Principles of Complex Systems, CSYS/MATH 300
University of Vermont, Spring 2013
Assignment 3 • code name: Bumblebee

Dispersed: Thursday, January 31, 2013.
Due: By start of lecture, 11:30 am, Thursday, February 7, 2013.
Some useful reminders:
Instructor: Peter Dodds
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E-mail: peter.dodds@uvm.edu
Office hours: 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, Wednesday
Course website: http://www.uvm.edu/∼pdodds/teaching/courses/2013-01UVM-300

All parts are worth 3 points unless marked otherwise. Please show all your working clearly and list the names of others with whom you collaborated.

Graduate students are requested to use LaTeX (or related TeX variant).

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1. (3+3 points) *Simon's model I:*

   For Herbert Simon's model of what we've called Random Competitive Replication, we found in class that the normalized number of groups in the long time limit, n_k, satisfies the following difference equation:

   $$\frac{n_k}{n_{k-1}} = \frac{(k-1)(1-\rho)}{1+(1-\rho)k} \tag{1}$$

   where $k \geq 2$. The model parameter ρ is the probability that a newly arriving node forms a group of its own (or is a novel word, starts a new city, has a unique flavor, etc.). For $k = 1$, we have instead

   $$n_1 = \rho - (1-\rho)n_1 \tag{2}$$

   which directly gives us n_1 in terms of ρ.

   (a) Derive the exact solution for n_k in terms of gamma functions and ultimately the beta function.

   (b) From this exact form, determine the large k behavior for n_k ($\sim k^{-\gamma}$) and identify the exponent γ in terms of ρ.

   Note: Simon's own calculation is slightly awry. The end result is good however.

2. (3+3 points) *Simon's model II:*

(a) A missing piece from the lectures: Obtain γ in terms of ρ by expanding Eq. 1 in terms of $1/k$. In the end, you will need to express n_k/n_{k-1} as $(1-1/k)^\theta$; from here, you will be able to identify γ. Taylor expansions and Procrustean truncations will be in order.

This (dirty) method avoids finding the exact form for n_k.

(b) What happens to γ in the limits $\rho \to 0$ and $\rho \to 1$? Explain in a sentence or two what's going on in these cases and how the specific limiting value of γ makes sense.

3. (6 + 3 + 3 points)

In Simon's original model, the expected total number of distinct groups at time t is ρt. Recall that each group is made up of elements of a particular flavor.

In class, we derived the fraction of groups containing only 1 element, finding

$$n_1^{(g)} = \frac{N_1(t)}{\rho t} = \frac{1}{2-\rho}$$

(a) (3 + 3 points)

Find the form of $n_2^{(g)}$ and $n_3^{(g)}$, the fraction of groups that are of size 2 and size 3.

(b) Using data for James Joyce's Ulysses (see below), first show that Simon's estimate for the innovation rate $\rho_{\text{est}} \simeq 0.115$ is reasonably accurate for the version of the text's word counts given below.

Hint: You should find a slightly higher number than Simon did.

Hint: Do not compute ρ_{est} from an estimate of γ.

(c) Now compare the theoretical estimates for $n_1^{(g)}$, $n_3^{(g)}$, and $n_3^{(g)}$, with empirical values you obtain for Ulysses.

The data (links are clickable):

- Matlab file (`sortedcounts` = word frequency f in descending order, `sortedwords` = ranked words):
http://www.uvm.edu/∼pdodds/teaching/courses/2013-01UVM-300/docs/ulysses.mat
- Colon-separated text file (first column = word, second column = word frequency f):
http://www.uvm.edu/∼pdodds/teaching/courses/2013-01UVM-300/docs/ulysses.txt

Data taken from http://www.doc.ic.ac.uk/ rac101/concord/texts/ulysses/. Note that some matching words with differing capitalization are recorded as separate words.