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Random Walks on Z_2^n

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For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let Z_2^n be the direct product of n copies of Z_2, i.e., $Z_2^n = \{(a_1, a_2, ..., a_n) | a_i = 0 \text{ or } 1 \text{ for all } i = 1, 2, ..., n\}$ and let $\{W_t^n\}_{t \geqslant 0}$ be a random walk on Z_2^n such that $P\{W_0^n = A\} = 2^{-n}$ for all A's in Z_2^n and $P\{W_{j+1}^n = (a_2, a_3, ..., a_n, 0) | W_j^n = (a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)\} = P\{W_{j+1}^n = (a_2, a_3, ..., a_n, 1) | W_j^n = (a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)\} = \frac{1}{2}$ for all $j = 0, 1, 2, ...,$ and all $(a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)$'s in Z_2^n. For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let C_n denote the covering time taken by the random walk W_t^n on Z_2^n to cover Z_2^n, i.e., to visit every element of Z_2^n. In this paper, we prove that, among other results, $P\{\text{except finitely many } n,\ c2^n \ln(2^n) < C_n < d2^n \ln(2^n)\} = 1$ if $c < 1 < d$.

For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let Z_2^n be the direct product of n copies of Z_2, i.e., $Z_2^n = \{(a_1, a_2, ..., a_n) | a_i = 0 \text{ or } 1 \text{ for all } i = 1, 2, ..., n\}$ and let $\{W_t^n\}_{t \geqslant 0}$ be a random walk on Z_2^n such that $P\{W_0^n = A\} = 2^{-n}$ for all A's in Z_2^n and $P\{W_{j+1}^n = (a_2, a_3, ..., a_n, 0) | W_j^n = (a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)\} = P\{W_{j+1}^n = (a_2, a_3, ..., a_n, 1) | W_j^n = (a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)\} = \frac{1}{2}$ for all $j = 0, 1, 2, ...$ and all $(a_1, a_2, ..., a_n)$'s in Z_2^n. For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let C_n denote the covering time taken by the random walk W_t^n on Z_2^n to cover Z_2^n, i.e., to visit every element of Z_2^n. In this paper, we prove that, among other results, $P\{\text{except finitely many } n,\ c2^n \ln(2^n) < C_n < d2^n \ln(2^n)\} = 1$ if $c < 1 < d$.

In [2], Matthews studied a different random walk on Z_2^n. His random walk can be described as follows: Let μ_n be a probability measure on Z_2^n, for each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, that puts mass p_n on $(0, 0, ..., 0)$ and mass $(1 - p_n)/n$ on each of $(1, 0, ..., 0)$, $(0, 1, 0, ..., 0)$, ..., $(0, 0, ..., 0, 1, 0)$, and

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$(0, 0, \ldots, 0, 1)$. For each step the random walk on Z_2^n corresponding to μ_n does not move with probability p_n, otherwise it changes exactly one coordinate, with each coordinate equally likely to be changed. He proved that $P\{(C_n - 2^n ln(2^{n+1}))\, 2^{-n} \leqslant x\} \to \exp(-e^{-x})$ for all x if $\sup_n p_n < 1$. Our result is similar to his. However, his technique does not seem applicable to the random walk w_t^n in this paper. A completely different method is used to obtain our results.

For ease of presentation, we introduce the following fair coin tossing process $\{X_m\}_{m \geqslant 1}$ as follows: $\{X_m\}_{m \geqslant 1}$ is a sequence of independent and identically distributed random variables such that $P(X_1 = 0) = P(X_1 = 1) = \frac{1}{2}$. For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let T_n denote the first occurrence time such that $(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{T_n})$ contains all A's in Z_2^n, i.e., $T_n = \inf\{k \mid \text{each } A \text{ in } Z_2^n \text{ appears in } (X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_k) \text{ at least once}\}$, $= \infty$ if no such k exists. It is easy to see that $C_n = T_n - n$ for all $n \geqslant 1$. Now we start with the following notation and definitions.

For each element $A = (a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_n)$ in Z_2^n, the positive integer i $(1 \leqslant i \leqslant n)$ is called a period of A if $(a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_{n-i}) = (a_{i+1}, a_{i+2}, \ldots, a_n)$. Let τ_A denote the minimal period of A which is defined by $\tau_A = \min\{i \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant n \text{ and } i \text{ is a period of } A\}$.

LEMMA 1. *For any two elements A and B in Z_2^n and any positive integer m, $P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_m)$ contains $A\} \leqslant P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_m)$ contains $B\}$ if $\tau_A < \tau_B$.*

Proof. See page 186 of [1].

LEMMA 2. *For any element A in Z_2^n and $\tau_A \geqslant k$, then $\{1 - n2^{-k}\}(n+1) \times 2^{-n} \leqslant P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_n)$ contains $A\} \leqslant (n+1)\, 2^{-n}$.*

Proof. For each integer $i = 1, 2, \ldots, n+1$, let $E_i = \{(X_i, X_{i+1}, \ldots, X_{i+n-1}) = A\}$. Then $P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{2n})$ contains $A\} = P\{\bigcup_{i=1}^{n+1} E_i\}$. By Lemma 1, we only have to consider the case when $\tau_A = k$. Now if $\tau_A = k$, then it is easy to see that E_i and E_j are disjoint if $|i - j| < k$. Hence $\sum_{i=1}^{n+1} P(E_i) \geqslant P(\bigcup_{i=1}^{n+1} E_i) \geqslant \sum_{i=1}^{n+1} P(E_i) - \sum_{1 \leqslant i < j \leqslant n+1} P(E_i \cap E_j)$. Therefore, $\{1 - n2^{-k}\}(n+1)\, 2^{-n} \leqslant P\{\bigcup_{i=1}^{n+1} E_i\} \leqslant (n+1)\, 2^{-n}$, since $P(E_1) = 2^{-n}$ and $P(E_1 \cap E_j) \leqslant 2^{-n-k}$ for all $k+1 \leqslant j \leqslant n+1$.

LEMMA 3. *For any element A in Z_2^n, $((n+1)/2)\, 2^{-n} \leqslant P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{2n})$ contains $A\} \leqslant (n+1)\, 2^{-n}$.*

Proof. Let $A_0 = (0, 0, \ldots, 0)$ be the unit element of Z_2^n. Then, by Lemma 1, $P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{2n})$ contains $A\} \geqslant P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{2n})$ contains $A_0\}$. Now it is easy to see that $P\{(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{2n})$ contains $A_0\} =$

$((n+1)/2)\,2^{-n}$. Therefore, $((n+1)/2)\,2^{-n} \leqslant P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{2n})$ contains $A\}$ $\leqslant (n+1)\,2^{-n}$ for any element A in Z_2^n.

LEMMA 4. *For any positive integer m and any element A in Z_2^n such that $\tau_A \geqslant k$. Then $P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{(m+1)n})$ contains $A\} \geqslant m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\{1 - n2^{-k} - ((n+1)\,2^{-n})^{1/2} - \frac{1}{2}m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\}$.*

Proof. For each positive integer $i = 1, 2, ..., m$, let B_i be the event that B_i occurs if $(X_{(i-1)n+1}, X_{(i-1)n+2}, ..., X_{(i+1)n})$ contains A. It is easy to see that $P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{(m+1)n})$ contains $A\} = P\{\bigcup_{i=1}^m B_i\} \geqslant \sum_{i=1}^m P(B_i) - \sum_{1\leqslant i<j\leqslant m} P(B_i \cap B_j) = mP(B_1) - (m-1)\,P(B_1 \cap B_2) - \frac{1}{2}(m-1)(m-2) \times P^2(B_1)$, since $B_1, B_2, ..., B_m$ are exchangeable and B_i, B_j are mutually independent if $|i-j| > 1$. Now by the lemma of [5, p. 278] and Lemma 2, we have Lemma 4.

LEMMA 5. *For any positive integer m and any element A in Z_2^n. Then $P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{(m+1)n})$ contains $A\} \geqslant \frac{1}{2}m(n+1)\ 2^{-n}\{1 - 2((n+1)\,2^{-n})^{1/2} - m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\}$.*

Proof. Similar to the proof of Lemma 4; use Lemma 3 in the final substitution.

For each positive integer $k = 1, 2, ..., n$, let $n_k = \text{card}\{A \mid A \in Z_2^n$ and $\tau_A = k\}$. It is easy to see that $n_k \leqslant 2^k$ for all $k = 1, 2, ..., n$.

LEMMA 6. *$\sum_{n=1}^\infty P\{T_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)\} < \infty$ if $d > 1$.*

Proof. $\sum_{n=1}^\infty P\{T_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)\} \leqslant \sum_{n=1}^\infty \sum_{k=1}^n P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{d2^n\ln(2^n)})$ does not contain

$$A \mid \tau_A = k\} \leqslant \sum_{n=1}^\infty 2^k\left\{1 - \frac{m}{2}(n+1)\,2^{-n}(1 - 2((n+1)\,2^{-n})^{1/2} - m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\right\}^{[d2^n \ln(2)/(m+1)]}$$

$$+ \sum_{n=1}^\infty 2^n\left\{1 - m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\left(1 - n2^{-k} - ((n+1)\,2^{-n})^{1/2} - \frac{1}{2}m(n+1)\,2^{-n}\right)\right\}^{[d2^n \ln(2)/(m+1)]}.$$

It is easy to see that if $k \leqslant 2\ln(n)$, then

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} 2^k \left\{1-\frac{m}{2}(n+1)2^{-n}(1-2((n+1)2^{-n})^{1/2} - m(n+1)2^{-n})\right\}^{[d2^n \ln(2)/(m+1)]} < \infty$$

if $md > m+1$; it is possible since $d>1$. Now since $n2^{-k} \to 0$ as $n \to \infty$ if $k \geqslant 2\ln(n)$, there exists an n_0 such that if $n \geqslant n_0$ and $m \leqslant n$, $n2^{-k} + ((n+1)2^{-n})^{1/2} + \frac{1}{2}m(n+1)2^{-n} < \varepsilon$, where $(1-\varepsilon)d > 1$. Hence

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} 2^n \left\{1-m(n+1)2^{-n}\left(1-n2^{-k}-((n+1)2^{-n})^{1/2} - \frac{1}{2}(n+1)2^{-n}\right)\right\}^{[d2^n \ln(2)/(m+1)]}$$

$$\leqslant 2^{n_0+1} + \sum_{n>n_0} 2^n \{1-(1-\varepsilon)mn2^{-n}\}^{[d2^n \ln(2)/(m+1)]}$$

$$\approx 2^{n_0+1} + \sum_{n>n_0} 2^n e^{-[d(1-\varepsilon)mn\ln(2)/(m+1)]} < \infty$$

$$\text{if} \quad d(1-\varepsilon)m > m+1;$$

it is possible since $d(1-\varepsilon) > 1$. The proof of Lemma 6 now is complete.

Now we are in a position to state and prove our upper bound for the covering time C_n.

THEOREM 1. *$P\{C_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)$ only finitely often$\} = 1$ for any constant $d>1$.*

Proof. Since $C_n = T_n - n$ for all $n = 1, 2, \ldots$, $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} P\{C_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)\} \leqslant \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} P\{T_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)\} < \infty$ if $d>1$. By the Borel–Cantelli lemma, we have $P\{C_n > d2^n \ln(2^n)$ only finitely often$\} = 1$ for any constant $d>1$.

With respect to the fair coin tossing process $\{X_m\}_{m \geqslant 1}$, we define a new sequence $\{Y_m\}_{m \geqslant 1}$ of random variables as follows: For each positive integer $m \geqslant 1$, $Y_m = 0$ or 1 according to $(X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_{m+n-2})$ contains $(X_m, X_m + 1, \ldots, X_{m+n-1})$ or not. For each positive integer $n \geqslant 1$, let $S_{2^n} = \sum_{i=1}^{2^n} Y_i$. It is easy to see that $S_2 n = \mathrm{card}\{W_0^n, W_1^n, \ldots, W_{2^n-1}^n\}$ is the number of distinct states which the random walk W_i^n visited before the 2^nth step.

LEMMA 7. $\lim_{n \to \infty} E(S_2 n) 2^{-n} \geqslant (e-1)/e$.

Proof. To show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} E(S_2 n)\, 2^{-n} \geqslant (e-1)/e$, it suffices to show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} E(S_2 n)\, 2^{-n} \geqslant (e-1)/e - \varepsilon$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$.

Let m be a fixed positive integer and $c = [2^n/(mn)]$ be the largest integer $\leqslant 2^n/(mn)$. Since $0 \leqslant E(Y_i) \leqslant 1$ and is non-increasing in i, $mn \sum_{j=1}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \leqslant E(S_2 n) \leqslant mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1})$. Since $mn\, \{\sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) - \sum_{j=1}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1})\} = mnE(Y_1) = mn$, $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=1}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) = \lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} E(S_2 n) = \lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1})$. Hence it is sufficient to show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \geqslant (e-1)/e - \varepsilon$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$.

By the definition of Y_j's, it is easy to see that $E(Y_{jmn+1}) = P(Y_{jmn+1} = 1) = \sum_{A \in Z_2^n} P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{jmn+n-1})$ does not contain A and $(X_{jmn+1}, X_{jmn+2}, ..., X_{jmn+n}) = A\} \geqslant \sum_{A \in Z_2^n} P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{jmn})$ does not contain A and $(X_{jmn+1}, X_{jmn+2}, ..., X_{jmn+n}) = A\} - n2^{-n} \geqslant \sum_{A \in Z_2^n} 2^{-n} \times P\{\bigcap_{i=1}^{j} [(X_{(i-1)mn+1}, X_{(i-1)mn+2}, ..., X_{imn})$ does not contain $A]\} - jn2^{-2} \geqslant (1 - mn2^{-n})^j - jn2^{-n}$ for all $j = 0, 1, 2, ..., c$. Hence $\sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \geqslant \sum_{j=0}^{c} \{(1 - mn2^{-n})^j - jn2^{-n}\} = 2^n (mn)^{-1} \{1 - (1 - mn2^{-n})^{c+1}\} - n2^{-n}\{c(c+1)/2\}$. Therefore, $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \geqslant \lim_{n\to\infty} \{\{1 - (1 - mn2^{-n})^{c+1}\} - (n/2)\, 2^{-n}(2^n/mn + 1)\} = (e-1)/e - 1/2m$. Since m can be as large as possible, $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \geqslant (e-1)/e - \varepsilon$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$ and it completes the proof of Lemma 7.

LEMMA 8. $\lim_{n\to\infty} E(S_2 n)\, 2^{-n} \leqslant (e-1)/e$.

Proof. By a similar argument used in the proof of Lemma 7, it is sufficient to show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \leqslant (e-1)/e + \varepsilon$ for any $\varepsilon > 0$. Now $E(Y_{jmn+1}) = P(Y_{jmn+1} = 1) \leqslant \sum_{A \in Z_2^n} P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{jmn})$ does not contain A and $(X_{jmn+1}, X_{jmn+1}, ..., X_{jmn+n}) = A\} \leqslant \sum_{k=1}^{n} n_k 2^{-n} P\{\bigcap_{i=1}^{j} [(X_{(i-1)mn+1}, X_{(i-1)mn+2}, ..., X_{imn})$ does not contain $A \mid \tau_A = k\} = \sum_{k=1}^{n} 2^{-n} n_k \{P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{mn})$ does not contain $A\}\}^j$. Now for sufficiently large n and $k \geqslant 2\ln(n)$, $P\{(X_1, X_2, ..., X_{mn})$ does not contain $A \mid \tau_A = k\} \leqslant (1 - mn2^{-n}(1-\varepsilon))$. Since $n_i \leqslant 2^i$, $\sum_{i=1}^{k} n_i 2^{-n} \to 0$ as $n \to \infty$ if $k < 2\ln(n)$. Hence, for sufficiently large n, $E(Y_{jmn+1}) \leqslant (1 - mn2^{-n}(1-\varepsilon))^j + \varepsilon$. Therefore, $2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} E(Y_{jmn+1}) \leqslant 2^{-n} mn \sum_{j=0}^{c} (1 - mn2^{-n}(1-\varepsilon))^j + \varepsilon = 1 - (1 - mn2^{-n}(1-\varepsilon))^{c+1} + \varepsilon \to 1 - e^{-1/(1-\varepsilon)} + \varepsilon$ as $n \to \infty$ and it completes the proof of Lemma 8.

For each positive integer $k = 1, 2, ...$, let $\mathscr{A}_k = \{W_t^n \mid (k-1)\, 2^n \leqslant t < k2^n\}$, $\mathscr{B}_k = \bigcup_{j=1}^{k} A_j$, $\mathscr{D}_k = Z_2^n - \mathscr{B}_k$, and $E_k = \mathscr{A}_k - \mathscr{B}_{k-1}$.

THEOREM 2. *For all* $k = 1, 2, ...$,

(i) $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{A}_k)\} = 1 - e^{-1}$,

(ii) $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_k)\} = 1 - e^{-k}$,

(iii) $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-n} E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{D}_k)\} = e^{-k}$.

Proof. By the fact that card($\mathscr{A}_k$) has the same distribution as of S_2n for all $k=1, 2, \ldots$. Now, by Lemmas 7 and 8, we have (i).

By the fact that W_t^n and $W_{t'}^n$ are independent if $|t-t'|\geqslant 2$ and (i), we have (ii).

By the fact that $\mathscr{D}_k \cap \mathscr{B}_k = \varnothing$, $Z_2^n = \mathscr{D}_k \cup \mathscr{B}_k$, and (ii), we have (iii).

In order to obtain the lower bound for the covering time C_n, we have to estimate the asymptotic upper bound for the variance of card($\mathscr{B}_k$) for all $k=1, 2, \ldots$. We start with the following lemmas.

For each pair (i, j) of positive integers, let $\varepsilon_{ij}=0$ or 1 according to $(X_i, X_{i+1}, \ldots, X_{i+n-1}) \neq (X_j, X_{j+1}, \ldots, X_{j+n-1})$ or $(X_i, X_{i+1}, \ldots, X_{i+n-1}) = (X_j, X_{j+1}, \ldots, X_{j+n-1})$. For each positive integer $N \geqslant n$, let $\xi(n, N) = \sum_{1 \leqslant i<j \leqslant N} \varepsilon_{ij}$ and for each positive integer n, let $t_n = \sup\{N \mid N \geqslant n$ and $\xi(n, N)=0\}$. It is easy to see that $\xi(n, N)$ is the number of recurrences in $N+n-1$ trials and t_n is the number of trials before the first recurrence. The next lemma is a special case of Theorems 1 and 2 of [3].

Lemma 9. *If $N \to \infty$ and n varies so that* (i) $\binom{N}{2} 2^{-n-1} \to \lambda > 0$ *and* (ii) $n^t N 2^{-n} \to 0$ *for all $t < \infty$. Then*

(1) $E\{Z^{\xi(n, N)}\} \to \exp\{\lambda(Z-1)/(1-\frac{1}{2}Z)\}$,

(2) $P\{t_n > x 2^{n/2}\} \to e^{-x^2}$.

Proof. See pages 172–179 of [3].

For each positive integer $k=1, 2, \ldots$, we define a finite sequence $\{\tau_i^k \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant \text{card}(\mathscr{D}_k)\}$ (probably empty) of hitting times of $\mathscr{D}_k$ as follows: $\tau_1^k = \min\{t \mid W_t^n \in \mathscr{D}_k,\ k2^n \leqslant t < (k+1)\,2^n\}$, $= \infty$ if no such t exists, and for each $j = 2, 3, \ldots, \text{card}(\mathscr{D}_k)$, $\tau_j^k = \min\{t \mid W_t^n \in \mathscr{D}_k,\ \tau_{j-1}^k < t < (k+1)\,2^n\}$, $= \infty$ if no such t exists. Let $V_k = \{\tau_i^k \mid i = 1, 2, \ldots,$ and $\tau_i^k < \infty\}$. It is easy to see that $E_{k+1} = \{W_{\tau_i^k}^n \mid \tau_i^k \in V_k\}$.

If $E_{k+1} \neq \varnothing$, we define a finite sequence $\{Z_i^k \mid 1 \leqslant i \leqslant \text{card}(E_{k+1})\}$ of random variables as follows: $Z_1^k = 1$ and for each $i = 2, 3, \ldots, \text{card}(E_{k+1})$, $Z_i^k = 0$ or 1 according as $W_{\tau_i^k}^n \in \{W_{\tau_j^k}^n \mid 1 \leqslant j < i\}$ or $W_{\tau_i^k}^n \notin \{W_{\tau_j^k}^n \mid 1 \leqslant j < i\}$. It is easy to check that $S(E_{k+1}) = \sum_{i=1}^{\text{card}(E_{k+1})} Z_i^k = \sum_{i=k2^n+1}^{(k+1)\,2^n} Y_i$ is the number of new states which the random walk W_t^n visited between the $(k2^n)$th step and the $((k+1)\,2^n-1)$th step.

Lemma 10. $\text{Var}(S(E_{k+1})) \leqslant ane^{-1}\,\text{card}(E_{k+1})$ *for some constant $a > 0$.*

Proof.

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathrm{Var}(S(E_{k+1})) &= \mathrm{Var}\left(\sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1})} Z_i^k\right) \\
&= \sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1})} \mathrm{Var}(Z_i^k) + \sum_{i\neq j} \mathrm{Cov}(Z_i^k, Z_j^k) \\
&= \sum_{i=1}^{\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1})} \{P(Z_i^k=1) - P^2(Z_i^k=1)\} \\
&\quad + \sum_{i\neq j} \{P\{(Z_i^k=1)\cap(Z_j^k=1)\} - P\{Z_i^k=1\}\, P\{Z_j^k=1\}\}.
\end{aligned}$$

Since Z_1^k, $Z_2^k, \ldots,$ are 0–1 random variables, $\mathrm{Var}(Z_j^k) \leqslant \frac{1}{4}$. Since the distribution $W_{\tau_i^k}^n$ is independent of $W_{\tau_j^k}^n$ if $|i-j| \geqslant n$, $P\{Z_j^k=1 \mid Z_i^k=1\} \leqslant P\{Z_j^k=1 \mid Z_i^k=0\} + n2^{-n}$ (by Lemma 9) as $n\to\infty$ and $j \geqslant i+n$. Hence $\sum_{i\neq j}\mathrm{Cov}(Z_i^k, Z_j^k) = \sum_{|i-j|<n}\mathrm{Cov}(Z_i^k, Z_j^k) + \sum_{|i-j|\geqslant n}\mathrm{Cov}(Z_i^k, Z_j^k) \leqslant (n/4)\,\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1}) + (n/n2^{-n})\,\mathrm{card}^2(E_{k+1})$. Since $\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1}) \leqslant 2^n$, $\mathrm{Var}(S(E_{k+1})) \leqslant an\,\mathrm{card}(E_{k+1})$. for some constant $a>0$ and it completes the proof of Lemma 10.

LEMMA 11. *$\lim_{n\to\infty} n^{-1}2^{-n}\mathrm{Var}\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_k)\} \leqslant ae^{-k}$ for some constant $a>0$.*

Proof. We will prove Lemma 11 by induction on k. By Lemma 10, Lemma 11 holds when $k=1$. Now we assume that Lemma 11 holds for all $k=1, 2, \ldots, M$, and we will show that $\lim_{n\to\infty} 2^{-1}2^{-n}\mathrm{Var}\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})\} \leqslant ae^{-M-1}$. Since $\mathscr{B}_{M+1} = \mathscr{B}_{M+1} = \mathscr{B}_M \cup E_{M+1}$ and $\mathscr{B}_M \cap E_{m+1} = \varnothing$,

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathrm{Var}(\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})\} &= E\{(\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1}) - E(\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})))^2\} \\
&= E\{[\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1}) - E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})|\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_M)\}]^2\} \\
&\quad + E\{[E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})|\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_M)\} - E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{M+1})\}]^2\} \\
&\approx e^{-2}\mathrm{Var}(\mathscr{B}_M) + E\{2^n - \mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_M)\}\cdot ane^{-1} \\
&\approx e^{-2}ane^{-M_{2^n}} + 2^n e^{-M} ane^{-1} = an2^n e^{-M-1}(1+e^{-1}).
\end{aligned}$$

Since $\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} e^{-i} = e/(e-1)$, by induction, we have $\lim_{n\to\infty} n^{-1}2^{-n}\mathrm{Var}\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_k)\} \leqslant ae^{-k}$ for some constant $a>0$ and for all $k \geqslant 1$.

LEMMA 12. *$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} P\{T_n < c2^n \ln(2^n)\} < \infty$ for any $c<1$.*

Proof. $P\{T_n < c2^n\ln(2^n)\} = P\{\sum_{i=1}^{c2^n\ln(2^n)} Y_i = 2^n\} = P\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{c\ln(2^n)}) = 2^n\} \approx P\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{c\ln(2^n)}) - E\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{c\ln(2^n)}) \geqslant 2^n - 2^n(1-2^{-nc})\} \leqslant \mathrm{Var}\{\mathrm{card}(\mathscr{B}_{c\ln(2^n)})\}/2^{2n(1-c)} \approx an2^n 2^{-2n(1-c)} e^{-c\ln(2^n)} = an2^{-n(1-c)}$. Hence $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} P\{T_n < c2^n\ln(2^n)\} \approx \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} an2^{-n(1-c)} < \infty$ since $c<1$.

Now we are in the position to state and prove our lower bound for the covering time C_n.

THEOREM 3. $P\{C_n > c2^n \ln(2^n)$ *except finitely many* $n\} = 1$, *if* $c < 1$.

Proof. By Lemma 12 and the fact that $C_n = T_n - n$ for all $n \geqslant 1$, $\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} P\{C_n < c2^n \ln(2^n)\} < \infty$. By the Borel–Cantelli lemma, $P\{C_n < c2^n \ln(2^n)$ infinitely often$\} = 0$. Hence $P\{C_n > c2^n \ln(2^n)$ except finitely many $n\} = 1$.

Combining Theorem 1 and Theorem 3, we have the following theorems.

THEOREM 4. $P\{\lim_{n\to\infty} C_n/(2^n \ln(2^n)) = 1\} = 1$.

THEOREM 5. $\lim_{n\to\infty} E(C_n)/(2^n \ln(2^n)) = 1$.

THEOREM 6. $P\{\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} 2^n(1-2^{-n})^{C_n} = \infty\} = 1$.

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