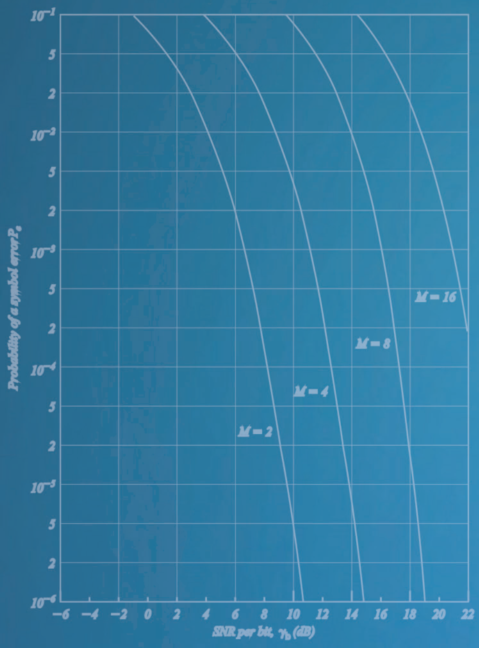

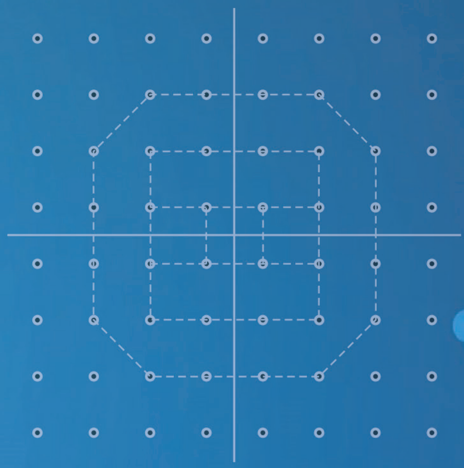

Theory of Telecommunications Networks

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CONTENTS

Preface **5**
1 Introduction **6**
1.1 Mathematical models for communication channels *8*
1.2 Channel capacity for digital communication *10*
1.2.1 Shannon Capacity and Interpretation *10*
1.2.2 Hartley Channel Capacity *12*
1.2.3 Solved Problems *13*
1.3 Noise in digital communication system *15*
1.3.1 White Noise *17*
1.3.2 Thermal Noise *18*
1.3.3 Solved Problems *19*
1.4 Summary *20*
1.5 Exercises *21*
2 Signal and Spectra **23**
2.1 Deterministic and random signals *23*
2.2 Periodic and nonperiodic signals *23*
2.3 Analog and discrete Signals *23*
2.4 Energy and power Signals *23*
2.5 Spectral Density *25*
2.5.1 Energy Spectral Density *25*
2.5.2 Power Spectral Density *25*
2.5.3 Solved Problems *26*
2.6 Autocorrelation *27*
2.6.1 Autocorrelation of an Energy Signal *27*
2.6.2 Autocorrelation of a Periodic Signal *27*
2.7 Baseband versus Bandpass *28*
2.8 Summary *29*
2.9 Exercises *30*
3 Probability and stochastic processes **31**
3.1 Probability *31*
3.1.1 Joint Events and Joint Probabilities *31*
3.1.2 Conditional Probabilities *32*
3.1.3 Statistical Independence *33*
3.1.4 Solved Problems *33*
3.2 Random Variables, Probability Distributions, and probability Densities *36*
3.2.1 Statistically Independent Random Variables *37*

3.2.2 Statistical Averages of Random Variables ... *37*
3.2.3 Some Useful Probability Distributions ... *38*
3.3 Stochastic processes ... *41*
3.3.1 Stationary Stochastic Processes ... *41*
3.3.2 Statistical Averages ... *41*
3.3.3 Power Density Spectrum ... *43*
3.3.4 Response of a Linear Time-Invariant System (channel) to a Random Input Signal ... *43*
3.3.5 Sampling Theorem for Band-Limited Stochastic Processes ... *44*
3.3.6 Discrete-Time Stochastic Signals and Systems ... *45*
3.3.7 Cyclostationary Processes ... *46*
3.3.8 Solved Problems ... *47*
3.4 Summary ... *50*
3.5 Exercises ... *52*
4 Signal space concept ... 55
4.1 Representation Of Band-Pass Signals And Systems ... *55*
4.1.1 Representation of Band-Pass Signals ... *55*
4.1.2 Representation of Band-Pass Stationary Stochastic Processes ... *58*
4.2 Introduction of the Hilbert transform ... *59*
4.3 Different look at the Hilbert transform ... *59*
4.3.1 Hilbert Transform, Analytic Signal and the Complex Envelope ... *59*
4.3.2 Hilbert Transform in Frequency Domain ... *61*
4.3.3 Hilbert Transform in Time Domain ... *62*
4.3.4 Analytic Signal ... *64*
4.3.5 Solved Problems ... *66*
4.4 Signal Space Representation ... *69*
4.4.1 Vector Space Concepts ... *69*
4.4.2 Signal Space Concepts ... *70*
4.4.3 Orthogonal Expansions of Signals ... *70*
4.4.4 Gram-Schmidt procedure ... *71*
4.4.5 Solved Problems ... *74*
4.4.6 Summary ... *78*
4.5 Exercises ... *79*
5 Digital modulation schemes ... 82
5.1 Signal Space Representation ... *82*
5.2 Memoryless Modulation Methods ... *82*
5.2.1 Pulse-amplitude-modulated (PAM) signals (ASK) ... *83*

5.2.2 *Phase-modulated signal (PSK)* *85*
5.2.3 *Quadrature Amplitude Modulation (QAM)* *86*
5.3 *Multidimensional Signals* *88*
5.3.1 *Orthogonal multidimensional signals* *88*
5.3.2 *Linear Modulation with Memory* *92*
5.3.3 *Non-Linear Modulation Methods with Memory* *95*
5.4 *Spectral Characteristic Of Digitally Modulated Signals* *101*
5.4.1 *Power Spectra of Linearly Modulated Signals* *101*
5.4.2 *Power Spectra of CPFSK and CPM Signals* *102*
5.4.3 *Solved Problems* *106*
5.5 *Summary* *110*
5.6 *Exercises* *110*
6 Optimum Receivers for the AWGN Channel 113
6.1 *Optimum Receivers For Signals Corrupted By Awgn* *113*
6.1.1 *Correlation demodulator* *114*
6.1.2 *Matched-Filter demodulator* *116*
6.1.3 *The Optimum detector* *118*
6.1.4 *The Maximum-Likelihood Sequence Detector* *120*
6.2 *Performance Of The Optimum Receiver For Memoryless Modulation* *123*
6.2.1 *Probability of Error for Binary Modulation* *123*
6.2.2 *Probability of Error for M-ary Orthogonal Signals* *126*
6.2.3 *Probability of Error for M-ary Biorthogonal Signals* *127*
6.2.4 *Probability of Error for Simplex Signals* *129*
6.2.5 *Probability of Error for M-ary Binary-Coded Signals* *129*
6.2.6 *Probability of Error for M-ary PAM* *130*
6.2.7 *Probability of Error for M-ary PSK* *130*
6.2.8 *Probability of Error for QAM* *132*
6.3 *Solved Problems* *134*
6.4 *Summary* *141*
6.5 *Exercises* *142*
7 Performance analysis of digital modulations 144
7.1 *Goals Of The Communications System Designer* *144*
7.2 *Error Probability Plane* *144*
7.3 *Nyquist Minimum Bandwidth* *146*
7.4 *Shannon-Hartley Capacity Theorem* *146*
7.4.1 *Shannon Limit* *148*
7.5 *Bandwidth-Efficiency Plane* *150*

7.5.1 *Bandwidth Efficiency of MPSK and MFSK Modulation* 151
7.5.2 *Analogies Between Bandwidth-Efficiency and Error-Probability Planes* 152
7.6 *Modulation And Coding Trade-Offs* 153
7.7 *Defining, Designing, And Evaluating Digital Communication Systems* 154
7.7.1 *M-ary Signaling* 154
7.7.2 *Bandwidth-Limited Systems* 155
7.7.3 *Power-Limited Systems* 156
7.7.4 *Requirements for MPSK and MFSK Signaling* 157
7.7.5 *Bandwidth-Limited Uncoded System Example* 158
7.7.6 *Power-Limited Uncoded System Example* 160
7.8 *Solved Problems* 162
7.9 *Summary* 165
7.10 *Exercise* 166
8 Why use error-correction coding **167**
8.1 *Trade-Off 1: Error Performance versus Bandwidth* 167
8.2 *Trade-Off 2: Power versus Bandwidth* 168
8.3 *Coding Gain* 168
8.4 *Trade-Off 3: Data Rate versus Bandwidth* 168
8.5 *Trade-Off 4: Capacity versus Bandwidth* 169
8.6 *Code Performance at Low Values of* E_b/N_0 169
8.7 *Solved problem* 170
8.8 *Exercise* 171
Appendix A **173**
The Q-function 173
The Error Function 174
Appendix B **175**
Comparison of M-ary signaling techniques 175
Error performance of M-ary signaling techniques 175
References **176**

PREFACE

Providing the theory of digital communication systems, this textbook prepares senior undergraduate and graduate students for the engineering practices required in the real word.

With this textbook, students can understand how digital communication systems operate in practice, learn how to design subsystems, and evaluate end-to-end performance.

The book contains many examples to help students achieve an understanding of the subject. The problems are at the end of the each chapter follow closely the order of the sections.

The entire book is suitable for one semester course in digital communication.

All materials for teaching texts were drawn from sources listed in References.

8 WHY USE ERROR-CORRECTION CODING

Error-correction coding can be regarded as a vehicle for effecting various system trade-offs. Figure 8.1 compares two curves depicting bit-error performance versus $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$. One curve represents a typical modulation scheme without coding. The second curve represents the same modulation with coding. Demonstrated below are four benefits or trade-offs that can be achieved with the use of channel coding.

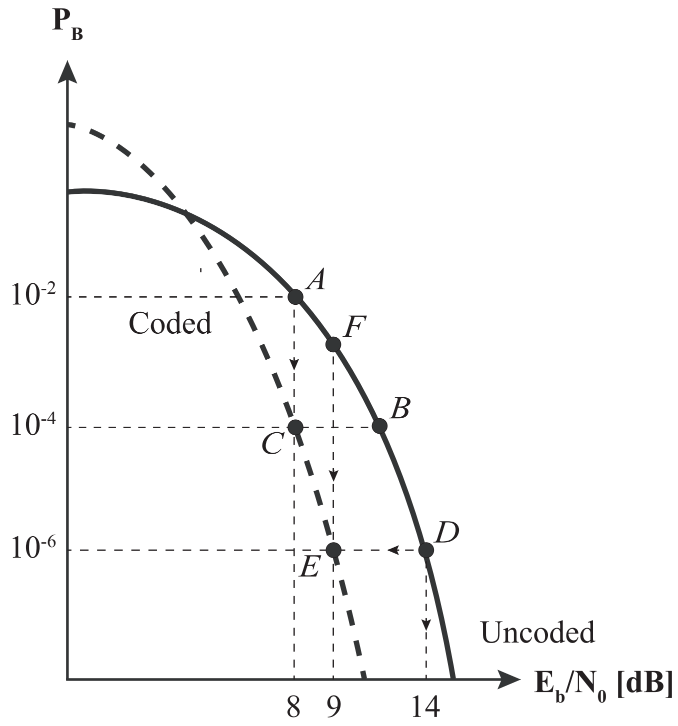


Figure 8.1 Comparison of typical coded versus uncoded error performance.

8.1 TRADE-OFF 1: ERROR PERFORMANCE VERSUS BANDWIDTH

Imagine that a simple, inexpensive voice communication system has just been developed and delivered to a customer. The system does not use error-correction coding. Consider that the operating point of the system can be depicted by point A in Figure 8.1 $\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0} = 8dB \ and \ P_B = 10^{-2}\right)$. After a few trials, there are complaints about the voice quality: the customer suggests that the bit-error probability should be lowered to 10^{-4}. The usual way of obtaining better error performance in such a system would be by effecting an operating point movement from point A to, say, point B in Figure 8.1. However, suppose that the $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ of 8 dB is the most that is available in this system. The figure suggests that one possible trade-off is to move the operating point from point A to point C. That is, "walking" down the vertical line to point C on the coded curve can provide the customer with improved error performance. What does it cost? Aside from the new components (encoder and decoder) needed, the price is more transmission bandwidth. Error-correction coding needs redundancy. If we assume that the system is a real-time communication system (such that the message may not be delayed), the addition of redundant bits dictates a faster rate of transmission, which of course means more bandwidth.

8.2 TRADE-OFF 2: POWER VERSUS BANDWIDTH

Consider that a system without coding, operating at point D in Figure 6.9 $\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0} = 14dB \ and \ P_B = 10^{-6}\right)$, has been delive·red to a customer. The customer has no complaints about the quality of the data, but the equipment is having some reliability problems as a result of providing an $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ of 14 dB. In other words, the equipment keeps breaking down. If the requirement on $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ or power could be reduced, the reliability difficulties might also be reduced. Figure 8.1 suggests a trade-off by moving the operating point from point D to point E. That is, if error-correction coding is introduced, a reduction in the required $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ can be achieved. Thus, the trade-off is one in which the same quality of data is achieved, but the coding allows for a reduction in power or $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$. What is the cost? The same as before - more bandwidth.

Notice that for *non-real-time* communication systems, error-correction coding can he used with a somewhat different trade-off. It is possible to obtain improved bit-error probability or reduced power (similar to trade-off 1 or 2 above) by paying the price of delay instead of bandwidth.

8.3 CODING GAIN

The trade-off example described in the previous section has allowed a reduction in $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ from 14 dB to 9 dB, while maintaining the same error performance. In the context of this example and Figure 8.1, we now define *coding gain*. For a given bit-error probability, coding gain is defined as the “relief” or reduction in $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ that can be realized through the use of the code. Coding gain G is generally expressed in dB, such as

$$\mathrm{G}[dB] = \left(\frac{E_b}{N_0}\right)_u [dB] - \left(\frac{E_b}{N_0}\right)_c [dB] \tag{8.1}$$

where $\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0}\right)_u$ and $\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0}\right)_c$, present the required $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$, uncoded and coded, respectively.

8.4 TRADE-OFF 3: DATA RATE VERSUS BANDWIDTH

Consider that a system without coding, operating at point D in Figure 8.1 $\left(\frac{E_b}{N_0} = 14dB \ and \ P_B = 10^{-6}\right)$ has been developed. Assume that there is no problem with the data quality and no particular need to reduce power. However, in this example, suppose that the customer's data rate requirement increases. Recall the relationship:

$$\frac{E_b}{N_0} = \frac{P_r}{N_0}\left(\frac{1}{R}\right) \tag{8.2}$$

If we do nothing to the system except increase the data rate R, the above expression shows that the received $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ would decrease, and in Figure 8.1, the operating point would move upwards from point D to, let us say, some point F. Now, envision "walking" down the vertical line to point E on the curve that represents coded modulation. Increasing the data rate has degraded the quality of the data. But, the use of error-correction coding brings back the same quality at the same power level $\left(\frac{P_r}{N_0}\right)$. The $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ is reduced, but the code facilitates getting the same error probability with a lower $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$. What price do we pay for getting this higher data rate or greater capacity? The same as before- increased bandwidth.

8.5 TRADE-OFF 4: CAPACITY VERSUS BANDWIDTH

Trade-off 4 is similar to trade-off 3 because both achieve increased capacity. A spread-spectrum multiple access technique, called code-division multiple access (CDMA), is one of the schemes used in cellular telephony. In CDMA, where users simultaneously share the same spectrum, each user is an interferer to each of the other users in the same cell or nearby cells. Hence, the capacity (maximum number of users) per cell is inversely proportional to $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$. In this application, a lowered $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ results in a raised capacity; the code achieves a reduction in each user's power, which in turn allows for an increase in the number of users. Again, the cost is more bandwidth. But, in this case, the signal-bandwidth expansion due to the error-correcting code is small compared with the more significant spread-spectrum bandwidth expansion, and thus, there is no impact on the transmission bandwidth.

In each of the above trade-off examples, a "traditional" code involving redundant bits and faster signaling (for a real-time communication system) has been assumed: hence, in each case, the cost was expanded bandwidth. However, there·, exists an error-correcting technique, called *trellis-coded* modulation, that does not require faster signaling or expanded bandwidth for real-time systems.

8.6 CODE PERFORMANCE AT LOW VALUES OF E_B/N_0

The reader is urged to solve Exercise 2, with is similar to Problem 1. In part a) of Exercise 2, where an $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ of 14 dB is given, the result is a message - error performance improvement through the use of coding. However, in part b) of Exercise 2, where the $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ has been reduced to 10 dB, coding provides no improvement, in fact, there is a degradation. One might ask, why does part b) of Exercise 2 manifest a degradation? After all, the same procedure is used for applying the code in both parts of the problem. The answer can be seen in the coded-versus-uncoded pictorial shown in Figure 8.1, Even though Exercise 2 deals with message-error probability, And Figure 8.1 displays bit-error probability, the following explanation still applies. In all such plots, there is a crossover between the curves (usually at some low value of $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$). The reason for such crossover (threshold) is that every code system has some fixed error-correcting capability. If there are more errors within a block than the code is capable of correcting, the system will perform poorly. Imagine that $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ is continually reduced. What happens at the output of the demodulator? It makes more and more errors. Therefore. such a continual decrease in $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ must eventually cause some threshold to be reached where the decoder becomes overwhelmed with errors. When that threshold is crossed, we can interpret the degraded performance as being caused by the redundant bits consuming energy but giving block nothing beneficial in return.

Does it strike the reader as a paradox that operating in a region (low values of $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$), where one would best like to see an error-performance improvement, is where the code makes things worse? There is, however, a class of powerful codes called turbo codes that provide error -performance improvement, at low values of $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$: the crossover point is lower for turbo codes compared with conventional codes.

8.7 SOLVED PROBLEM

Problem 1

Compare the message error probability for a communications link with and without the use of error-correction coding. Assume that the uncoded transmission characteristics are: BPSK modulation. Gaussian noisse $\frac{P_r}{N_0} = 43{,}776$, data rate $R = 4800\ bits/s$. For the coded case, also assume the use of a (15.11) error-correcting code that is capable of correcting any single-error pattern within a block of 15 bits. Consider that the demodulator makes hard decisions and thus feeds the demodulated code bits directly to the decoder, which in turn outputs an estimate of the original message.

Solution

Following Equation, let $p_u = Q\left(\sqrt{\frac{2E_b}{N_0}}\right)$ and $p_u = Q\left(\sqrt{\frac{2E_c}{N_0}}\right)$ be the uncoded and coded channel symbol error probabilities, respectively, where $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ is the bit energy per noise spectral density and $\frac{E_c}{N_0}$ is the code-bit energy per noise spectral density.

Without coding

$$\frac{E_b}{N_0} = \frac{P_r}{N_0}\left(\frac{1}{R}\right) = 9{,}12\ (9{,}6dB)$$

And

$$p_u = Q\left(\sqrt{\frac{2E_b}{N_0}}\right) = Q\left(\sqrt{18{,}24}\right) = 1{,}02 * 10^{-5} \qquad (8.3)$$

where the following approximation of Q(x) was used:

$$Q(x) \approx \frac{1}{x\sqrt{2\pi}} exp\left(\frac{-x^2}{2}\right), for\ x > 3$$

The probability that the uncoded message block P_M^u will be received in error is 1 minus the product of the probabilities that each bit will be detected correctly. Thus,

$$P_M^u = 1 - (1 - p_u)^k$$

$$= 1 - \underbrace{(1 - p_u)^{11}}_{\substack{probability\ that\ all \\ 11 bits\ in\ uncoded \\ block\ are\ correct}} = \underbrace{1{,}12 * 10^{-4}}_{\substack{probability\ that\ at \\ least\ 1\ bit\ out \\ 11\ is\ in\ error}} \qquad (8.4)$$

Without coding

Assuming a real-time communication system such that delay is unacceptable, the channel-symbol rate or code-hit rate R, is 15/11 times the data hit rate:

$$R_c = 4800 * \frac{15}{11} \approx 6545\ bps$$

And

$$\frac{E_c}{N_0} = \frac{P_r}{N_0}\left(\frac{1}{R_c}\right) = 6{,}69\ (8{,}3\ dB)$$

The $\frac{E_c}{N_0}$ for each colic bit is less than that for the data bit in the uncoded case because the channel-bit has increased, but the transmitter power is assumed to be fixed:

$$p_c = Q\left(\sqrt{\frac{2E_c}{N_0}}\right) = Q\left(\sqrt{13{,}38}\right) = 1{,}36 * 10^{-4} \quad (8.5)$$

It can be seen by comparing the results of Equation 8.3 with those of Equation 8.5 that because redundancy was added, the channel bit-error probability has degraded. More bits must he detected during the same time interval and with the same available power: the performance improvement due to the coding is not yet apparent. We now compute the coded message error rate P_M^c:

$$p_M^c = \sum_{j=2}^{n=15} \binom{15}{j} (p_c)^j (1-p_c)^{15-j}$$

The summation is started with $j = 2$, since the code corrects all single errors within a block of n = 15 bits. An approximation is obtained by using only the first term of the summation. For p_c, we use the value calculated in Equation 8.5:

$$P_M^c = \binom{15}{2} (p_c)^2 (1-p_c)^{13} = 1{,}94 * 10^{-6} \quad (8.6)$$

By comparing the results of Equation 8.4 with 8.6, we can see that the probability of message error has improved by a factor of 58 due to the error-correcting code used in this example. This example illustrates the typical behavior of all such real-time communication systems using error-correction coding. Added redundancy means faster signaling, less energy per channel symbol, and more errors out of the demodulator. The benefits arise because the behavior of the decoder will (al reasonable values of $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$) more than compensate for the poor performance of the demodulator.

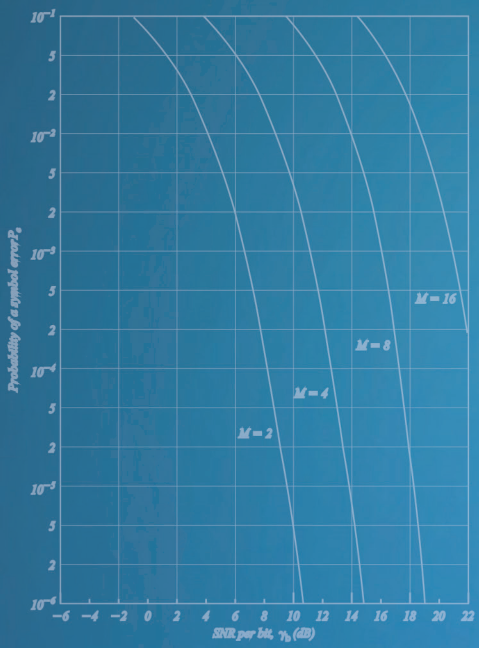
8.8 EXERCISE

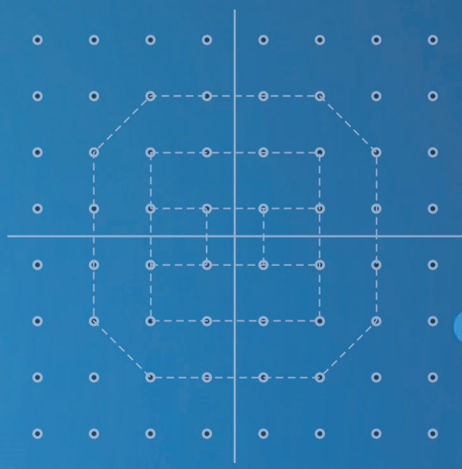
1. For a fixed probability of channel symbol error, the probability of bit error for a Hamming (15, 11) code is worse than that for a Hamming (7, 4) code. Explain why. What, then, is the advantage of the (15, 11) code? What basic trade-off is involved?
2. Consider a (24, 12) linear block code capable of double – error corrections. Assume that a noncoherently detected binary orthogonal frequency – shift keying (BFSK) modulation format is used and that the received $\frac{E_b}{N_0} = 14dB$.

a. Does the code provide any improvement in probability of message error? If it does, how much? If it does not, explain why not.
b. Repeat part a) with $\frac{E_b}{N_0} = 14dB$.

3. Information from a source is organized in 36-bit messages that are to be transmitted over an AWGN channel using noncoherently detected BFSK modulation.
   a. If no error control coding is used, compute the $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ required to provide a message error probability of 10^{-3} .
   b. Consider the use of a (127,36) linear block code (minimum distance is 31) in the transmission of these messages. Compute the coding gain for this code for a message error probability or 10^{-3}. (Hint: The coding gain is defined as the difference between $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$, required without coding and the $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ required with coding.).

4. A message consists of English text (assume that each word in the message contains six letters). Each letter is encoded using the 7-bit ASCII character code. Thus, each word of text consists of a 42-bit sequence. The message is to be transmitted over a channel having a symbol error probability of 10^{-1}
   a. What is the probability that a word will be received in error?
   b. If a repetition code is used such that each letter in each word is repeated three times and at the receiver, majority voting is used to decode the message, what is the probability that a decoded word will be in error?
   c. If a (126, 42) BCH code with error-correcting capability of t = 14 is used to encode each 42-bit word, what is the probability that a decoded word will be in error?
   d. For a real system, it is not fair to compare uncoded versus coded message error performance on the basis of a fixed probability of channel symbol error, since this implies a fixed level of received $\frac{E_c}{N_0}$ for all choices of coding (or lack of coding). Therefore, repeat parts (a), (b), and (c) under the condition that the channel symbol error probability is the determined by a received $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ of 12 dB, where $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$ is the information bit energy per noise spectral density. Assume that the information rate must be the same for all choices of coding or lack of coding. Also assume that noncoherent orthogonal binary FSK modulation is used over an AWGN channel.
   e. Discuss the relative error performance capabilities of the above coding schemes under the two postulated conditions- fixed channel symbol error probability, and fixed $\frac{E_b}{N_0}$. Under what circumstances can a repetition code offer error performance improvement? When will it cause performance degradation?





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