

On the faces problem for perfect codes

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Abstract

Perfect 1-error correcting codes C in the hyper cube Z_2^n are considered. The possibilities for the number $\gamma(C)$ of code words in a k -face γ of the hyper cube are discussed. It is shown that the possibilities for the number $\gamma(C)$ depend on the dimension of the face γ , the rank of C and the dimension of the kernel of C . Especially we get an answer to a question of Sergey V. Avgustinovich whether there is a perfect code with no full $(n-1)/2$ -face or not.

1 Introduction

We consider the direct product $Z_2^n = Z_2 \times Z_2 \times \dots \times Z_2$ of the field $Z_2 = \{0, 1\}$. The elements of this direct product will be called *words* of *length* n . The *weight* of a word c , $w(c)$, will be the number of non zero components of c . The *distance* between two words c and c' , $d(c, c')$, will be the weight of the word $c - c'$.

A *perfect 1-error correcting binary code* of length n is a subset C of Z_2^n satisfying the following condition:

To any $v \in Z_2^n$ there is an unique $c \in C$ with $d(c, v) \leq 1$.

(By trivial counting arguments, the only possible values for the length of a perfect 1-error correcting binary code are $n = 2^m - 1$ where m is an integer.)

A k -*face* of the n -cube Z_2^n is the set of points

$$\Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_t}}^{i_1, \dots, i_t} = \{x \in Z_2^n \mid x_{i_v} = \sigma_{i_v} \quad v = 1, 2, \dots, t\},$$

where $t = n - k$.

A perfect code C of length n is said to be *full* on the $(n-1)/2$ -face γ if any point on γ is at distance at most one from an unique word of

$$C \cap \gamma.$$

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Sergey V. Avgustinovich [1] proposed the problem whether or not there exists a perfect code C which is not full on any $(n-1)/2$ -face of the n -cube.

Below we give a formula that relates the number of full $(n-1)/2$ -faces to the rank of the perfect code C . We also show that the possibilities for the number of words of a perfect code on a $(n-1)/2$ -face are related to the size of the kernel of C . We remind on the definition of rank and kernel of a perfect code.

Consider the linear span $\langle C \rangle$ of the words of C . For any code C , $\langle C \rangle$ is a linear subspace of the vector space Z_2^n . The dimension of this subspace is the *rank* of C , $\text{rank}(C)$.

The *kernel* of a perfect code is the set

$$\ker(C) = \{p \in Z_2^n \mid p + c \in C \text{ for all } c \in C\}.$$

The kernel is a subspace of Z_2^n .

We show in Section 3

Theorem 1 *The number of full $(n-1)/2$ -faces of a perfect 1-error correcting binary perfect code C of length n is equal to*

$$(2^{n-\text{rank}(C)} - 1)2^{(n-1)/2}.$$

Further the full $(n-1)/2$ -faces may be divided into equivalence classes, such that each class consists of $2^{(n-1)/2}$ parallel faces.

In particular no full rank perfect code will have any full face.

We also consider the orthogonal complement γ^\perp of a full $(n-1)/2$ -face γ . We get the following theorem.

Theorem 2 *If γ is a full $(n-1)/2$ -face of a perfect 1-error correcting binary perfect code C of length n then $\gamma^\perp \cap C$ is isomorphic to an extended perfect 1-error correcting binary perfect code C of length $n+1$.*

The proof technique of Theorem 1 also give the following theorem.

Theorem 3 *For any perfect code C of length n and any $(n-1)/2$ -face γ*

$$|C \cap \gamma| = \frac{t \cdot |\ker(C)|}{2^{(n-1)/2}}$$

for some integer t .

To prove these theorems we use the technique with fourier coefficients, as described in [5] and summarized in the next section.

2 Preliminaries

2.1 Fourier coefficients

We consider a group algebra $R[x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n]$. The elements of this group algebra are polynomials

$$r(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{v \in Z_2^n} r_v x_1^{v_1} x_2^{v_2} \dots x_n^{v_n} \quad v = (v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n) \quad (1)$$

where the coefficients r_v , $v \in Z_2^n$, belong to the set of real numbers R .

Let $y_t(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$, for $t \in Z_2^n$, denote the polynomial

$$y_t(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \frac{1}{2^n} \prod_{i=1}^n (1 - x_i)^{t_i} (1 + x_i)^{1-t_i} \quad t = (t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n).$$

It was proved in [5] that any polynomial $r(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ of $R[x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n]$ has an unique expansion

$$r(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{t \in Z_2^n} A_t y_t(x_1, \dots, x_n), \quad (2)$$

where $A_t \in R$ for $t \in Z_2^n$. The coefficients A_t , $t \in Z_2^n$, in the expansion (2) will be called the *fourier coefficients* of the polynomial $r(x_1, \dots, x_n)$.

We note that the polynomials may be considered as polynomials in the ring $R[x_1, \dots, x_n]$. We may hence make substitutions of x_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ by real numbers, whereby equalities will remain true.

If we in the equality (2) substitute

$$x_i = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } d_i = 0 \\ -1 & \text{if } d_i = 1 \end{cases} \quad d = (d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n) \in Z_2^n, \quad (3)$$

then we get from the equations (1) and (2) that

$$A_d = \sum_{v \in Z_2^n} r_v (-1)^{v \cdot d}, \quad (4)$$

where

$$(v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n) \cdot (d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n) = v_1 d_1 + v_2 d_2 + \dots + v_n d_n.$$

To a subset C of Z_2^n we associate the polynomial

$$C(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{c \in C} x_1^{c_1} x_2^{c_2} \dots x_n^{c_n} \quad c = (c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n).$$

We will say that the fourier coefficients of the polynomial $C(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ are the *fourier coefficients of the set C* .

The following result was proved in [7], see also [5].

Theorem 4 *If C is a perfect 1-error correcting binary code of length n then there are integers A_0 and A_d , $d \in D = \{t \in Z_2^n \mid w(t) = \frac{n+1}{2}\}$, such that*

$$C(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \frac{A_0}{2^n} \prod_{i=1}^n (1 + x_i) + \sum_{d \in D} \frac{A_d}{2^n} \prod_{i=1}^n (1 + x_i)^{1-d_i} (1 - x_i)^{d_i}.$$

If we let $x_i = 1$ for $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$ in (2) and (3) we will get that

$$|C| = \sum_{c \in C} 1 = C(1, 1, \dots, 1) = A_0.$$

Let $\langle d \rangle^\perp$ denote the set of words that are orthogonal to the word $d = (d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n)$ in Z_2^n , i.e.

$$\langle d \rangle^\perp = \{(v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n) \mid d_1 v_1 + d_2 v_2 + \dots + d_n v_n \equiv 0 \pmod{2}\}.$$

We get from equation (4) that

$$A_d = 2 \mid \langle d \rangle^\perp \cap C \mid - \mid C \mid. \quad (5)$$

Hergert [6] observed that if $d \neq 0$ is orthogonal to all words of C , then $w(d) = (n+1)/2$. Hence, if $\langle C \rangle$ denotes the linear span of the words of C , then we may conclude from (5) that

$$d \in \langle C \rangle^\perp \quad \text{if and only if} \quad A_d = \mid C \mid. \quad (6)$$

2.2 Some notation

Below, a *perfect code* always will be a perfect 1-error correcting binary code in Z_2^n .

We will let e_i denote a word of weight 1 with the single one in the i :th coordinate position.

Let I be a subset of $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ and let $g = \sum_{i \in I} e_i$. Define for any word $c \in Z_2^n$,

$$w_I(c) = c_1 g_1 + c_2 g_2 + \dots + c_n g_n$$

where we do *not* count modulo 2. We define for any two words c and c' of Z_2^n ,

$$d_I(c, c') = w_I(c - c').$$

We also need the usual so called *dot-product* in Z_2^n : If $c = (c_1, \dots, c_n)$ and $v = (v_1, \dots, v_n)$ then

$$c \cdot v = c_1 v_1 + c_2 v_2 + \dots + c_n v_n \pmod{2}.$$

We will let $\text{supp}(t)$ denote the *support* of a word $t = (t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n)$, i.e.

$$\text{supp}(t) = \{i \mid t_i \neq 0\}.$$

3 Proof of the theorems

From previous section we know that for any perfect code C of length n

$$C(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{t \in D} A_t y_t(x_1, \dots, x_n) \quad (7)$$

where $D = \{t \in Z_2^n \mid w(t) = (n+1)/2\}$, and where

$$A_t = |\{c \in C \mid c \cdot t = 0\}| - |\{c \in C \mid c \cdot t = 1\}| \quad (8)$$

or equivalently

$$A_t = 2|< t >^\perp \cap C| - |C|. \quad (8')$$

We now consider a $(n-1)/2$ -face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ of the n -cube Z_2^n . Below we will let $I = \{i_1, \dots, i_s\}$, $\sigma = (\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s})$ and $g = \sum_{i \in I} e_i$. To count the number of words of C on γ we make the substitution

$$x_i = 1 \quad \text{if} \quad i \notin I.$$

With this substitution we get

$$C(x_1, \dots, x_n)|_{x_i=1, i \notin I} = \sum_{\tau \in Z_2^s} h_\tau x_{i_1}^{\tau_{i_1}} \dots x_{i_s}^{\tau_{i_s}} \quad \tau = (\tau_{i_1}, \dots, \tau_{i_s}) \quad (9)$$

where h_τ equals the number of words of C in the face $\Gamma_{\tau_1, \dots, \tau_s}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$. The same substitution in the polynomials $y_t(x_1, \dots, x_n)$ gives

$$y_t(x_1, \dots, x_n)|_{x_i=1, i \notin I} = \begin{cases} \frac{2^{(n-1)/2}}{2^n} \prod_{v=1}^s (1 - x_{i_v}) & \text{if } t = g \\ \frac{2^{(n-1)/2}}{2^n} \prod_{v=1}^s (1 + x_{i_v}) & \text{if } t = 0 \\ 0 & \text{else} \end{cases} \quad (10)$$

Hence from (7), (9) and (10) we deduce that

$$\sum_{\tau \in Z_2^s} h_\tau x_{i_1}^{\tau_{i_1}} \dots x_{i_s}^{\tau_{i_s}} = \frac{|C|}{2^n} 2^{(n-1)/2} \prod_{v=1}^s (1 + x_{i_v}) + \frac{A_g}{2^n} 2^{(n-1)/2} \prod_{v=1}^s (1 - x_{i_v}).$$

Consequently

$$h_\tau = \begin{cases} (|C| + A_g) 2^{-(n+1)/2} & \text{if } w(\tau) \text{ is even} \\ (|C| - A_g) 2^{-(n+1)/2} & \text{else.} \end{cases} \quad (11)$$

From (8') we thus have the following

Proposition *For the number of words h_τ in the $(n-1)/2$ -face $\Gamma_{\tau_{i_1}, \dots, \tau_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ the following formula is true:*

$$h_\tau = \begin{cases} 2|< g >^\perp \cap C| 2^{-(n+1)/2} & \text{if } w(\tau) \text{ is even} \\ 2(|C| - |< g >^\perp \cap C|) 2^{-(n+1)/2} & \text{else.} \end{cases}$$

Proof of Theorem 1: Consider a face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ where $s = (n+1)/2$. We assume that $w(\sigma)$ is an even number. The proof in the case $w(\sigma)$ is odd, is similar.

Assume γ is a full face. Then, with $\sigma = (\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_s)$,

$$h_\sigma = 2^{\frac{n-1}{2} - \log \frac{n+1}{2}}. \quad (12)$$

By the previous proposition, as $|C| = 2^{n-\log(n+1)}$, a simple calculation shows that if (12) holds then, with g as above, $|A_g|$ is maximal and $|\langle g \rangle^\perp \cap C|$ equals $|C|$ or equivalently $g \in \langle C \rangle^\perp$.

Assume that $g \in \langle C \rangle^\perp$. Then $|\langle g \rangle^\perp \cap C|$ equals $|C|$, A_g is maximal and from the proposition above, (12) will be true. This implies that γ is a full face.

We have proved that γ is a full face if and only if $g \in \langle C \rangle^\perp$. We also get from the previous paragraph that if $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$, where $s = (n+1)/2$, is a full $(n-1)/2$ -face, then any $(n-1)/2$ -face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\tau_{i_1}, \dots, \tau_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$, where $\tau = (\tau_{i_1}, \dots, \tau_{i_s})$ has an even weight, is a full face. Theorem 1 is proved.

Remark 1 It is a triviality to show that if a perfect code has a full $(n-1)/2$ -face then it also must have empty faces.

Definition To faces in n -cube Z_2^n , $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ and $\gamma' = \Gamma_{\tau_{j_1}, \dots, \tau_{j_{n-s}}}^{j_1, \dots, j_{n-s}}$ are said to be orthogonal to each other if

$$\{i_1, \dots, i_s\} \cap \{j_1, \dots, j_{n-s}\} = \emptyset.$$

We say that γ' is an *orthogonal complement* of γ and write $\gamma' = \gamma^\perp$.

Proof of Theorem 2: Assume $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$, $s = (n+1)/2$, is a full face of the perfect code C . Let as above $g = e_{i_1} + \dots + e_{i_s}$. As γ is a full face we adopt from the previous proof that the fourier coefficient A_g equals $|C|$.

We now substitute x_i by -1 if $i \in \{i_1, \dots, i_s\}$ in equation (7). As in the proof of the proposition we get

$$\sum_{\sigma \in Z_2^{n-s}} h_\sigma x_{j_1}^{\sigma_{j_1}} \dots x_{j_{n-s}}^{\sigma_{j_{n-s}}} = \frac{A_g}{2^n} 2^{(n+1)/2} \prod_{v=1}^{n-s} (1 + x_{j_v}).$$

As $A_g = |C| = 2^{n-\log(n+1)}$ we deduce that

$$h_\sigma = 2^{\frac{n-1}{2} - \log \frac{n+1}{2}} \quad (13)$$

for any $\sigma = (\sigma_{j_1}, \dots, \sigma_{j_{n-s}}) \in Z_2^{(n-1)/2}$.

As $g \in \langle C \rangle^\perp$, every word $c \in C$ will satisfy $g \cdot c \equiv 0 \pmod{2}$ or equivalently

$$w_I(c) \equiv 0 \pmod{2} \quad \text{where} \quad I = \{i_1, \dots, i_s\}. \quad (14)$$

As the difference between any two words of even weight is an even number we get that

$$d_I(c, c') \geq 4 \quad (15)$$

for any two words c and c' of C . The theorem is now proved by (13), (14) and (15).

Proof of Theorem 3: Let $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ be any $(n-1)/2$ -face of the hypercube. From (11) follows that the number of words of $C \cap \gamma$ depends on the fourier coefficient A_g where

$$g = e_{i_1} + \dots + e_{i_s}.$$

Consider the kernel of C . The perfect code C is the disjoint union of cosets of this kernel:

$$C = \ker(C) \cup (a_1 + \ker(C)) \cup (a_2 + \ker(C)) \cup \dots \cup (a_k + \ker(C)).$$

For any $p \in \ker(C)$ and for any g with $A_g \neq 0$, $p \cdot g = 0$, see [5]. Hence, for any $c \in a_i + \ker(C)$,

$$c \cdot g = a_i \cdot g.$$

From (8) we thus get that A_g is a multiple of the number of words of the kernel of C . Let $t(g)$ denote the number of words a_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, k$, with $a_i \cdot g = 0$. Then, by (8'),

$$A_g = 2 \cdot |\ker(C)|(1 + t(g)) - |C|$$

and hence from (11) we get that the number of words in the $(n-1)/2$ -face γ is

$$\frac{|C| + (-1)^{w(\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s})} (2 \cdot |\ker(C)|(1 + t(g)) - |C|)}{2^{(n+1)/2}}.$$

As $|C|$ is a multiple of $|\ker(C)|$, the theorem is proved.

Remark Any perfect code has as many full 3-faces as there are words of weight 3. No full rank perfect code of length n has any full $(n-1)/2$ -face by Theorem 1. It would be interesting to decide if, for some k with $2 \leq k \leq \log(n+1) - 3$, there are full rank perfect codes of length n with a full $((n+1)/2^k - 1)$ -faces.

4 Some results for d-faces

We first consider $((n+1)/2^k - 1)$ -faces. We need a notation.

Let $N_k(n, 2)$ denote the number of subspaces of dimension k of a vector space of dimension n over the finite field Z_2 . By [3]

$$N_k(n, 2) = \prod_{i=0}^{k-1} \frac{2^{n-i} - 1}{2^{i+1} - 1}$$

Theorem 5 *Let C be a perfect code of length n . If the rank of C equals r then, for any integer k in the interval $1 \leq k \leq n - r$, there are at least $N_k(n - r, 2)$ different equivalence classes of full $((n+1)/2^k - 1)$ -faces. Each such equivalence class contains $2^{n-k+1-2^{-k}(n+1)}$ full and mutually parallel $((n+1)/2^k - 1)$ -faces.*

Proof: We consider the dual space C^\perp of C . The dimension of C^\perp equals $n - r$ and any word of C^\perp has weight $(n+1)/2$, see [6]. As C^\perp is a simplex code, [6], it follows that to any subspace L of dimension k of C^\perp there is exactly one subset $J = \{j_1, j_2, \dots, j_\mu\}$, $\mu = (n+1)/2^k - 1$, of $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ such that the support of any of the words in L has an empty intersection with the set J .

We now proceed as in the proof of Theorem 1. In equation (7) we perform the substitution

$$x_j = 1 \quad \text{if} \quad j \in J.$$

We know from (5), that for any word g of C^\perp , $A_g = |C|$. By trivial counting arguments, as in the proof of Theorem 1, we get that the face

$$\Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_t}}^{i_1, \dots, i_t} = \{x \in Z_2^n \mid x_{i_v} = \sigma_{i_v} \quad v = 1, 2, \dots, t\},$$

where

$$\{i_1, i_2, \dots, i_t\} = \{1, 2, \dots, n\} \setminus J,$$

is a full $((n+1)/2^k - 1)$ -face if and only if the word

$$g = e_{\sigma_{i_1}} + e_{\sigma_{i_2}} + \dots + e_{\sigma_{i_t}}$$

belongs to L^\perp . As the dimension of L^\perp equals $n - k$, the number of such words g will be

$$\frac{2^{n-k}}{2^{(n+1)/2^k - 1}}$$

(where $2^{(n+1)/2^k - 1}$ simply is the number of words of length $(n+1)/2^k - 1$).

Finally we consider the most general case. We give a formula for the number of words of a perfect code on a d -face γ , for any integer d . The derivation of this formula, which is very similar to the proof of Theorem 3, will be omitted.

Lemma *Let C be a perfect code of length n and assume*

$$C = \ker(C) \cup (a_1 + \ker(C)) \cup (a_2 + \ker(C)) \cup \dots \cup (a_k + \ker(C)).$$

Let for any $g \in Z_2^n$, $t(g)$ denote the number of words in the set $\{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_k\}$ that are orthogonal to the word g . The number of words of C on a d -face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ equals

$$|C \cap \gamma| = 2^{d-\log(n+1)} + \sum_{\substack{g \\ \text{supp}(g) \subseteq \{i_1, \dots, i_s\} \\ w(g) = (n+1)/2}} 2^{d-n} (-1)^{\sigma \cdot g} (2|\ker(C)|(1 + t(g)) - |C|)$$

where $\sigma = (\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s})$.

We give two corollaries of this Lemma. The first shows that the number of words on a face is related to the size of the kernel.

Corollary 1 *Let C be any perfect code of length n . The number of words on a d -face γ will be equal to*

$$t \cdot 2^{d-n} |\ker(C)|$$

for some integer t .

Corollary 2 *Let C be a perfect code of length n . The number of words of C on a d -face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$, $s = n - d$, equals*

$$2^{d-\log(n+1)}$$

if and only if $t(g) = (k-1)/2$ for all g with $w(g) = (n+1)/2$ and $\text{supp}(g) \subseteq \{i_1, \dots, i_s\}$.

By Theorem 4, if $A_g \neq 0$ then $w(g) = (n+1)/2$. Hence, as $A_0 = |C|$ we get the following Corollary already proved by Avgustinovich and Vasilieva [2].

Corollary 3 (Avgustinovich-Vasilieva) *Let C be a perfect code of length n . For any $d > (n-1)/2$, the number of words on a d -face will be*

$$2^{d-\log(n+1)}.$$

Example We consider the case $d = \log(n + 1)$. We get from the Corollary 2 that if C is a perfect code of length n and $\{i_1, \dots, i_s\}$, $s = n - d$, a subset of the set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ such that $t(g) = (k - 1)/2$, (where k is as in the Lemma) for any word g with $w(g) = (n + 1)/2$ and $\text{supp}(g) \subseteq \{i_1, \dots, i_s\}$, then the number of words of C on the d -face $\gamma = \Gamma_{\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s}}^{i_1, \dots, i_s}$ for any word $(\sigma_{i_1}, \dots, \sigma_{i_s})$, will be equal to one. This means that the perfect code C is *systematic*. The converse statement will also be true.

Remark 1 Theorem 1 can rather easily be proved also by using the Corollary 3.

Remark 2 We also very much would like to mention that Theorem 1, Theorem 2, Corollary 2 and Corollary 3 are easy and immediate consequences of the results of [4]. Just put $x_i = 1$, in the equation (7), for $i \in J$ where J is a suitable chosen subset of the set of positions $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$.

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