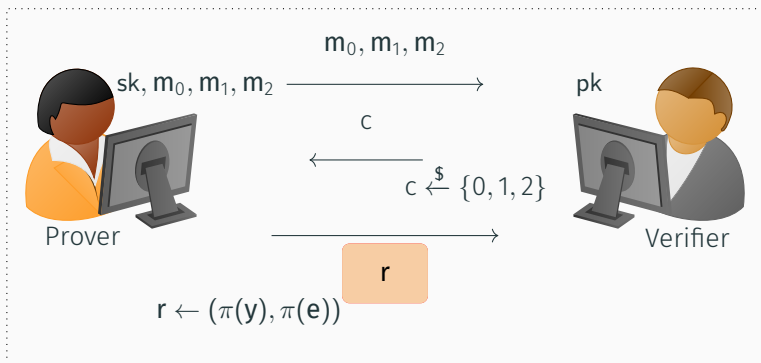


Interaction

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

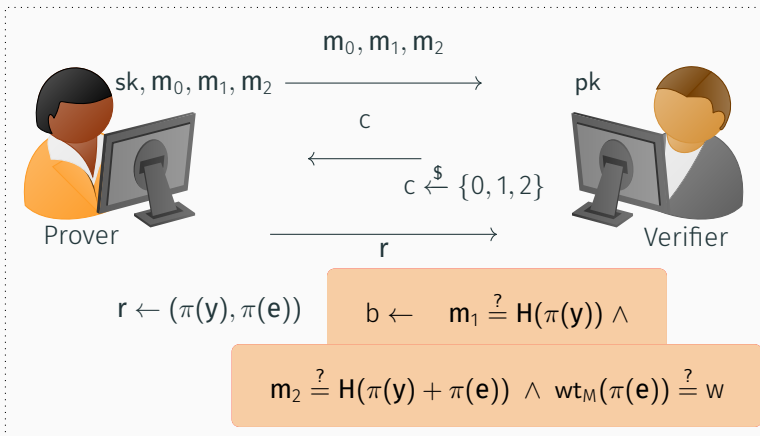
Interaction: case $c = 0$

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL



Interaction

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL



Verifying: case $c = 0$

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

Basic properties:

- the scheme is **complete**;
- it is **sound**, with **soundness error** of $2/3$;
- it is proven to be **honest verifier zero-knowledge** in the random oracle model.

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

Basic properties:

- the scheme is **complete**;
- it is **sound**, with **soundness error** of $2/3$;
- it is proven to be **honest verifier zero-knowledge**.

Soundness error can be reduced arbitrarily close to zero by repeating the protocol r times.

STERN'S IDENTIFICATION PROTOCOL

Major drawback: high communication costs (order of 100 kB).

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→ Reduction of communication cost can be achieved using **pseudo random generators** and **deterministic commitments**.

OUR CONTRIBUTIONS⁵

A **honest verifier zero-knowledge** variant of Stern's identification scheme adapted to the **generalized syndrome decoding problem**.

⁵André Chailloux and Simona Etinski. On the (In)security of optimized Stern-like signature schemes. Cryptology ePrint Archive, Paper 2021/552. 2022.

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A **honest verifier zero-knowledge** variant of Stern's identification scheme adapted to the **generalized syndrome decoding problem**.

A proof that using **deterministic commitments** in combination **pseudo random generated** random vectors is secure.

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NUMERICAL RESULTS

Obtained for concrete parameters of GSDP that guarantee that the analyzed algorithms run in $2^{128} \Rightarrow 128$ bits of security.

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The optimized scheme is constructed using **deterministic commitments** in combination with **pseudo-random generators**.

NUMERICAL RESULTS

q	Non-optimized scheme		Optimized scheme	
	wt _H	wt _L	wt _H	wt _L
2	253.05	253.05	26.21	26.21
3	116.54	116.54	21.81	21.81
5	138.54	95.48	27.62	21.41
7	126.47	90.94	28.29	22.71
13	113.23	79.27	29.38	23.29

Table: Communication cost of non-optimized and optimized schemes

SUMMARY OF THE SECOND PART

Communication cost can be significantly reduced by using **deterministic commitments** in combination with the **pseudo-random generation**.

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Communication cost can be significantly reduced by using **deterministic commitments** in combination with the **pseudo-random generation**.

Without loss in security, **additional reduction** can be obtained by replacing the original SDP with its **generalized version over Lee weight**.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Generalize the asymptotic analysis to the ISD algorithms based on **representation techniques, nearest neighbour search, and statistical decoding.**

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Generalize the asymptotic analysis to the ISD algorithms based on **representation techniques, nearest neighbour search, and statistical decoding.**

Apply more advanced communication reduction techniques such as **shared permutations, "MPC in the head", use quasi-cyclic matrices.**

MERCI POUR VOTRE ATTENTION !
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!
HVALA VAM NA PAŽNJI!