

Traversing the k -mer Landscape of NGS Read Datasets for Quality Score Sparsification

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Next-generation sequencing (NGS)

NGS is the name given to several different sequencing technologies that were developed in the past decade.

These methods have in common a much higher throughput and a much lower cost compared to Sanger sequencing, which was used to sequence the Human Genome [LLL⁺12].

Sequencers	HiSeq 2000	SOLiDv4	Sanger 3730xl
Output data/run	600 Gb	120 Gb	1.9~84 Kb
Cost/million bases	\$0.07	\$0.13	\$2400

The problem with NGS

"In the past two decades, genomic sequencing capabilities have increased exponentially, outstripping advances in computing power and storage."

- Moore's law predicts that the number of transistors on integrated circuits doubles every 24 months [Moo65].
- Kryder's law predicts that hard drive density doubles approximately every 13 months [Wal05].
- Sequencing output has doubled every 9 months [Kah11].

How to deal with storage

	Lossless	Lossy
General purpose	GZIP BZIP2 7zip	
Specific for NGS		RQS

An example of the FASTQ format

```
@EAS54_6_R1_2_1_443_348  
GTTGCTTCTGGCGTGGGTGGGGGGG  
+EAS54_6_R1_2_1_443_348  
;;;;;;;;;;9;7;;.7;393333
```

- First and third rows contain an identifier for the read.
- Second row is the read itself.
- Fourth element represents the error probability of each base call using Phred quality scores.

Phred quality score

Definition (Phred quality score)

Let P_e be the estimated probability that a base call is incorrect. Then we define its *Phred quality score* Q as

$$Q = -10 \log_{10} P_e.$$

This quantity is encoded in the Sanger FASTQ format as a single byte, where the character '!' represents the lowest quality while '~' is the highest ($|\Sigma| = 94$).

The RQS algorithm in brief

Yu, Yorukoglu and Berger [YYB14] propose the following:

- 1 Generate a dictionary D of all k -mers that appear with high multiplicity in a representative collection of reads.
- 2 Let γ be a read. Its k -mers close to D in Hamming distance have nearly all of their quality score discarded.
- 3 Compress the resulting high redundancy sequence with a general purpose lossless compression algorithm.

The DICT algorithm

Algorithm 1 DICT

Input: C, k, r

Output: D

```
1:  $D \leftarrow \{\}$ 
2:  $A \leftarrow [0, \dots, 0] \in \mathbb{N}^{4^k}$ 
3: for  $x \in C_k$  do
4:    $A[x]++$ 
5: for  $x \in [4^k]$  do
6:   if  $A[x] \geq r$  then
7:      $D.append(x)$ 
8: return  $D$ 
```

The MARKMER algorithm

Algorithm 2 MARKMER

Input: x, D

Output: M

```
1: if  $\Delta(x, D) > 1$  then  
2:    $M \leftarrow [\text{false}, \dots, \text{false}] \in \{\text{true}, \text{false}\}^k$   
3: else  
4:    $M \leftarrow [\text{true}, \dots, \text{true}] \in \{\text{true}, \text{false}\}^k$   
5:   for  $y \in D \mid \Delta(x, y) = 1$  do  
6:     for  $i \in [k]$  do  
7:       if  $x_i \neq y_i$  then  
8:          $M_i \leftarrow \text{false}$   
9: return  $M$ 
```

The MARKREAD algorithm

Algorithm 3 MARKREAD

Input: γ, D

Output: \mathcal{M}

- 1: // Let x^a be the k -mer in γ starting at a .
 - 2: // Cover γ by k -mers $\{x^{a_1}, \dots, x^{a_n}\}$.
 - 3: **for** $i \in [n]$ **do**
 - 4: $M^i \leftarrow \text{MARKKMER}(x^{a_i}, D)$
 - 5: $\overline{M}^i \leftarrow [\text{false}, \dots, \text{false}] \in \{\text{true}, \text{false}\}^{\text{length}(\gamma)}$
 - 6: **for** $j \in [k]$ **do**
 - 7: $\overline{M}_{j+a_i-1}^i \leftarrow M_j^i$
 - 8: $\mathcal{M} \leftarrow \overline{M}^1 \vee \dots \vee \overline{M}^n$
 - 9: **return** \mathcal{M}
-

The SPARSIFYRQ algorithm

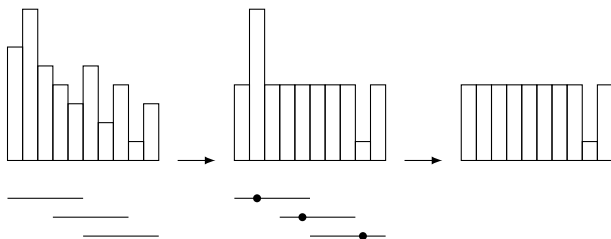
Algorithm 4 SPARSIFYRQ

Input: $\gamma, Q, D, Q_{\text{threshold}}$

Output: Q'

- 1: $Q' \leftarrow Q$
 - 2: $\mathcal{M} \leftarrow \text{MARKREAD}(\gamma, D)$
 - 3: **for** $i \in [\text{length}(\gamma)]$ **do**
 - 4: **if** $(Q_i > Q_{\text{threshold}})$ **or** $(\mathcal{M}_i = \text{true})$ **then**
 - 5: $Q'_i \leftarrow Q_{\text{threshold}}$
 - 6: **return** Q'
-

An example



Results

Results of compressing HG02215, chromosome 21 with $r = 50$, $k = 32$ and $Q_{\text{threshold}} = 40$, along with the F1 score of downstream variant calling:

Method	Size	Bits/Q	F1
Uncompressed	273 MiB	8.0000	1
GZIP	143 MiB	4.1923	1
BZIP2	133 MiB	3.8791	1
7zip (PPMd)	124 MiB	3.6269	1
RQS + GZIP	14 MiB	0.3825	0.9914
RQS + BZIP2	8.7 MiB	0.2540	0.9914
RQS + 7zip (PPMd)	11 MiB	0.2953	0.9914

The implementation of MARKMER

The search for k -mers in the dictionary within Hamming Distance 1 from D is accomplished by Yu et al. with a Boost multi-index hash table with 4 keys and a tricky algorithm described in the appendix of their paper.



A variant of the SPELLMODELS algorithm [Sag98] could be used here instead:

- The dictionary of k -mers D is maintained in memory as its generalized suffix tree.
- Given a k -mer, we search in D for the set of k -mers at Hamming Distance 1 from it.

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