

Neural network design options for RNG's verification

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ABSTRACT. In this work, we explore neural network design options for discriminating Random Number Generators(RNG), as a complement to existing statistical test suites, it is continuation of the recent paper [CGGV]. Specifically, we consider variations in architecture and data preprocessing. We test their impact on the network's ability to discriminate sequences from a low-quality RNG versus a high-quality one—that is, to discriminate between "optimal" sequence sets and those from the generator under test. When the network fails to distinguish them, the test is passed. For this test to be useful, the network must have real discrimination capabilities. We review several network design possibilities showing significant differences in the obtained results. The best option presented here is convolutional networks working on 5120-byte sequences.

1. The introduction

Random number generators (RNGs) are widely used in many applications including cryptographically secured communications, industrial testing, Monte Carlo simulations, massive data processing, quantitative finance, etc. There are two principal methods used to generate random numbers. The first one, called *Pseudorandom Number Generators*(PRNGs), i.e. algorithms which takes a small number of bits truly randomly generated, called *the seed*, and expand them to a larger sequence. The second measures some physical phenomenon that is expected to be random and then compensates for possible biases in the measurement process. In this last class we have Quantum Random Number Generators (QRNGs) that stand out from RNG's because their randomness comes from quantum processes. In this work, we are focusing on laser fluctuations as QRNG.

The quality of RNG is important in various fields including cryptography [SK]. The most popular method to experimentally evaluate the fitness of pseudorandom sequences is through the use of the statistical tests such as NIST-STS [NIST] and DIEHARD [M], see also [BV] and [CGGV]. There are also several theoretical measures of pseudorandomness. However they are quite difficult to test in practice because of their high computational complexity. Passing these tests is a necessary

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condition for the quality of an RNG, but not sufficient, since it has been proven that RNGs considered weak can pass it.

Neural networks are well known machine learning tools that have led to important advances in recent years in many fields, such as image and video object segmentation, medical imaging, face recognition, time series prediction, signal identification, image classification, object detection or human action recognition (see for instance [CZ] and [LLYPZ]).

Recently, in several research papers ([MGGO], [KIO], [LZSGW], [CRN], [ADM], [CGV]) neural networks have been suggested as an alternative approach to guarantee the randomness of a given RNG. Those approaches can be considered currently under development, and this work focuses on investigating the possibilities of one of them, which seems the most promising and straightforward to generalize to a test.

Following the idea of [KIO], the work [CGGV] presented the potential of convolutional networks using the following scheme: ask the neural network to learn to discriminate between two classes of sequences, one coming from an "optimal" RNG and the other from the RNG to be tested; if the network achieves a success margin significantly different from chance, the RNG to be tested would be considered invalid. For the tests, we will use two RNGs: one weak and one strong, and the network must be able to discriminate between them. The main objective is to explore network design and input preprocessing options to analyze their impact on the network's discriminatory capacity.

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. We start introducing the main concepts and review the work [CGGV] in Section 2 for later use. Next, in Section 3 we detail the main objectives of the present paper. In Section 4, we show the results achieved with the different explored options. Finally, Section 5 makes some final comments and poses future approaches of research.

2. Preliminaries

Here we review several related results and definitions from [CGGV] for later use and better understanding of the rest of the document.

2.1. Random number generators. The experiment carried out used four kinds of sequences: the laser-based quantum Random Number Generator (the raw sequence and the post-processed one), the binary codification of a large video, the linear congruential generator (LCG), and the linear Congruential Generator on Elliptic Curves (EC-LCG).

Comparing all of them to the HMAC-DRBG on NIST SP 800-90A (see details in [BK]) as the ideal, i.e. high-quality mode of PRNG. An HMAC is a specific type of Message Authentication Code (MAC) involving a cryptographic Hash function and a secret cryptographic key. HMAC-DRBG is a very efficient Deterministic Random Bit Generator (DRBG). It has security proofs for a single call to generate pseudorandom numbers and it is backtracking-resistant. On the other hand, it has a machine-verified security proof, that is, the output produced by HMAC-DRBG is indistinguishable from random by a computationally bounded adversary.

2.1.1. Quantum random number generator based on random polarization. The Quantum random number generator based on laser fluctuations is presented in [QV]. Random numbers are experimentally obtained from the random excitation

of the linearly polarized modes of a gain-switched vertical-cavity surface-emitting laser. This randomness is induced by the spontaneous emission that can be considered as quantum noise. Since the raw sequence produced by the QRNG has not passed the NIST test suite [QV], we consider the post-processed bit string based on $[n, k, d]$ -BCH codes defined over the finite field $GF(2)$ and where $n+1$ is a power of 2, see [VQVG] and [L].

For the raw input bits $(x_{n-1}, \dots, x_0)$, the output $(y_{k-1}, \dots, y_0)$ is obtained as:

$$\begin{pmatrix} g_{n-k} & \dots & g_0 & 0 \dots 0 \\ 0 & g_{n-k} & \dots & 0 \dots 0 \\ \dots & \dots & \dots & \dots \\ 0 \dots 0 & 0 & g_{n-k} & \dots g_0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x_{n-1} \\ x_{n-2} \\ \vdots \\ x_0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} y_{k-1} \\ y_{k-2} \\ \vdots \\ y_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

and $g(x) = g_{n-k}x^k + \dots + g_1x + g_0$ is the cyclic generator polynomial of the $[n, k, d]$ -BCH code.

Here we have considered BCH code with parameters $[1023, 1003, 5]$ the generator cyclic polynomial is $x^{20} + x^{15} + x^{13} + x^{12} + x^{11} + x^9 + x^7 + x^6 + x^3 + x^2 + 1$

2.1.2. *Linear Congruential Generator.* Given positive integers a, b and m such that $\gcd(a, m) = 1$ the *Linear Congruential Generator (LCG)* is a sequence x_n of pseudorandom numbers defined by the relation

$$x_{n+1} \equiv (ax_n + b) \bmod m, \quad n = 0, 1, \dots,$$

where x_0 is the *seed*. Unfortunately the LCG is not suitable for cryptographic purposes, see [B, KD]. Although the author [HS] claims that NIST test suites cannot detect the linearity.

In this computational experiment we took the sequences from the rand function in the glibc library version 2-17 without any tuning such that $m = O(2^{32})$ bits, and the output of simple Python LCG code with $m = O(2^{100})$.

2.1.3. *Linear Congruential Generator on Elliptic Curves.* For a prime p , we denote by $\mathbb{F}_p \cong \mathbb{Z}_p$ the field of p elements and, we assume that it is represented by the set $\{0, 1, \dots, p-1\}$.

Let E be an elliptic curve defined over $\mathbb{F}_p$ given by an *affine Weierstrass equation*, which for $\gcd(p, 6) = 1$ takes form $Y^2 = X^3 + aX + b$, for some $a, b \in \mathbb{F}_p$ with $4a^3 + 27b^2 \neq 0$.

We recall that the set $E(\mathbb{F}_p)$ of $\mathbb{F}_p$ -rational points forms an abelian group, with the *point at infinity* O as the neutral element of this group (which does not have affine coordinates).

For a given point $G \in E(\mathbb{F}_p)$ the *Linear Congruential Generator on Elliptic Curves*, *EC-LCG* is a sequence U_n of pseudorandom numbers defined by the relation

$$U_n = U_{n-1} \oplus G = nG \oplus U_0, \quad n = 1, 2, \dots,$$

where $\oplus$ denote the group operation in $E(\mathbb{F}_p)$ and $U_0 \in E(\mathbb{F}_p)$ is the *initial value* or *seed*. We refer to G as the *composer* of the EC-LCG.

The EC-LCG provides a very attractive alternative to linear and non-linear congruential generators with many applications to cryptography and it has been extensively studied in the literature, see [BD, G, H].

The *.txt* file of 2^{20} bits used was generated running the following SAGEMATH code:

```

f = open('/Users/PRNG/Desktop/EC_LG.txt', 'a')
size_prime = 512
p=next_prime(ZZ.random_element(2**size_prime))
a=ZZ.random_element(p)
b=ZZ.random_element(p)
if (4*a**3+27*b**2)%p != 0:
    C =EllipticCurve(GF(p),[a,b])
G=C.random_element()
U0=C.random_element()
for i in range(500):
    V=U0+i*G
    f.write(bin(V[0])[2:]+bin(V[1])[2:])
f.close()

```

2.2. Neural networks. Two kind of NN's was used in [CGGV]: LSTM networks and Convolutional ones. Since in this work we aim to compare the performance of convolutional networks, which we analyzed in a previous study, with that of conventional multilayer networks (with full connectivity), we briefly describe these two types of models below. For a more detailed description see [A]

2.2.1. *Feedforward networks or multilayer perceptrons.* Dense feedforward networks, or multilayer perceptrons work processing data in a layer-by-layer fashion, where each layer is a set of nonlinear functions of the previous layer output. Typically, these nonlinearities are 1-D nonlinear functions of the n-D linear combination. Each nonlinear function is calculated in a *processor*, and the linear coefficients are called weights.

2.2.2. *Convolutional networks (CNN).* This type of networks is used where inputs are sequence of same-type values (a row of pixel intensities, a strand of sound pressure values, etc.) Instead of having each processor operate on the whole input array and produce a single output, it calculates a (nonlinear, as above) convolution of the input array with a smaller weight array.

2.3. Implementation and results. The method consisted of training a neural network to differentiate between a PRNG and a truly random sequence, exemplified by the sequences generated by HMAC-DBRG.

The test result is how far can the neural network go in telling apart those two sequence types. The proposed framework to several other RNG's, including Linear Congruential Generator(LCG), Linear Congruential Generator on Elliptic Curves(EC-LCG), and the laser outputs, raw and post-processed. Including a large enough video file(episode 7 of the continuing education course [T]) as a source of random (meaning unpredictable) sequences.

Using the library *PyTorch* to implement the neural network in a Linux machine with GPU Tesla V100-PCIE-32GB; the obtained results are in table 1, including *confusion matrices*:

$$\left(\begin{array}{cc} \boxed{1\ 1} & \boxed{1\ 0} \\ \boxed{0\ 1} & \boxed{0\ 0} \end{array} \right) \begin{array}{cc} \boxed{1\ 1} & \boxed{1\ 0} \\ \boxed{0\ 1} & \boxed{0\ 0} \end{array} \begin{array}{cc} RNG & 1 \\ HMAC & 0 \end{array} \begin{array}{cc} NN & 1 \\ NN & 1 \end{array} \begin{array}{cc} RNG & 1 \\ HMAC & 0 \end{array} \begin{array}{cc} NN & 0 \\ NN & 0 \end{array}$$

TABLE 1. Results applying the proposed framework to other PRNGs.

PRNG tested	Training size	AO. PRNG	AO. GSRNG	Confusion matrix
VCSEL QRNG	2^{18}	0.47	0.47	$\begin{pmatrix} 16324 & 0 \\ 16444 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
VCSEL QRNG	2^{19}	0.51	0.51	$\begin{pmatrix} 72 & 16255 \\ 81 & 16360 \end{pmatrix}$
Raw QRNG	2^{18}	0.73	0.55	$\begin{pmatrix} 6543 & 9934 \\ 3235 & 13056 \end{pmatrix}$
EC-LCG	2^{18}	0.49	0.49	$\begin{pmatrix} 15650 & 845 \\ 15428 & 845 \end{pmatrix}$
Video	2^{18}	0.58	0.33	$\begin{pmatrix} 14475 & 1822 \\ 7831 & 8640 \end{pmatrix}$
LCG (32 bits)	2^{18}	0.51	0.42	$\begin{pmatrix} 11625 & 4769 \\ 7910 & 8464 \end{pmatrix}$
LCG (100 bits)	2^{18}	0.50	0.51	$\begin{pmatrix} 8827 & 7458 \\ 7729 & 8754 \end{pmatrix}$

We can see that the VCSEL QRNG passes the test. Not so for the raw QRNG. The elliptic curve generator is also successful. We can also see that adding a periodic parameter reset to the LCG is enough to make it pass the test. The video file didn't pass the test, but its performance wasn't that bad; it may rank as good as a naive LCG.

Table 2 shows the effects of several design decision changes, namely: number of processors, network type, layers, sequence length, bytes per element.

TABLE 2. Performance evaluation of the neural network model with sequential application of hyperparameter or architecture settings.

Design decision	Tested PRNG	Training size	AO. PRNG	AO. GSRNG	Confusion matrix
Increasing processors from 80 up to 150	LCG	2^{15}	0.21	-0.06	$\begin{pmatrix} 16480 & 1 \\ 16241 & 46 \end{pmatrix}$
Two layers with 40 and 10 processors	LCG	2^{15}	0.36	0.41	$\begin{pmatrix} 14734 & 1742 \\ 12770 & 3522 \end{pmatrix}$
Increasing sequence length from 2^8 to 2^9	LCG	2^{15}	0.61	0.23	$\begin{pmatrix} 13689 & 2832 \\ 3706 & 12541 \end{pmatrix}$
Increasing sequence length from 2^8 to 2^9	VCSEL QRNG	2^{18}	0.51	0.51	$\begin{pmatrix} 177 & 16146 \\ 147 & 16298 \end{pmatrix}$
CNN-1	LCG	2^{18}	1	0	$\begin{pmatrix} 16492 & 35 \\ 0 & 16233 \end{pmatrix}$
CNN-1	VCSEL QRNG	2^{19}	0.5	0.5	$\begin{pmatrix} 8218 & 8133 \\ 8165 & 8252 \end{pmatrix}$
CNN-2 and sequence length=512	VCSEL QRNG	2^{18}	0.5	0.5	$\begin{pmatrix} 9696 & 6644 \\ 9853 & 6575 \end{pmatrix}$
CNN-2 and 2-byte elements	VCSEL QRNG	2^{18}	0.5	0.5	$\begin{pmatrix} 8275 & 8140 \\ 8292 & 8061 \end{pmatrix}$

The design decisions that turned effective were: increasing sequence length and using convolutional networks. Results in Table 2 shows that increasing the training set size from 2^{15} to 2^{18} and changing LSTM by CNN improves the capability of the NN to discriminate between those generators and the GSRNG since perfect

discrimination is achieved when AO.PRNG and AO.GSRNG are 1 and 0, respectively. VCSEL QRNG was indistinguishable even with the biggest networks that we have tried, as shown in the last three rows of Table 2, since a value of 0.5 for AO.PRNG and AO.GSRNG means that the NN is unable to discriminate between VCSEL QRNG and GSRNG. It remains an open question whether a massively larger network would be able to perform that discrimination.

3. Proposed framework

We then have two randomly obtained bit series: HMAC and QRBG-VCSEL without postprocessing. We obtain the HMAC bit sequence using the [HMAC] implementation, initializing the generator with 64 bytes obtained from the system’s randomness source (Linux) using the *os.urandom* function, generating 1 byte at a time.

As for the VCSEL with gain generation, it is described in depth in [QV], [VQVG], and summarising in Section 2.1.

In both cases, a number of bytes around 2^{20} was generated, which is the base set used in all tests. Each case is one of the sequences, and the expected output is the strong or weak generator label.

Since the generator to be tested is known to be weak, it must be discriminated, see Table 1 and Table 2 of the previous Section 2. Therefore, experiments will be considered successful the higher the discriminatory accuracy of the network; in any case, it must be greater than 50%, which corresponds to chance. As previous section illustrates, we already showed some promising initial results with convolutional networks.

The options we explore here fall into two categories

- Network Design (Conventional Full Connectivity vs. Convolutional)
- Input Sequence Preprocessing

3.1. Procedure. We used the Pytorch package (and PyWavelets for the transformations), running on a GPU with CUDA. In all cases, the procedure is:

- (1) Select a data set for adjustment, another for control, and another for testing. They are taken from the base set by random selection (using the functions included in Pytorch). For the majority of 256-byte sequences, we verified that sizes above 2^{15} do not make a difference in the results; however, we verified with tests of size 2^{16} or 2^{18} .
- (2) Adjust the network parameters, using the set selected for this purpose and verifying the error rate on the control set. If there is a consistent increase in the error on this second set, it would indicate overfitting, and the process would be terminated.
- (3) Analyze the results on the test set. In principle, a response below 0.5 would be considered class 0 (in our case, the strong generator), and above, class 1 (in our case, the weak generator). The 0.5 threshold can be adapted to each case by finding the cutoff point of the response histograms.

To ensure the consistency of the network results and eliminate the influence of the initialization point, we can repeat the last two steps several times. When a good result is the exception rather than the rule, we have considered the test to be poor. The error function to be optimized is the mean square error. The fitting uses accumulated gradients from every few hundred cases (between 100 and 500), using

the resilient backpropagation algorithm [RB] most of the time, but in some cases we have obtained better results with Adam [KB], with a fitting rate of 10^{-3}

3.2. Types of Networks. In addition to the convolutional networks already presented in Section 2.2, we have tested fully connected networks. In all cases, we have used the LeakyRELU as the nonlinear activation, except in the final output, where we used the logistic sigmoid function.

3.2.1. *Conventional Fully Connected Networks.* We have tested a network with 200-25-5-1 units in each layer. These sizes are arbitrary; our goal is to be guided by the results to empirically obtain an appropriate size. If the network is too large, there will be a tendency to overfitting, while if it is too small, its accuracy will decrease. Therefore, we will vary the size based on the results. To avoid overfitting, there are other approaches without reducing size, such as: sparse layers ([MMSNGL]), parameterization of weight matrices (orthogonalization, SVD simplification), weight decay/penalty, and random processor deactivation.

3.3. Preprocessing Options. We take as a starting point the Section 2.3, where the input to the network was the bits obtained by the generator, specifically, sequences of 256 bytes, i.e., 2048 bits.

The possibilities we test here are:

- Fourier Transform
- Wavelet Transform
- Increasing the length of sequences by an order of magnitude, including the possibility of placing them in two dimensions

3.3.1. *Fourier Transform.* In this case, the network's input, instead of being the bits obtained from the random generator, is its Fourier transform. To do this, we take the original sequence and, since they are real, we obtain the transform coefficients with the rfft function from the torch package. The real and imaginary parts of the coefficients, separately, are the two input signals received by the network.

3.3.2. *Wavelet Transform.* This case is analogous to the previous one but using the Wavelet transform. To do this, we take the original sequence and obtain a 4-level decomposition using the wavedec function from the ptwt package. We use the Daubechies-2 basis function with reflection extension. The four series of detail coefficients and the one of approximation coefficients constitute the five input signals to the network. Since the lengths of these sequences are different, we use separate branches of the network for each of them, followed by a common block of dense connectivity layers.

3.3.3. *Increasing Sequence Length.* In this case, maintaining the 1D structure simply involves feeding the network longer sequences. In the case of the 2D structure, we obtained it simply by splitting the 1D sequence into equal fragments and making each fragment a row of a matrix. This matrix constitutes the 2D input to the network. The fragment length we used is the original one from previous analyses, 2048 bits (256 bytes).

4. Results

For clarity, we present confusion matrices in some cases. HMAC (the optimal generator) always appears first, followed by the QRNG without postprocessing (the weak one); we follow the standard approach of indicating the actual labels in rows and the labels assigned by the network in columns.

4.1. Conventional Fully Connected Networks. We tested a network with 200-25-5-1 units in each layer. The accuracy achieved was 63%. Using a validation set, we found a tendency toward overfitting; this led us to believe that the chosen size was too large. We then tried reducing the size to 50-5-1, but it didn't work (accuracy 53%). We found, therefore, that a large size led to overfitting, but a smaller network lost accuracy. We then opted to maintain the large size but use other options to avoid overfitting, which we present below.

We tested automatic pruning on the original network, followed by refitting, but also achieved accuracies of 60 – 63%, which did not represent an improvement. Other tests performed included sparse layers ([MMSNGL]), parameterization of weight matrices (orthogonalization, SVD simplification), weight decay/penalization, and random processor deactivation, but none of these options surpassed the aforementioned accuracy, and therefore, the accuracy of convolutional networks was not achieved.

Although we have not exhaustively explored all layer sizes and numbers, our impression is that the performance is worse than that of convolutional networks.

Therefore, for the remaining tests, we use convolutional networks, as in Section 2.

4.2. Fourier Transform. We arrive at confusion matrices of the type:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 26\% & 24\% \\ 27\% & 24\% \end{pmatrix}$$

We observe that the accuracy obtained is 50%, that is, pure chance, which leads us to abandon this approach.

4.3. Wavelet Transform. A typical histogram of network responses can be seen in Fig.1. It can be seen that approximately half of the QRNG cases are considered good, while the reverse hardly occurs. The confusion matrices obtained in different tests (varying network sizes and data sets) are:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 44 - 45\% & 4.7 - 6.4\% \\ 24 - 26\% & 24 - 26\% \end{pmatrix}$$

which leads to an accuracy of 70 – 71%

Although this is an improvement (1% better than the pure-bit option, a small but consistent difference across different tests), it is not large enough to be considered a substantial improvement.

4.4. 20-fold increase in sequence length. Using 5120-byte sequences, the network produced responses whose histogram is presented in fig.2 We see that in exchange for clearly increasing the discrimination of the QRNG sequences, with fewer entering as good, the labeling of the HMACs has more variability, although not enough to mix with the QRNG sequences. The progress over the base model is clear, as can be seen in the following representative confusion matrix:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 48\% & 1.22\% \\ 19.5\% & 31\% \end{pmatrix}$$

The accuracies obtained were in the 75 – 79% range in contrast with an accuracy of 69 – 70% obtained in Section 2.3 using convolutional networks. To achieve accuracies higher than that range, we worked with longer sequences when reaching the final dense connection section. That is, despite having much longer input series,

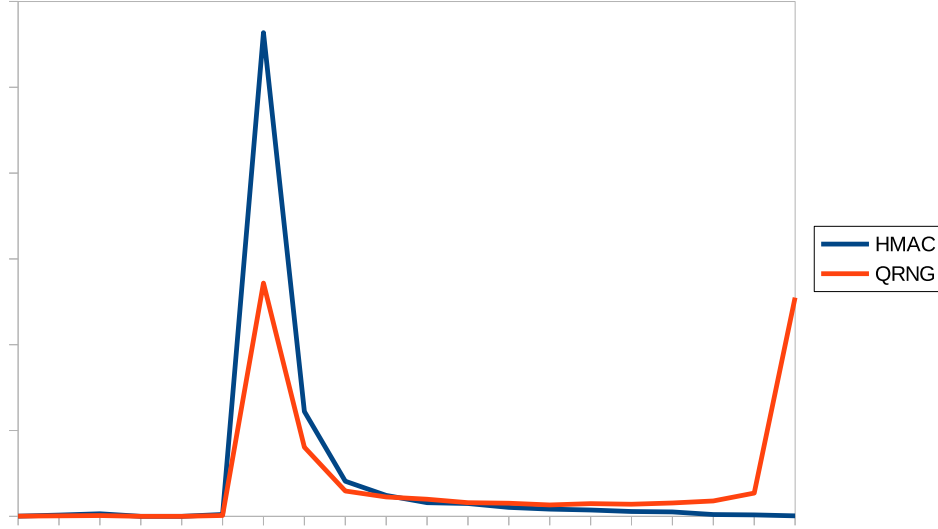


FIGURE 1. Histogram with wavelet transformed input

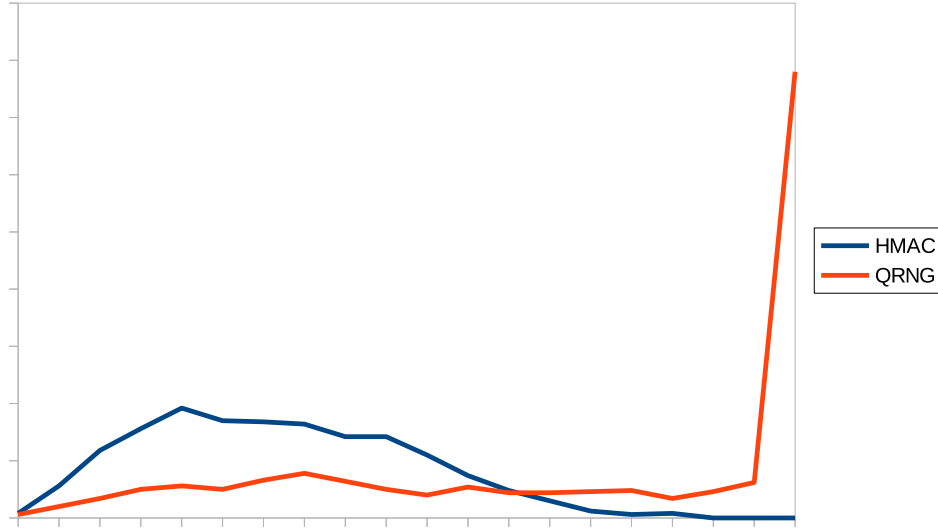


FIGURE 2. Histogram with 40960-bit input

we did not make major reductions in the convolutional section, which means that many more values reach the final convolutional section.

If we use the indicator proposed in [KIO], the average response in case 0 (strong generator) according to the tests is 0.3 ± 0.02 , and in case 1 (weak generator) 0.72 ± 0.02 .

To see more precisely how the network design affects this case, we present in table 3 several results indicating the design decision and the quality indicators of the obtained result. The design refers to the convolutional part, where the number

Design	Precision	S	E	V
32max2-6max2-5max2-5max2-5	0.76	0.72	0.80	0.80
5max4-6max4-5max4-5max4-5max2-3	0.75	0.63	0.88	0.83
5med4-6med4-5med4-5med4-5med2-3	0.76	0.62	0.89	0.86
5med2-6med2-5med4-5-5-3	0.79	0.62	0.96	0.94
5-6-5-5-5-3	0.79	0.61	0.98	0.98

TABLE 3. Results with various networks on 5120-byte sequences

of processors in each layer is indicated, separated by hyphens, and, if the sequence is reduced, what the reduction factor is and how it is obtained (maximum or average). The final part is always the same: 3 dense connectivity layers, with 20, 7, and 1 processor. The calculation of the indicators is:

$$S = \frac{\text{class 1 hits}}{\text{total actual class 1}}$$

$$E = \frac{\text{class 0 hits}}{\text{total actual class 0}}$$

$$V = \frac{\text{class 1 hits}}{\text{total indicated by the network as class 1}}$$

Regarding the confidence intervals for the indicators and for the last row, we have:

- $P = 0.7995\%$. Confidence interval $0.77 - 0.81$.
- $S = 0.6195\%$. Confidence interval $0.57 - 0.64$.
- $E = 0.9895\%$. Confidence interval $0.97 - 0.99$.
- $V = 0.9895\%$. Confidence interval $0.96 - 0.99$.

For the other rows, the interval widths are roughly the same. Finally, we tried placing these sequences in a 2D arrangement (20 rows of 2048 bits each), but did not change the precision at all.

5. Conclusions

To summarize the experiments conducted, we have:

- Convolutional networks perform better than dense connectivity networks. We believe this is due to the excess weights, which results in a tendency toward overfitting.
- The Fourier transform is not useful in this context, but the wavelet transform is, although it provides a minimal advantage.
- The most useful factor has proven to be a sharp increase in the length of the sequences. Placing them in two dimensions makes no difference.

As future lines of research, one architecture that we have not dedicated to this task, but that other authors have used for prediction, are networks with an attention mechanism [BCB], [LZSGW]; therefore, we will conduct tests with it to compare it with the convolutional architecture we have used so far. Furthermore, seeing that length increases have the greatest impact, we considered extending the

sequence lengths to substantially larger sizes to discern whether the performance of the networks continues to improve.

Finally, it would be interesting to study from the mathematical point of view the obtained results of two options used: Fourier transform and Wavelet ones.

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