

## Homework 3 Solutions

Barras Simon <simon.barras@epfl.ch>

Zachary Doll <zachary.doll@epfl.ch>

### 1 Problem 1 (Frugal Vertex Coloring)

Let  $G = (V, E)$  be a graph with maximum degree  $\Delta$ . A vertex coloring  $\chi : V \rightarrow C$  is called  $\beta$ -frugal if for every vertex  $v$ , no color appears more than  $\beta$  times in its neighborhood  $N(v)$ . That is,

$$|\{u \in N(v) : \chi(u) = c\}| \leq \beta \quad \text{for all } v \in V, c \in C.$$

A coloring is *proper* if  $\chi(u) \neq \chi(v)$  for all edges  $\{u, v\} \in E$ .

Show that for any constant integer  $\beta \geq 1$ , there exists a  $\beta$ -frugal coloring of  $G$  using  $Q = O(\Delta^{1+1/\beta})$  colors.

In fact, a stronger statement is true: there is a coloring that is both proper and  $\beta$ -frugal. But we only require to prove the above weaker statement.

#### 1.1 Solution

*Proof.* Consider a color set  $C$  with cardinality  $|C| := Q$ . Let us color each vertex of  $G = (V, E)$  uniformly at random:

$$\chi(v) \stackrel{\text{i.i.d.}}{\sim} \mathcal{U}\{Q\}, \quad \forall v \in V$$

For each vertex  $v \in V$  all colours  $c \in C$ , and any subset  $S \subseteq N(v)$  of size  $|S| = \beta + 1$ , define the bad event:

$$B(v, c, S) = \{\text{all vertices in } S \text{ have color } c\}$$

If such a bad event exists, then by definition, the coloring  $\chi$  is not  $\beta$ -frugal over  $G$ .

From the uniform color assignment, we have that the probability  $p$  of the bad event occurring for a fixed tuple  $(v, c, S)$  is given by:

$$\mathbb{P}[B(v, c, S)] = Q^{-(\beta+1)} \triangleq p$$

Let us now find an upper-bound for the number of events  $d^*$  on which  $B(u, c, S)$  depends, for a fixed vertex  $u \in S$ :

1. Because each color is assigned independently for each vertex, the event  $B(u, c, S)$  only depends on the colors in  $S$ . In other words, for the events  $B(u, c, S)$  and  $B(w, \tilde{c}, \tilde{S})$  to be dependent, it must be the case that  $u \in \tilde{S} \subseteq N(w)$ , i.e.  $w$  and  $u$  must be neighbors.

By hypothesis, we know that  $\delta(v) \leq \Delta$  for all  $v \in V$ , so there are at most  $\Delta$  choices for an initial vertex.

2. We have at most  $\binom{\Delta-1}{\beta}$  choices for the remaining  $\beta$  vertices in  $\tilde{S} \subseteq N(w) \setminus \{u\}$ .
3. We have  $Q$  choices for the color  $\tilde{c} \in C$ .

Thus,

$$d^* \leq \Delta \binom{\Delta-1}{\beta} Q - 1$$

Where we subtracted 1 for the event itself. Union-bounding over the fixed cardinality  $|S| = \beta + 1$  yields an upper-bound to the total number of events  $d$  that any non-fixed event depends on:

$$\begin{aligned} d &\leq (\beta + 1)d^* \\ &\leq Q(\beta + 1)\Delta \binom{\Delta-1}{\beta} - 1 \\ &\leq Q(\beta + 1)\Delta \left(\frac{e\Delta}{\beta}\right)^\beta - 1 \\ &= Q(\beta + 1) \left(\frac{e}{\beta}\right)^\beta \Delta^{\beta+1} - 1 \triangleq QC_\beta \Delta^{\beta+1} - 1 \end{aligned}$$

Where  $C_\beta = (\beta + 1) \left(\frac{e}{\beta}\right)^\beta$ , and where we used stirling's bound in the third line:

$$k! \geq \left(\frac{k}{e}\right)^k \implies \frac{n^k}{k!} \leq \frac{n^k}{(k/e)^k} = \left(\frac{en}{k}\right)^k$$

The Local Lovász Lemma states that, if  $ep(d+1) \leq 1$ , then with positive probability, no bad event occurs, meaning a  $\beta$ -frugal coloring exists. Thus, plugging in the computed value for  $p$  and the above bound for  $d$  into the LLL inequality, it suffices to have

$$eQ^{-(\beta+1)} \cdot QC_\beta \Delta^{\beta+1} \leq 1 \implies eC_\beta Q^{-\beta} \Delta^{\beta+1} \leq 1$$

Finally, solving for  $Q$  gives:

$$Q^\beta \geq eC_\beta \Delta^{\beta+1} \implies Q \geq (eC_\beta)^{1/\beta} \Delta^{1+1/\beta}$$

And thus

$$Q = O\left(\Delta^{1+1/\beta}\right)$$

as required. □

## 2 Problem 2 (Concentration for Euclidean MST)

Let  $X_1, \dots, X_n$  be  $n$  points chosen independently and uniformly at random from the unit square  $[0, 1]^2$ . Let  $L(X_1, \dots, X_n)$  denote the total length of the Minimum Spanning Tree (MST) on these points, using Euclidean distances.

Let  $\mu = \mathbb{E}[L(X_1, \dots, X_n)]$  be the expected length of the MST. Prove that for any  $\epsilon > 0$ , the probability of deviating from the mean by  $\epsilon n$  is exponentially small in  $n$ . Specifically, show that:

$$\Pr(|L - \mu| \geq \epsilon n) \leq 2 \exp\left(-\frac{\epsilon^2 n}{25}\right)$$

Hint: You may use the following fact without proof.

**Fact:** Any Euclidean MST on points in the 2D plane (using the  $L_2$  norm) has a maximum vertex degree of at most 5.

### 2.1 Solution

We aim to prove that  $L$  is a Lipschitz function, and then apply McDiarmid's inequality to obtain the desired concentration bound.

*Proof.* We claim that  $L$  is a Lipschitz function. That is, for any two configurations  $X = (X_1, \dots, X_n)$  and  $X' = (X_1, \dots, X'_i, \dots, X_n)$  that differ only in one coordinate  $i$ , the following holds:

$$|L(X) - L(X')| \leq c$$

for some constant  $c$ .

Let  $T$  be the minimum spanning tree (MST) of  $X$ , and let  $T'$  be the tree obtained from  $T$  by replacing the vertex  $X_i$  with  $X'_i$ . Although  $T'$  may not be the MST of  $X'$ , it is still a valid spanning tree on the modified set of points. Let  $T'^*$  denote the MST of  $X'$ , then:

$$\text{len}(T'^*) \leq \text{len}(T')$$

Since all points lie within the unit square  $[0, 1]^2$ , the maximum Euclidean distance between any two points is

$$\sqrt{1^2 + 1^2} = \sqrt{2}$$

Given the fact that in planar MST, each vertex has maximum degree of 5. Therefore, when a single point  $X_i$  is moved to  $X'_i$ , at most five edges are affected, each by changing by at most  $\sqrt{2}$  in length. Hence

$$|\text{len}(T) - \text{len}(T')| \leq 5\sqrt{2}$$

Since  $\text{len}(T'^*) \leq \text{len}(T')$ , it follows that:

$$|L(X) - L(X')| \leq |\text{len}(T) - \text{len}(T'^*)| \leq 5\sqrt{2}$$

Thus,  $L$  is  $c$ -Lipschitz with  $c = 5\sqrt{2}$ .

We can now apply McDiarmid's inequality, which states that if  $L$  is  $c_i$ -Lipschitz in each coordinate, then:

$$\Pr[|L - \mu| \geq t] \leq 2 \exp\left(-\frac{2t^2}{\sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2}\right)$$

Since each  $c_i = 5\sqrt{2}$ , we have

$$\sum_{i=1}^n c_i^2 = n \cdot (5\sqrt{2})^2 = 50n$$

Setting  $t = \varepsilon n$ , we obtain:

$$\Pr[|L - \mu| \geq \varepsilon n] \leq 2 \exp\left(\frac{-2\varepsilon^2 n^2}{50n}\right) = 2 \exp\left(\frac{-\varepsilon^2 n}{25}\right)$$

□

### 3 Problem 3 (A randomized algorithm for $k$ -SAT)

Consider a satisfiable  $k$ -CNF  $\Phi$  on  $n$  variables. One try of the algorithm: start at uniform  $x_0 \in \{0, 1\}^n$ ; for  $T$  steps  $t = 0, 1, \dots, T - 1$ , if  $x_t$  satisfies  $\Phi$  return  $x_t$ , else pick an unsatisfied clause  $C$ , choose a uniform random literal  $\ell \in C$  and flip its variable to obtain  $x_{t+1}$  from  $x_t$ . If no solution within  $T$  steps, restart. Fix a satisfying assignment  $x^*$  and let  $D_t = \|x_t - x^*\|_1$ .

- (a) Show that whenever  $D_t > 0$ ,  $\Pr[D_{t+1} = D_t - 1 \mid x_t] \geq 1/k$ .
- (b) If  $D_0 = d$ , prove  $\Pr[\text{hit } 0 \text{ within } d \text{ steps}] \geq (1/k)^d$  (via  $d$  consecutive decreases).
- (c) For  $x_0$  uniform,  $D_0 \sim \text{Bin}(n, 1/2)$ . Show  $\Pr[\text{success in one try}] \geq \left(\frac{k+1}{2k}\right)^n$ .
- (d) Argue that  $T = n$  suffices to capture the event in (b), and conclude the expected time  $\tilde{O}\left(\left(\frac{2k}{k+1}\right)^n\right)$ ; specialize to  $k = 3$  as  $\tilde{O}\left(\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)^n\right)$ .

**Remark (Schöning's bound).** If in (b) you instead bound  $\Pr[\text{ever hit } 0 \mid D_0 = d] \geq (1/(k-1))^d$  using a biased random-walk/gambler's-ruin argument with step  $-1$  w.p.  $1/k$  and  $+1$  w.p.  $1 - 1/k$ , then averaging as in (c) yields per-try success  $\left(\frac{k}{2(k-1)}\right)^n$  and expected time  $\tilde{O}\left((2 - \frac{2}{k})^n\right)$  (e.g.,  $\tilde{O}\left((\frac{4}{3})^n\right)$  for 3-SAT).

#### 3.1 Solution

##### 3.1.1 Part A

*Proof.* Pick an arbitrary assignment  $x_t$  with distance  $D_t > 0$  from a satisfying  $x^*$ , and assume  $x_t$  does not satisfy  $\Phi$  (in which case the algorithm would terminate).

Because  $x^*$  satisfies  $\Phi$ , every clause  $C$  contains at least one literal  $\ell^* \in C$  set to true under the assignment  $x^*$ . Conversely, as  $C$  is unsatisfied under  $x_t$ , every literal of  $C$  must be false in  $x_t$ . In particular, we have that  $\ell^* \in C$  is false in  $x_t$ . Because the algorithm picks a literal  $\ell \in C$  u.a.r. among the  $k$  possible choices, and at least one of them ( $\ell^*$ ) would decrease the Hamming distance by 1, it follows that

$$\Pr[D_{t+1} = D_t - 1 \mid x_t] \geq \frac{1}{k}$$

□

### 3.1.2 Part B

*Proof.* We assume the satisfying assignment  $x^*$  is unique, as per clarifications on the exercise.

Consider the event that each of the first  $d$  steps decrease the distance by exactly 1. From part (a), we have that

$$\Pr \left[ \bigcap_{t=0}^{d-1} \{D_{t+1} = D_t - 1\} \right] = \prod_{t=0}^{d-1} \Pr[D_{t+1} = D_t - 1 \mid x_t] \geq \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^d$$

Thus:

$$\Pr[\text{hit 0 within } d \text{ steps} \mid D_0 = d] \geq \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^d$$

□

### 3.1.3 Part C

*Proof.* the result from part (b) gives us

$$\Pr[\text{success in one try} \mid D_0 = d] \geq \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^d$$

From which it immediately follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \Pr[\text{success in one try}] &\geq \mathbb{E} \left[ \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^{D_0} \right] = \prod_{i=1}^n \mathbb{E} \left[ \left(\frac{1}{k}\right)^{Z_i} \right], \quad Z_i \sim \text{Ber}(1/2) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n \left( \frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{k} \right) \\ &= \left( \frac{k+1}{2k} \right)^n \end{aligned}$$

Where we simply used the MGF of  $D_0 \sim \text{Bin}(n, 1/2)$ .

□

### 3.1.4 Part D

The event from (b), namely:

$$D_0 = d \implies \Pr[\text{hit 0 within } d \text{ steps}] \geq (1/k)^d$$

is fully contained in the first  $d$  steps. Because we consider the K-SAT problem over  $n$  variables, it is clear that the maximal possible initial distance is  $D_0 = n$ , i.e. when all variables from  $x_0 \sim \mathcal{U}\{0,1\}^n$  differs from the satisfying assignment  $x^*$ . Thus,  $D_0 = d \leq n$ , and choosing  $T = n$  suffices to capture the event fully.

From part (c), we know that the probability of success in one try is:

$$P \geq \left(\frac{k+1}{2k}\right)^n$$

Therefore the expected number of necessary tries until success is

$$\mathbb{E}[\text{necessary tries until success}] = O(1/P) = O\left(\left(\frac{2k}{k+1}\right)^n\right)$$

Each try costs  $T = n$  time, and thus:

$$\mathbb{E}[\text{time}] = O\left(n \left(\frac{2k}{k+1}\right)^n\right) = \tilde{O}\left(\left(\frac{2k}{k+1}\right)^n\right)$$

#### 4 Problem 4 (The Long(est) Path Home)

Given a graph  $G = (V, E)$ , you want to find long simple paths in the graph in polynomial time.

- (a) (Algorithm 1: Dead easy.) Show that you can find a path of length  $k$  (if such a path exists) in time  $n\Delta^k$ , where  $\Delta$  is the maximum degree of  $G$ .
- (b) (Easy.) If the graph were directed and acyclic (i.e., a DAG), then show that you can deterministically find the longest path in  $G$  in time  $O(m + n)$ . Here, and in general,  $m = |E|$  and  $n = |V|$ .
- (c) (Algorithm 2:) Consider running the following procedure  $n$  times, and outputting the longest path found in these  $n$  tries.

Take a random permutation of the vertices, and direct each edge from the lower endpoint to the higher endpoint to create a DAG  $\vec{G}$ . Find a longest path in  $\vec{G}$ .

Show that for  $k = c \frac{\log n}{\log \log n}$  for some constant  $c > 0$ , Algorithm 2 will find a path of length  $k$  (if it exists) with probability at least  $1/2$ .

- (d) Now, consider a slight extension of this idea. Suppose you have a graph  $G$ , and you color the vertices using  $k$  colors (neighbors need not have different color). A path is called *polychromatic* if has  $\ell \leq k$  vertices, and all the  $\ell$  vertices have different colors.
  - i. Show that you can find a polychromatic path of length  $k$  in time that is  $\text{poly}(n, k)2^k$ . (So, this is polynomial time for  $k = O(\log n)$ ).
  - ii. (Algorithm 3:) Consider running the following procedure  $n$  times, and outputting the longest path found in these  $n$  tries.

Take a random coloring of the vertices using  $k$  colors, and find the polychromatic path of length at most  $k$  in  $G$ .

Show that for  $k = c \log n$  for some constant  $c > 0$ , Algorithm 3 will find a path of length  $k$  (if it exists) with probability at least  $1/2$ . (Hint: Use Stirling's approximation.)

## 4.1 Solution

### 4.1.1 Part A

We aim to show that the brute-force algorithm for finding the longest path of length at most  $k$  in a graph  $G = (V, E)$  runs in  $O(n\Delta^k)$ , where  $n = |V|$  is the number of vertices and  $\Delta$  is the maximum degree of any vertex in  $G$ .

*Proof.* The high-level algorithm (Algorithm 1) enumerates all vertices as potential starting points for the longest path. For each vertex  $v \in V$ , it calls a recursive procedure that explores all possible simple paths starting from  $v$  with length at most  $k$ . The outer loop thus contributes as factor of  $O(n)$ .

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**Algorithm 1** Find longest path in the graph

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```
procedure LONGEST-PATH( $G = (V, E), k$ )  
   $P \leftarrow \emptyset$   
  for  $v \in V$  do  
     $Q \leftarrow \text{Longest-Path-Vertex}(G, v, \emptyset, k)$   
     $P \leftarrow \max(P, Q)$   
  end for  
  return  $P$   
end procedure
```

---

Algorithm 2 describes the recursive procedure that computes the longest path starting from a fixed vertex  $v$ . At each recursive step, the algorithm considers all neighbors  $u$  of  $v$  (excluding the predecessor vertex  $p$ ) and recursively explores all paths of remaining length  $k - 1$  starting from  $u$ .

Since each vertex has at most  $\Delta$  neighbors, and the recursion proceeds to depth  $k$ , the total number of recursive calls can be upper-bounded by  $O(\Delta^k)$ . This corresponds to exploring all possible paths of length up to  $k$  starting from a given vertex.

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**Algorithm 2** Find longest path of a vertex

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```
procedure LONGEST-PATH-VERTEX( $G = (V, E), v, p, k$ )  
   $P \leftarrow \emptyset$   
  if  $k = 0$  then  
    return  $P$   
  end if  
  for  $u \in V$  where  $\{u, v\} \in E$  and  $u \neq p$  do  
     $Q \leftarrow \text{Longest-Path-Vertex}(G, u, v, k - 1)$   
     $P \leftarrow \max(P, Q)$   
  end for  
  return  $P$   
end procedure
```

---

Combining both procedures, the overall time complexity is obtained by multiplying the outer  $O(n)$  loop with the recursive exploration cost  $O(\Delta^k)$ . Therefore, the total running time of the algorithm is

$$O(n\Delta^k)$$

□

### 4.1.2 Part B

We aim to show that if the graph  $G = (V, E)$  is directed and acyclic, there exist an algorithm to find the longest path in time  $O(V + E)$ .

*Proof.* Finding the the longest path in a DAG (Directed Acyclic Graph) can achieved efficiently using a DFS (Depth-First Search) combined with dynamic programming. This approach ensures that each vertex is processed only once, avoiding redundant computations and achieving the desired linear-time complexity.

The high-level procedure (Algorithm 3) iterates over all vertices, treating each as potential starting points for the longest path. For every vertex  $v \in V$ , it invokes a recursive routines that computes and memorizes the longest path starting from  $v$ . The outer loop thus contributes as factor of  $O(V)$ .

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#### Algorithm 3 Find longest path in a DAG

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```

procedure LONGEST-PATH-DAG( $G = (V, E), k$ )
   $\mathcal{P} \leftarrow \{\emptyset\}$  for  $|V|$ 
  for  $v \in V$  do
    Longest-Path-Vertex-DAG( $G, \mathcal{P}, v$ )
  end for
  return  $\max(P \in \mathcal{P})$ 
end procedure

```

---

Algorithm 4 defines the recursive routine improved with dynamic programming that computes the longest path starting from a fixed vertex  $v$ . If the longest path for  $v$  has already been computed (i.e.,  $\mathcal{P}[v] \neq \emptyset$ ), the result is returned immediately. Otherwise, for each outgoing edge  $(v, u) \in E$ , the algorithm recursively computes the longest path starting from  $u$  and updates  $\mathcal{P}[v]$  accordingly.

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#### Algorithm 4 Find longest path of a vertex in DAG

---

```

procedure LONGEST-PATH-VERTEX-DAG( $G = (V, E), \mathcal{P}, v$ )
  if  $\mathcal{P}[v] \neq \emptyset$  then return
  end if
  for  $e = \{v, u\} \in E$  do
    Longest-Path-Vertex-DAG( $G, \mathcal{P}, u$ )
     $\mathcal{P}[v] \leftarrow \max(\mathcal{P}[v], \mathcal{P}[u] + e)$ 
  end for
end procedure

```

---

Each vertex  $v$  is visited only once, and during its processing, the algorithm inspects all its outgoing edges. The total amount of work fo all vertices is the total number of edges  $E$ .

Thus combining bot procedures yields an algorithm that computes the longest path in a DAG in linear time.

$$O(V + E)$$

□



### 4.1.3 Part C

We claim that if we assign a random ordering to all vertices of an undirected graph  $G = (V, E)$  and orient each edge from the vertex with smaller index to the one with larger index, we obtain a directed acyclic graph (DAG)  $\vec{G} = (V, E)$ .

Now, consider construction  $n$  independent random orientations  $\vec{G}_1, \dots, \vec{G}_n$ . We want to show that, for

$$k = c \frac{\log n}{\log \log n}$$

with a sufficiently large constant  $c > 0$ , the probability that at least one of these DAGs contains a path of length  $k$  is at least  $\frac{1}{2}$ :

$$\Pr \left[ \exists i, P \subseteq \vec{G}_i, \text{len}(P) = k \right] \geq \frac{1}{2}$$

*Proof.* Fix a specific path  $P$  of length  $k$  in  $G$ . It consists of  $k + 1$  vertices. When we randomly permute the vertices, there are  $(k + 1)!$  possible relative orderings of these vertices, and only one of them produces an increasing order consistent with the directed edges of  $\vec{G}$ . Hence

$$\Pr \left[ P \subseteq \vec{G} \right] = \frac{1}{(k + 1)!} =: p$$

The longer the path, the smaller this probability becomes. Let  $P^*$  be a longest path in  $G$ . For our family of random orientations, the probability that at least one of the  $\vec{G}_i$  contains  $P^*$  is

$$\Pr \left[ P^* \in \bigcup_{i=1}^n \vec{G}_i \right] \geq \Pr \left[ P^* \in \bigcup_{i=1}^n \vec{G}_i \right] = 1 - \Pr \left[ P^* \notin \bigcup_{i=1}^n \vec{G}_i \right] = 1 - (1 - p)^n$$

Using the standard exponential bound  $(1 - p)^n \leq e^{-pn}$ .

$$\Pr \left[ P^* \in \bigcup_{i=1}^n \vec{G}_i \right] \geq 1 - e^{-pn} = 1 - \exp \left( -n \frac{1}{(k + 1)!} \right) = 1 - \exp \left( -n \frac{1}{\left( c \frac{\log n}{\log \log n} + 1 \right)!} \right)$$

Using Stirling's bound

$$(k + 1)! \geq \sqrt{2\pi(k + 1)} \left( \frac{k + 1}{e} \right)^{k+1}$$

we obtain

$$\frac{1}{(k + 1)!} \leq \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi(k + 1)}} \left( \frac{e}{k + 1} \right)^{k+1}$$

Substituting  $k = c \frac{\log n}{\log \log n}$

$$p \leq \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi k}} \left( \frac{e \log \log n}{c \log n} \right)^{c \frac{\log n}{\log \log n}}$$

Hence

$$pn \leq n^{1-c+o(1)}$$

If we choose any  $c > 1$ , then  $pn \rightarrow 0$  as  $n \rightarrow \infty$ , implying  $1 - e^{-pn} \rightarrow 0$ . Conversely, if  $c < 1$ , then  $pn \rightarrow \infty$ , and

$$1 - e^{-pn} \rightarrow 1$$

Thus, there exist a threshold constant  $c^* \approx 1$  such that for  $c < c^*$  the probability exceeds  $\frac{1}{2}$  for large  $n$ .  $\square$

#### 4.1.4 Part D

Consider a graph  $G = (V, E)$  where each vertex is assigned one of  $k$  colors, such that no two adjacent vertices share the same color. A path  $P$  is said to be polychromatic if it contains at most one vertex of each color. Clearly, the length of any such path satisfies  $\text{len}(P) \leq k$ .

We claim that there exist algorithms running in time  $\text{poly}(n, k)2^k$  that finds the longest polychromatic path.

*Proof.* Consider a dynamic programming (DP) table defined as:

$$\text{DP}[C][v] = \begin{cases} \text{True} & \text{if there exists a path ending at vertex } v \text{ with } C \\ \text{False} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Where  $C$  is a polychromatic subset.

The DP is initialized for single-vertex paths:

$$\text{DP}[\text{col}(v)][v] = \text{True}, \quad \forall v \in V$$

Then, it is updated recursively:

$$\text{DP}[C][v] = \bigvee_{u \in N(v)} \text{DP}[C \setminus \text{col}(v)][u]$$

Where  $N(v)$  denotes the set of neighbors of  $v$ .

Each entry in the DP table represents whether a polychromatic path with color subset  $C$  ends at vertex  $v$ .

Since there are  $2^k$  subsets of colors and  $n$  vertices, the table contains  $O(n2^k)$  entries. For each vertex, we may check all its incident edges, leading to a total time complexity of:

$$O(2^k(n + m)) = \text{poly}(n, k)2^k$$

□

By repeating the random coloring of the graph  $G = (V, E)$  independently  $n$  times to generate graphs  $G_1^\bullet, \dots, G_n^\bullet$ , we claim that for

$$k = c \log n$$

with constant  $c > 0$ , the algorithm finds a polychromatic path of length  $k$  (if exists) with probability at least  $\frac{1}{2}$ :

$$\Pr[\exists i, P \subseteq G_i^\bullet, \text{len}(P) = k] \geq \frac{1}{2}$$

*Proof.* Fix a specific path  $P$  of length  $k$  in  $G$ . The path contains  $k$  distinct vertices, each independently assigned one of  $k$  color.

There are  $k^k$  possible colorings of the vertices along  $P$ , but only those in which all vertices have distinct colors yield a polychromatic path. The number of distinct-color colorings equals  $k!$ . Thus, for a single random coloring:

$$\Pr[p(P) \in G^\bullet] = \frac{k!}{k^k} =: p$$

Where  $p(P)$  is the polychromatic possible path of  $P$ .

For our family of random coloring, the probability that at least one of the  $G_i^\bullet$  contains a valid  $p(P)$  of length  $k$  is

$$\Pr [\exists i : p(P) \in G_i^\bullet] = 1 - (1 - p)^n \geq 1 - e^{-pn} = 1 - \exp\left(-n \frac{k!}{k^k}\right)$$

To analyze this expression asymptotically, we apply Stirling's approximation:

$$k! \approx \sqrt{2\pi k} \left(\frac{k}{e}\right)^k$$

Thus,

$$\frac{k!}{k^k} \approx e^{-k} \sqrt{2\pi k}$$

Plugging this back, we get:

$$\Pr [\exists i : p(P) \in G_i^\bullet] \geq 1 - \exp\left(e^{-k} \sqrt{2\pi k}\right)$$

Setting  $k = c \log n$

$$ne^{-k} \sqrt{2\pi k} = ne^{-c \log n} \sqrt{2\pi c \log n} = n^{1-c} \sqrt{2\pi c \log n}$$

For this probability to be at least  $\frac{1}{2}$ , we require the exponent to be at least  $\ln 2$ . That is,  $n^{1-c} \sqrt{\log n} = \Omega(1)$ , which holds for any constant  $c < 1$ .

Therefore, for any constant  $c < 1$ ,

$$k = c \log n \Rightarrow \Pr [\exists i : p(P) \in G_i^\bullet] \geq \frac{1}{2}$$

□