



SHANGHAI JIAO TONG
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION AND ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

APN functions

Zhaole Li

Workshop of APN function, 2022



Section 1

Introduction



Given two positive integers n and m , a vectorial Boolean (n, m) -function, or simply (n, m) -function, is any function $F : \mathbb{F}_2^n \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_2^m$. When $m = 1$, we often call it n -variable Boolean function.

One can identify the vector space \mathbb{F}_2^n with the finite field \mathbb{F}_{2^n} .



The differential attack, introduced by Biham and Shamir¹, is a chosen plaintext attack for block ciphers in general.

An (n, m) -function F is called differentially δ -uniform, if for every nonzero $a \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$ and every $b \in \mathbb{F}_2^m$, the equation $F(x) + F(x + a) = b$ has at most δ solutions. We denote the minimum of these integers δ by δ_F and call it the differential uniformity of F . For every (n, m) -function F , we have $\delta_F \geq \max(2, 2^{n-m})$.

¹E. Biham and A. Shamir. Differential cryptanalysis of DES-like cryptosystems. Journal of Cryptology 4 (1), pp. 3–72, 1991.

We can have $\delta_F = 2$ only when $n \geq m$, and this case is specially defined for $n = m$:

Definition (APN functions)

An (n, n) -function F is called almost perfect nonlinear (APN) if it is differentially 2-uniform, i.e. if for every $a \in \mathbb{F}_2^n \setminus \{0_n\}$ and every $b \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$, the equation $F(x) + F(x + a) = b$ has 0 or 2 solutions (i.e. the derivative $D_a F(x) = F(x) + F(x + a)$ is 2-to-1). Equivalently, $|D_a F(x), x \in \mathbb{F}_2^n| = 2^{n-1}$. In other words, for distinct elements $x, y, z, t \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$, the equality $x + y + z + t = 0_n$ implies $F(x) + F(y) + F(z) + F(t) \neq 0_n$.

Definition

Let F and F' be two functions from \mathbb{F}_2^n to \mathbb{F}_2^m .

- ① F and F' are Extended affine equivalent (EA-equivalent) if

$$F'(x) = L_1(F(L_2(x))) + L(x),$$

where L_1 and L_2 are affine permutations on \mathbb{F}_2^m , and L is an affine function on \mathbb{F}_2^n .

- ② F and F' are Carlet–Charpin–Zinoviev equivalent (CCZ-equivalent) if there exists an affine permutation which maps G_F onto $G_{F'}$, where $G_F = \{(x, F(x)) : x \in \mathbb{F}_2^n\}$ is the graph of F , and $G_{F'}$ is the graph of F' .



Remark:

- ① CCZ-equivalence is a generalization of EA-equivalence.
- ② If a function is APN, then its CCZ-equivalent functions are all APN.
- ③ Two quadratic APN functions are CCZ-equivalent if and only if they are EA-equivalent.

Section 2

A matrix approach for constructing quadratic APN functions

Let $F(x) = \sum_{1 \leq t < i \leq n} c_{i,t} x^{2i-1+2^{t-1}} \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}[x]$ be a quadratic function. We define an $n \times n$ matrix $E = (e_{i,t})_{n \times n}$ by setting $e_{i,t} = c_{i,t}$ for $i > t$, otherwise $e_{i,t} = 0$. Let $X = (x^{2^0}, x^{2^1}, \dots, x^{2^{n-1}})^T$ and $x = x_1\alpha_1 + x_2\alpha_2 + \dots + x_n\alpha_n$ where $x_i \in \mathbb{F}_2$ for $1 \leq i \leq n$. We have

$$F(x) = \bar{x}^T M^T E M T \bar{x}, \quad (1)$$

where $\bar{x} = (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)^T$ and $M = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha_1 & \alpha_2 & \dots & \alpha_n \\ \alpha_1^2 & \alpha_2^2 & \dots & \alpha_n^2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \alpha_1^{2^{n-1}} & \alpha_2^{2^{n-1}} & \dots & \alpha_n^{2^{n-1}} \end{pmatrix}.$



When $a = a_1\alpha_1 + a_2\alpha_2 + \cdots + a_n\alpha_n$ and $\bar{a} = (a_1, \dots, a_n)^T$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} D_a F(x) &= F(x + a) + F(x) + F(a) \\ &= (\bar{x} + \bar{a})^T M^T E M (\bar{x} + \bar{a}) + \bar{x}^T M^T E M \bar{x} + \bar{a}^T M^T E M \bar{a} \\ &= \bar{x}^T M^T (E + E^T) M \bar{a}. \end{aligned}$$

So we define a symmetric matrix $C_F = E + E^T$ with diagonal elements are all zero, so is $H = M^T C_F M$. When F is quadratic, $D_a F(x)$ is a linear function, so F is APN iff $\max\{\dim_{\mathbb{F}_2}(Ker(D_a)) | a \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}\} = 1$.

$D_a F(x) = \bar{x}^T H \bar{a}$ has 2 solutions iff $\text{Rank}_{\mathbb{F}_2}(H \bar{a})^T = n - 1$, and $H \bar{a}$ is the linear combination of n columns of H . Thus

$$D_a(x) = \bar{x}^T H \bar{a} = 0,$$

has 2 solutions for $\bar{a} \in \mathbb{F}_2^n \setminus \{0\}$ iff F is APN.

Definition

Let $H = (h_{u,v})_{n \times n}$ be an $n \times n$ matrix over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} . H is called a quadratic APN matrix (QAM) if

- ① H is symmetric and the elements in its main diagonal are zero;
- ② Every nonzero linear combination of the n rows of H has rank $n-1$.

F is an APN function with the correspondence matrix is QAM related to basis $\{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$.

- ① So if H_α, H_β are corresponding matrices for $F(x)$ relative to the α, β respectively. Then we confirm $H_\beta = P^T H_\alpha P$ where the invertible $n \times n$ matrix P satisfying that

$$(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_n) = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n)P.$$

- ② So if $F(x), F'(x)$ is the quadratic function defined by H_α, H_β related to α , are two functions EA-equivalent?

The relation between $F(x)$ and $F'(x)$



The answer is yes: $F'(x)$ is EA-equivalent to $F(x)$.

Proof.

Set the functions defined by H and $H' = P^T H P$ relative to α be $F(x) = \sum_{1 \leq t < i \leq n} c_{i,t} x^{2^{i-1} + 2^{t-1}}$, define E, E' as before, hence we have

$$F(x) = \bar{x}^T M^T E M \bar{x}, F'(x) = \bar{x}^T M^T E' M \bar{x},$$

where $\bar{x} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)^T \in \mathbb{F}_2^n$. We set $W = M^T E M, W' = M^T E' M$, then $W + W^T = H$ and $W' + W'^T = H' = P^T H P = P^T W P + P^T W^T P$. □



Lemma

Suppose $H = (h_{u,v})_{n \times n}$ is a symmetric matrix over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} with diagonal elements are all zeros, define a set $S = \{W | W + W^T = H\}$, if $W_1 + W_1^T = W_2 + W_2^T = H$, then there exists a symmetric matrix A such that $W_2 = W_1 + A$.

Proof.

Obviously for any symmetric matrix A , we have

$$(W_1 + A) + (W_1 + A)^T = W_1 + W_1^T + A + A^T = W_1 + W_1^T = H$$

which implies that $W_1 + A \in S$ for any symmetric matrix A .

By fixing W_1 , we define another set $S' = \{W_1 + A | A \text{ is symmetric}\}$, then $\#S'$ is the number of symmetric matrices over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} , i.e. $\#S' = (2^n)^{n + \frac{n(n-1)}{2}}$. Note that $\#S = \#S'$, and all elements of S' belong to S , so $S' = S$, i.e. $W_2 = W_1 + A$. □

The relation between $F(x)$ and $F'(x)$



Proof.

Since $W' + W'^T = H' = P^T H P = P^T W P + P^T W^T P$, according to lemma above, there exists a symmetric matrix A such that $W' = P^T W P + A$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned} F'(x) &= \bar{x}^T M^T E' M \bar{x} = \bar{x}^T W' \bar{x} \\ &= \bar{x}^T (P^T W P + A) \bar{x} = \bar{x}^T P^T M^T E M P \bar{x} + \bar{x}^T A \bar{x} \\ &= G(x) + \bar{x}^T A \bar{x}, \end{aligned}$$

where $G(x) = \bar{x}^T P^T M^T E M P \bar{x}$, is affine equivalent to $F(x)$.

$$\bar{x}^T A \bar{x} = \sum_{i=1}^n a_{i,i} x_i.$$

is a linear function since A is symmetric, so $F'(x)$ is EA-equivalent to $G(x)$. Thus $F'(x)$ is EA-equivalent to $F(x)$.



Theorem

Let $H = (h_{u,v}) \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{n \times n}$ be a symmetric matrix with main diagonal elements all zeros, and L be a linear permutation on \mathbb{F}_{2^n} . Let $H' = (h'_{u,v}) \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{n \times n}$ such that $h'_{u,v} = L(h_{u,v})$ for all $1 \leq u, v \leq n$. Then the quadratic functions defined by H and H' relative to α are EA-equivalent. And H is a QAM iff H' is a QAM.

Proof.

Just as before, we have $H = M^T(E + E^T)M = M^T C_F M$, then $C_F = (M^T)^{-1} H M^{-1}$. For the basis $\alpha = \{\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n\}$, we have the dual basis $\theta = \{\theta_1, \dots, \theta_n\}$ such that

$$\text{Tr}(\alpha_i \theta_j) = \begin{cases} 0, & \text{for } i \neq j; \\ 1, & \text{for } i = j. \end{cases}$$

Thus we have $(M^T)^{-1} = M_\theta$ and the element in i -th row and j -th column is $\theta_j^{2^{i-1}}$. Hence we have $C_F = M_\theta H M_\theta^T$, so

$$c_{i,t} = \sum_{1 \leq u, v \leq n} \theta_u^{2^{i-1}} \theta_u^{2^{t-1}} h_{u,v}.$$

Choose $\eta_{u,v} \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}$ such that $\eta_{u,v} + \eta_{v,u} = h_{u,v}$ and $h_{u,v} = 0$, then we have a quadratic function $Q(x) = \sum_{1 \leq v < u \leq n} \text{Tr}(\theta_u x) \text{Tr}(\theta_v x) h_{u,v}$ over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} which is EA-equivalent to

Proof.

$F(x)$, using the same technique we get $Q'(x)$ which is also EA-equivalent to $F'(x)$. Thus we only need to confirm the relation between $Q(x)$ and $Q'(x)$:

$$\begin{aligned} Q'(x) &= \sum_{1 \leq v < u \leq n} \text{Tr}(\theta_u x) \text{Tr}(\theta_v x) h'_{u,v} = \sum_{1 \leq v < u \leq n} \text{Tr}(\theta_u x) \text{Tr}(\theta_v x) L(h_{u,v}) \\ &= L\left(\sum_{1 \leq v < u \leq n} \text{Tr}(\theta_u x) \text{Tr}(\theta_v x) h_{u,v}\right) = L(Q(x)). \end{aligned}$$

$L(\text{Tr}(x)) = \text{Tr}(x)$ since L is a linear permutation. Therefore it deduces that $F(x)$ and $F'(x)$ are EA-equivalent. □

Before introducing the algorithms for constructing quadratic APN functions, we give some results on matrices over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} which are useful.

Lemma

Let $H \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{n \times n}$ be a symmetric matrix with main diagonal elements all zero. Then every nonzero linear combination over \mathbb{F}_2 of the n rows of H has rank at most $n-1$.

Theorem

Let $A = (a_{i,j}) \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{r \times c}$ with $1 \leq r < c \leq n$ and $a_{i,j} = a_{j,i}, a_{i,i} = 0$ for $1 \leq i, j \leq r$. Let $A[:, k], A[k]$ be the k -th column and k -th row of A , respectively. Set $b = \sum_{k=1}^c \lambda_k A[:, k]$, where $0 \neq (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_c) \in \mathbb{F}_2^c$. Assume $t = \text{Rank}_{\mathbb{F}_2} \{b[1], b[2], \dots, b[r]\}$. Then if every nonzero linear combination over \mathbb{F}_2 of the r rows of A has rank at least $c-1$, we have

- ① if $(\lambda_{r+1}, \dots, \lambda_c) = 0$, then $t = r - 1$;
- ② if $(\lambda_{r+1}, \dots, \lambda_c) \neq 0$, then $t = r$;

- ① Assume $(\lambda_{r+1}, \dots, \lambda_c) = 0$, then $b = \sum_{k=1}^r \lambda_k A[:, k]$, so $t \leq r - 1$; Let B is the matrix of first $r \times r$ submatrix of A , then $b = \text{Rank}_{\mathbb{F}_2}(\sum_{k=1}^r \lambda_k B[k])$, so if $t < r - 1$, then we have $\text{Rank}_{\mathbb{F}_2}(\sum_{k=1}^r \lambda_k A[k]) < r - 1 + (c - r) = c - 1$, contradiction.
- ② Assume $(\lambda_{r+1}, \dots, \lambda_c) \neq 0$, w.l.o.g. let $\lambda_c = 1$, then substitute $A[:, c]$ with b , we get a new $r \times c$ matrix A' . If $t < r$, we have $\sum_{k=1}^r \lambda'_k A'[k, c] = 0$ for $(\lambda'_1, \dots, \lambda'_r) \in \mathbb{F}_2^r \setminus \{0\}$. W.l.o.g. suppose $\lambda'_1 \neq 0$, then substitute $A'[1]$ with $\sum_{i=1}^r \lambda'_i A'[i]$ and get a new matrix A'' , then substitute $A''[:, 1]$ with $\sum_{i=1}^r \lambda'_i A''[:, i]$ and get a new matrix A''' , note that $A' = AP$, where P is a invertible matrix; $A'' = P' A'$, $A''' = A'' P''$, where P', P'' are also invertible matrices, so every nonzero linear combination over \mathbb{F}_2 of the r rows of A''' has rank at least $c-1$. However, we have $A'''[1, c] = A'''[1, 1] = 0$, contradiction.



Corollary

$H = (h_{u,v})_{n \times n}$ is a symmetric matrix over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} and A is the $r \times c$ submatrix consisting of the first r rows and the first c columns of H . Suppose $B = A^T$, then if A has the property that every nonzero linear combination over \mathbb{F}_2 of the r rows of A has rank at least $c-1$, so does B .

Note that every submatrix $A = (a_{i,j}) \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{r \times c}$ with $1 \leq r < c \leq n$ of a QAM H must have the property that every nonzero linear combination over \mathbb{F}_2 of the r rows of the submatrix has rank at least $c-1$. Thus, if a matrix has a submatrix which doesn't have that property, it cannot be a QAM. Using the corollary, checking the property of submatrix A is enough.



Given an $n \times n$ QAM matrix H over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} , we wish to get some new QAMs by assigning some different values of H . Since H is a QAM, the $(n-1) \times (n-1)$ submatrix A consists of the first $n-1$ rows and the first $n-1$ columns of H , and any nonzero linear combination of the $n-1$ rows of A has rank $n-2$. Thus $H = \begin{pmatrix} A & c \\ c^T & 0 \end{pmatrix}$, where $c = (x_1, \dots, x_{n-1})^T$. Then we choose suitable c to make H a QAM.

Example

Let $n = 4$ and we give the H over \mathbb{F}_{2^4} :

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & h_{1,2} & h_{1,3} & c_1 \\ h_{2,1} & 0 & h_{2,3} & c_2 \\ h_{3,1} & h_{3,2} & 0 & c_3 \\ c_1 & c_2 & c_3 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad (2)$$

The matrix framed is the submatrix A , clearly any nonzero linear combination of the 4-1 rows of A has rank 4-2. Then we need to test whether $[A, c]$ has the similar property:

- ① if $c_1 \in \text{Span}(A[1])$, then the first row of $[A, c]$ has rank 4-2, so H is not a QAM;
- ② if $c_1 + c_2 \in \text{Span}(A[1] + A[2])$, then the sum of the first two rows of $[A, c]$ has rank 4-2, so H is not a QAM;
- ③ \dots ;

From the example above, we need only to choose $c = (c_1, \dots, c_{n-1})^T \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n}^{n-1}$ to satisfy

$$\lambda_1 c_1 + \dots + \lambda_{n-1} c_{n-1} \in \mathbb{F}_{2^n} \setminus \text{Span}(\lambda_1 A[1] + \dots + \lambda_{n-1} A[n-1]),$$

where $\lambda_i \in \mathbb{F}_2$ for all $1 \leq i \leq n-1$.

First we only modify c_1 , we can simplify the set as below: Let $S_1 = \mathbb{F}_{2^n} \setminus V_1$, where $V_1 = \text{Span}(A[1])$. After fixing the value for c_1 , we need to modify c_2 , but the range of c_2 is more complex: $c_2 \notin \text{Span}(A[2])$ and $c_2 \notin \text{Span}(A[1] + A[2])$. And c_3 has the same condition: $c_3 \notin \text{Span}(A[3])$, $c_3 \notin \text{Span}(A[3] + A[1])$, $c_3 \notin \text{Span}(A[3] + A[2])$ and $c_3 \notin \text{Span}(A[3] + A[2] + A[1])$.

An algorithm for choosing suitable c



Let A be the submatrix of H consisting of the first $n - 1$ rows and columns,
 $S = \{S_\lambda : \lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_{n-1}) \in \mathbb{F}_2^{n-1} \setminus \{0\}\}$ where $S_\lambda = \mathbb{F}_{2^n} \setminus \text{Span}(\sum_{j=1}^{n-1} \lambda_j A[j])$.

Algorithm 1: The algorithm for choosing suitable c

Input : A QAM H over \mathbb{F}_{2^n} ; A set S as defined above; An index $i = 1$.

Output: Some QAMs

```
1 for each  $c_i \in S_{e_i}$  do
2   if  $i = n - 1$  then
3      $h_{n-1,n} = h_{n,n-1} = c_{n-1}$ ;
4     return  $H$ 
5   end
6    $h_{i,n} = h_{n,i} = c_i$ ;
7    $S_{e_{i+1}} \leftarrow S_{e_{i+1}} \cap S_{e_{i+1}+e_i}$ ;
8    $i \leftarrow i + 1$ ;
9 end
```



Thus, given a QAM H , we can assign the values of the last colomum of H to get some new QAMs by using algorithm. Furthermore, assigning the values of the more colomums of H can get more QAMs, but it needs to apply the algorithm several times. If we want to find new APN functions on \mathbb{F}_{2^n} for $n \geq 8$, we must change values of a QAM for at least two colomums by experimental results,

Example

x^3 is a well-known quadratic APN function on \mathbb{F}_{2^n} . Let $n = 8$, g be the primitive element of \mathbb{F}_{2^8} with $g^8 + g^4 + g^3 + g^2 + 1 = 0$, C be an 8×8 matrix such that $c_{1,2} = c_{2,1} = 1$ and $c_{i,j} = 0$ for all the others. Suppose M is an 8×8 matrix such that $m_{i,j} = (g^{11})^{2^{i-1}+2^{j-1}}$ for $1 \leq i, j \leq 8$. Then the corresponding QAM of x^3 is

$$H_8 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & g^{34} & g^{81} & g^{83} & g^{170} & g^{106} & \mathbf{c}_{13} & \mathbf{c}_7 \\ g^{34} & 0 & g^{68} & g^{162} & g^{166} & g^{85} & \mathbf{c}_{12} & \mathbf{c}_6 \\ g^{81} & g^{68} & 0 & g^{136} & g^{69} & g^{77} & \mathbf{c}_{11} & \mathbf{c}_5 \\ g^{83} & g^{162} & g^{136} & 0 & g^{17} & g^{138} & \mathbf{c}_{10} & \mathbf{c}_4 \\ g^{170} & g^{166} & g^{69} & g^{17} & 0 & g^{34} & \mathbf{c}_9 & \mathbf{c}_3 \\ g^{106} & g^{85} & g^{77} & g^{138} & g^{34} & 0 & \mathbf{c}_8 & \mathbf{c}_2 \\ \mathbf{c}_{13} & \mathbf{c}_{12} & \mathbf{c}_{11} & \mathbf{c}_{10} & \mathbf{c}_9 & \mathbf{c}_8 & 0 & \mathbf{c}_1 \\ \mathbf{c}_7 & \mathbf{c}_6 & \mathbf{c}_5 & \mathbf{c}_4 & \mathbf{c}_3 & \mathbf{c}_2 & \mathbf{c}_1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Example

We assign values for c_i for $1 \leq i \leq 13$ to get new QAMs. Let H_8 be a QAM, then:

- 1 $V = \text{Span}(g^{34}, g^{81}, g^{83}, g^{170}, g^{106})$, and V can partition \mathbb{F}_{2^8} into 8 sets:
$$\mathbb{F}_{2^8} = V \cup (V + a_1) \cup (V + a_2) \cup (V + a_3) \cup (V + a_4) \cup (V + a_5) \cup (V + a_6) \cup (V + a_7);$$
- 2 $\text{Rank}_{\mathbb{F}_2}(0, g^{34}, g^{81}, g^{83}, g^{170}, g^{106}, c_{13}) = 6$, i.e. $c_{13} \in \mathbb{F}_{2^8} \setminus V$. Suppose c_{13} is the linear combination of $g^{34}, g^{81}, g^{83}, g^{170}, g^{106}$ with a set $A = \{a_i | 1 \leq i \leq 7\}$;

Example

3 Thus we have

$$H'_8 = P^T H_8 P = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & g^{34} & g^{81} & g^{83} & g^{170} & g^{106} & a & \mathbf{c}_7 \\ g^{34} & 0 & g^{68} & g^{162} & g^{166} & g^{85} & x_{12} & \mathbf{c}_6 \\ g^{81} & g^{68} & 0 & g^{136} & g^{69} & g^{77} & x_{11} & \mathbf{c}_5 \\ g^{83} & g^{162} & g^{136} & 0 & g^{17} & g^{138} & x_{10} & \mathbf{c}_4 \\ g^{170} & g^{166} & g^{69} & g^{17} & 0 & g^{34} & x_9 & \mathbf{c}_3 \\ g^{106} & g^{85} & g^{77} & g^{138} & g^{34} & 0 & x_8 & \mathbf{c}_2 \\ a & x_{12} & x_{11} & x_{10} & x_9 & x_8 & 0 & \mathbf{c}_1 \\ \mathbf{c}_7 & \mathbf{c}_6 & \mathbf{c}_5 & \mathbf{c}_4 & \mathbf{c}_3 & \mathbf{c}_2 & \mathbf{c}_1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

4 If H_8 is a QAM then H'_8 is also a QAM, and they are EA-equivalent. So we only need to consider $c_{13} \in A$.

Example

- 5 Similarly, $U = \text{Span}(g^{34}, g^{68}, g^{162}, g^{166}, g^{85})$, and $B \cup (B + g^{34})$ be a partition of $\mathbb{F}_{2^8} \setminus U$.
- 6 When c_{13} and c_{12} have been chosen, let $E = \text{Span}(g^{34}, g^{81}, g^{83}, g^{170}, g^{106}, c_{13})$, then E can partition \mathbb{F}_{2^8} into 4 parts.
- 7 $F = \text{Span}(g^{34}, g^{68}, g^{162}, g^{166}, g^{85}, c_{12})$ and $G \cup (G + g^{34})$ be a partition of $\mathbb{F}_{2^8} \setminus F$.



SHANGHAI JIAO TONG
UNIVERSITY

Thank You

Zhaole Li · APN functions