

16 Refereeing a paper

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1 Project 3 – discussion

The main issue is how to assess the difficulty of a riddle. Clearly, this depends on the language in which the hints are given. The same clause may appear less difficult when presented as a zero-variable first-order formula than as a Boolean formula in disjunctive normal form. For example, $a[1, 1] = a[1, 2]$ is easier to understand than $(a_{111} \wedge a_{121}) \vee (a_{112} \wedge a_{122}) \vee \dots \vee (a_{11n} \wedge a_{12n})$. The specification language is thus most important, and we must choose it first.

Most groups have defined their own language for expressing riddles. It would be interesting to look at the problem from the perspective of the Boolean satisfiability problem.

2 Refereeing a paper

A researcher should provide about as many reviews as he expects to receive (i.e., about three per submission), to keep the system in balance.

| | conference | journal |
|----------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| typical length | 10 – 15 pages | 40 – 60 pages |
| review effort | about $\frac{1}{2}$ day | several days |
| | is the contribution meaningful? | check proofs, details |

2.1 Structure of a review

1. Summary of the paper.
2. Evaluation:
 - maintain an advisory attitude;
 - state a clear opinion;
 - give concrete positive and negative points.
3. For the author: improvement suggestions.
4. Confidential remarks to the program committee/editor (invisible to the author).