

Error Amplification in Code-based Cryptography

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Background

- Code-based Cryptography

- Previous work

- Attack Scenario

Contributions

- The Chaining method

- Generating e_0

Results

- Amplification effect

Wrapping it up

- One of the major branches of cryptographic post-quantum research.

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- **Large keys!**

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- Encryption simply: $c \leftarrow mG + e$
- Uses iterative **bitflipping decoding** in the decryption stage
- Decryption Failure Rate (**DFR**), is **non-zero**.

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Sparse! ≈ 99 bits out of 100 are zero in H .

The **secret key** $H \in \mathbb{F}_2^{r \times n}$ is constructed as

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Knowledge of h_0 (the first row of H_0) is sufficient for complete **key recovery**.

Public key $G \in \mathbb{F}_2^{(n-r) \times n}$ is constructed as follows:

$$G = \left(\begin{array}{c|c} I & \begin{pmatrix} (H_{n_0-1}^{-1} \cdot H_0)^T \\ (H_{n_0-1}^{-1} \cdot H_1)^T \\ \vdots \\ (H_{n_0-1}^{-1} \cdot H_{n_0-2})^T \end{pmatrix} \end{array} \right)$$

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The decoding algorithms (Ψ_H) are based on variants of the original **Gallager's bitflipping** algorithm.

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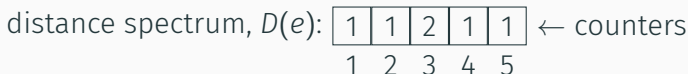
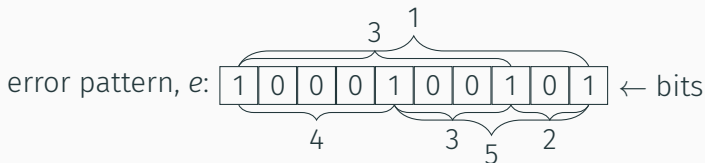
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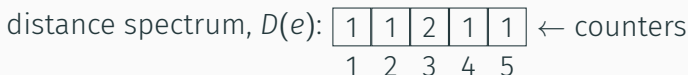
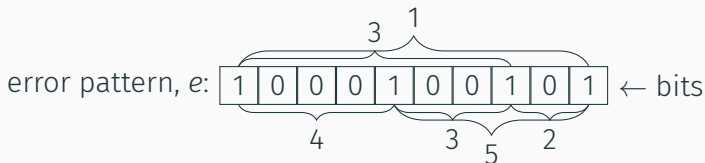
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- **Key recovery** is possible with 250-300 M ciphertexts for 80-bit security parameters.
- Attack against **CCA** secure QC-MDPC.
- The authors discovered a correlation between the **distance spectrums** of the secret key and of non-decodeable error patterns.

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We want to find $D(h_0)$, the distance spectrum of the first row of H_0 , the first part of the secret key H .

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By combining **all $D(e_i)$ vectors** we see a **non-uniform** probability distribution of individual distances that directly **correlates** to $D(h_0)$. We need **many samples** to correctly determine $D(h_0)$.

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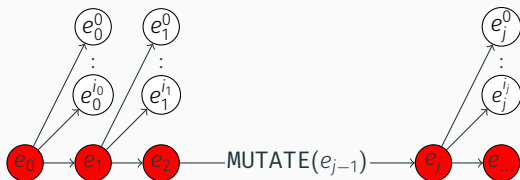
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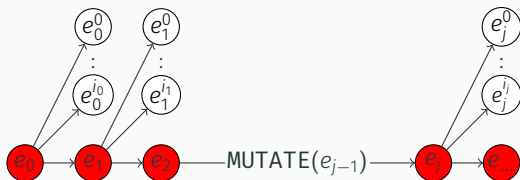
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We call deriving e_i from e_j the **chaining method**, by which we significantly **amplify** the DFR.

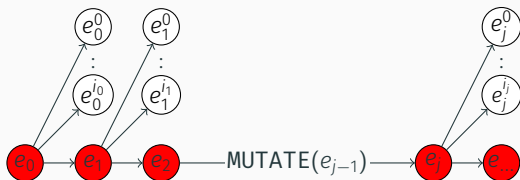


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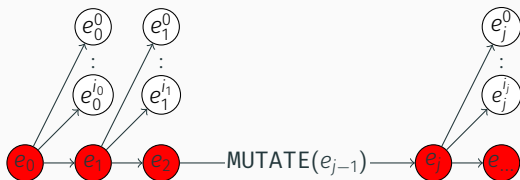
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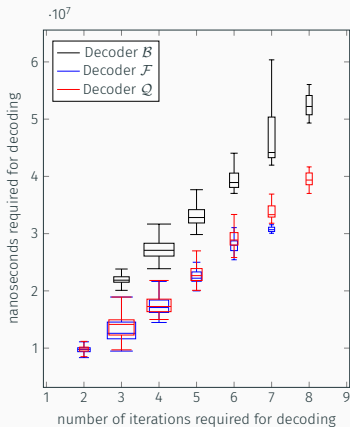
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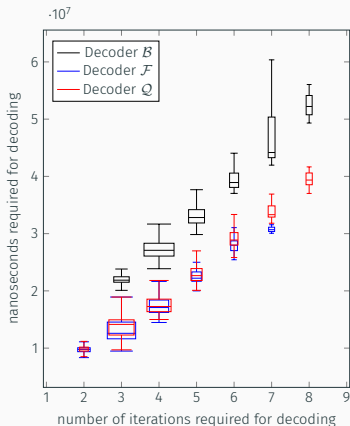
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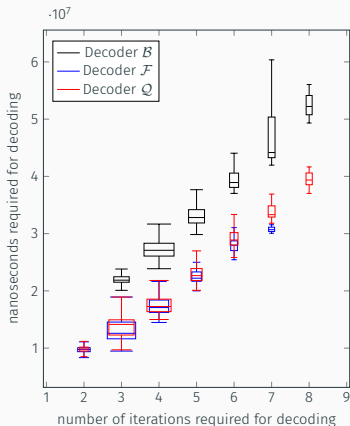


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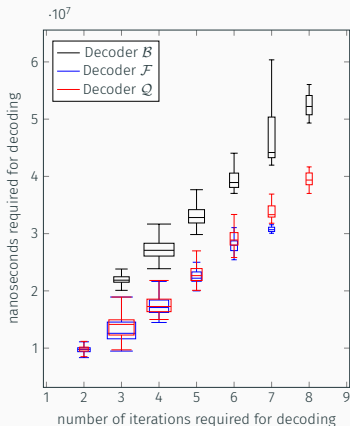
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- e'_0 is replaced each time a **more difficult pattern** is encountered!
- Keep going until a decryption failure e_0 is found.

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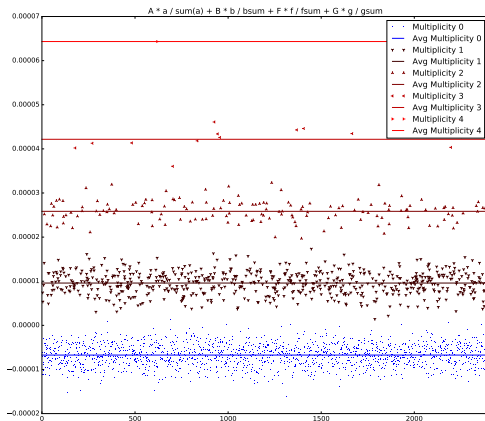
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Wrapping it up

We see that the vector

$$\Delta D = \frac{\sum_{k=0}^j \Delta D_k}{j}$$

settle into **multiplicity layers** for large j (long chains).

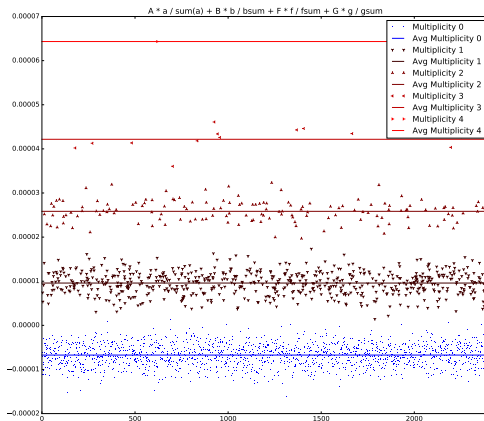


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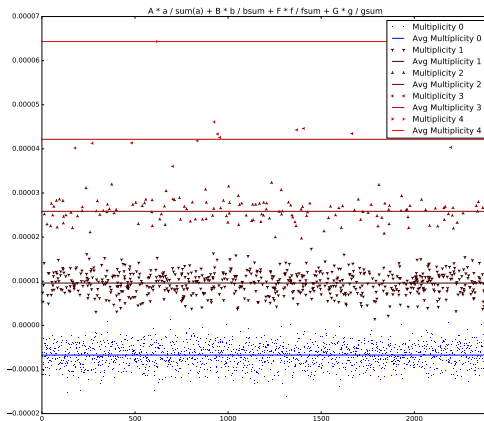


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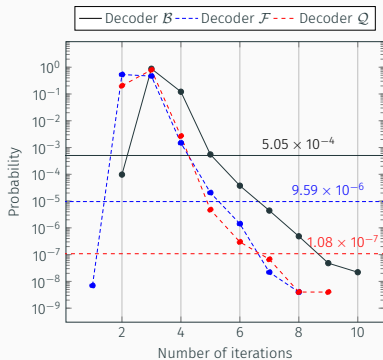
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We can reconstruct the **secret key** using [GJS16]!

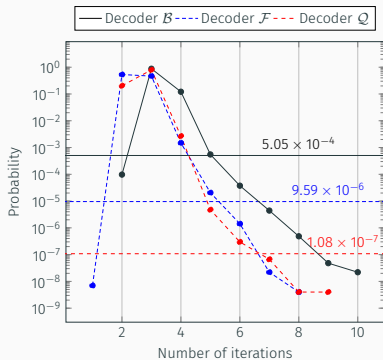


Random samples

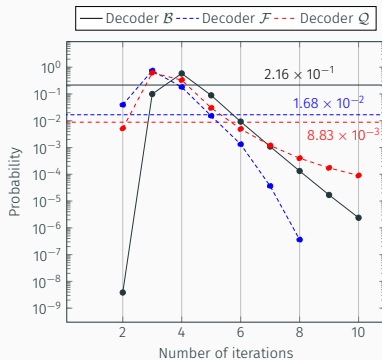
Chaining method

DFR indicated by **horizontal** lines.

Note the **logarithmic** scale on the y-axis!



Random samples



Chaining method

DFR indicated by horizontal lines.

Note the logarithmic scale on the y-axis!

Background

- Code-based Cryptography

- Previous work

- Attack Scenario

Contributions

- The Chaining method

- Generating e_0

Results

- Amplification effect

Wrapping it up

- **Improvement** over the original (CPA-version) attack with a factor 20-30.

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 - **IND-CCA** secure schemes are not vulnerable to the chaining method.

Thank you!

(Questions?)

- [GJS16] Qian Guo, Thomas Johansson, and Paul Stankovski. “A Key Recovery Attack on MDPC with CCA Security Using Decoding Errors”. In: *ASIACRYPT 2016, Part I*. Ed. by Jung Hee Cheon and Tsuyoshi Takagi. Vol. 10031. LNCS. Springer, Heidelberg, Dec. 2016, pp. 789–815. DOI: [10.1007/978-3-662-53887-6_29](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-662-53887-6_29).
- [Mis+12] Rafael Misoczki et al. *MDPC-McEliece: New McEliece Variants from Moderate Density Parity-Check Codes*. Cryptology ePrint Archive, Report 2012/409. <http://eprint.iacr.org/2012/409>. 2012.
- [NJW18] Alexander Nilsson, Thomas Johansson, and Paul Stankovski Wagner. “Error Amplification in Code-based Cryptography”. In: *IACR TCHES 2019.1* (2018). <https://tches.iacr.org/index.php/TCHES/article/view/7340>, pp. 238–258. ISSN: 2569-2925. DOI: [10.13154/tches.v2019.i1.238-258](https://doi.org/10.13154/tches.v2019.i1.238-258).