

Article

Rule-Based Generation of de Bruijn Sequences: Memory and Learning

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Abstract

We investigate binary sequences generated by non-Markovian rules with memory length μ , similar to those adopted in elementary cellular automata. This generation procedure is equivalent to a shift register, and certain rules produce sequences with maximal periods, known as de Bruijn sequences. We introduce a novel methodology for generating de Bruijn sequences that combines (i) a set of derived properties that significantly reduce the space of feasible generating rules and (ii) a neural-network-based classifier that identifies which rules produce de Bruijn sequences. The experiments for some values of μ demonstrate the approach's effectiveness and computational efficiency.

Keywords: sequence generation; cellular automata with memory; de Bruijn sequences; shift registers; neural network

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1. Introduction

Cellular automata (CA) are a class of dynamical systems that evolve in discrete time and space [1,2]. A CA consists of cells (or agents), each of which can adopt a state from a discrete set. The most commonly used alphabet is binary, typically denoted by $\{0, 1\}$. The CA evolves by applying generating rules at each time step. These rules can be static or dynamic (i.e., they may change depending on the current state of the entire CA) and either local or global, depending on whether they involve only neighboring cells or the entire population.

From an initial configuration, the state of the CA evolves over time according to the specified rules. The update rule for each cell can depend on both the past states of the cell itself (temporal dimension) and the states of its neighboring cells (spatial dimension). Elementary one-dimensional cellular automata (1dCA) typically assume a memoryless structure with a linear topology, where each cell interacts only with its nearest neighbors [1]. More complex models incorporate memory—i.e., dependence on a set of past states—and long-range spatial influences [3,4].

Relatively less attention has been given to zero-dimensional cellular automata (0dCA), which consist of a single cell whose state is updated based solely on its own past states. Despite their apparent simplicity, 0dCA do not involve interactions between multiple cells, their time evolution yields interesting sequences of symbolic states. The rules governing such systems depend on the memory μ —the number of previous states influencing the next

state—and the alphabet $\{\alpha\}$, the number of possible states a cell can take. Generally, the complexity of the system increases with both μ and α . For simplicity, we focus on binary systems, i.e., $\alpha = 2$, using the symbols $\{0, 1\}$, and, due to computational limitations, we restrict our study to a subset of cases with relatively low values of μ (less than 8).

2. 0-Dimensional CA

Symbolic sequences naturally arise in discrete dynamical systems, e.g., CA [5]. From an initial condition, the next state is computed according to a generation rule (or function) that depends on previous states. For instance, a classical non-Markovian binary time series can be defined by initial values a_1 and a_2 and a recursive rule:

$$a_{k+2} = (a_{k+1} + a_k) \pmod 2, \quad \text{for } k = 1, 2, \dots \tag{1}$$

With initial states $a_1 = 0$ and $a_2 = 1$, the sequence continues as $a_3 = 1, a_4 = 0, a_5 = 1, a_6 = 1$, etc., producing the following binary sequence:

$$s_1 = 0110110110110 \dots$$

This sequence is clearly periodic with period $T_1 = 3$. In this case, the next digit depends on the two previous digits, implying a memory $\mu = 2$.

Other examples with $\mu = 2$ can be constructed using logical operators. For instance, applying the AND-function with the rules

$$11 \rightarrow 1, \quad 10 \rightarrow 0, \quad 01 \rightarrow 0, \quad 00 \rightarrow 0$$

to the initial pair 01 produces the sequence

$$s_2 = 0100000 \dots$$

Similarly, applying the OR-function

$$11 \rightarrow 1, \quad 10 \rightarrow 1, \quad 01 \rightarrow 1, \quad 00 \rightarrow 0$$

to the same initial configuration 01 results in

$$s_3 = 0111111 \dots$$

Both sequences converge to fixed values (0 or 1), i.e., their periods are $T_2 = T_3 = 1$, and these fixed points are independent of the initial configuration.

In contrast, applying the XOR-function

$$11 \rightarrow 0, \quad 10 \rightarrow 1, \quad 01 \rightarrow 1, \quad 00 \rightarrow 0$$

to the initial state $a_1 = 0, a_2 = 1$ yields

$$s_4 = 0110110110 \dots$$

with period $T_4 = 3$. However, using the same rule with the initial configuration $a_1 = 0, a_2 = 0$ results in a constant sequence $a_k = 0$ for all $k > 2$. These examples illustrate that the resulting behavior depends not only on the rule but also on the initial conditions.

For any finite memory $\mu < \infty$, all sequences generated in this framework are eventually periodic. That is, for any rule and initial condition, the sequence will eventually settle into

a repeating pattern (also referred to as a motif or loop). The maximum possible period for a sequence with memory μ is

$$T_{\max} = 2^\mu \tag{2}$$

As μ increases, the sequences may resemble aperiodic ones, making them useful for computing pseudorandom numbers to be applied in Monte Carlo simulations and cryptographic systems [6]. Truly aperiodic behavior can only arise when $\mu \rightarrow \infty$, or when the alphabet is infinite (e.g., using real-valued states).

To explore periodicity in 0dCA, we adopt combinatorial generating rules analogous to those used in 1dCA [1], with memory playing the role of spatial interaction. Formally, a generating rule with memory μ is a function that maps each of the 2^μ binary sequences of length μ to a single binary output:

$$R(a_1, a_2, \dots, a_\mu) = a_j \tag{3}$$

where $a_i \in \{0, 1\}$ for all $i = 1, 2, \dots, \mu$ (see Figure 1). Starting from an initial configuration, the rule is applied recursively to generate the digits of the sequence as follows:

$$a_{j+1} = R(a_{j-\mu+1}, a_{j-\mu+2}, \dots, a_j) \tag{4}$$

which eventually converges to an asymptotic pattern with period T .

(A) $\mu = 3$, Rule 150 = 10010110

(B) $\mu = 3$, Rule 45 = 00101101

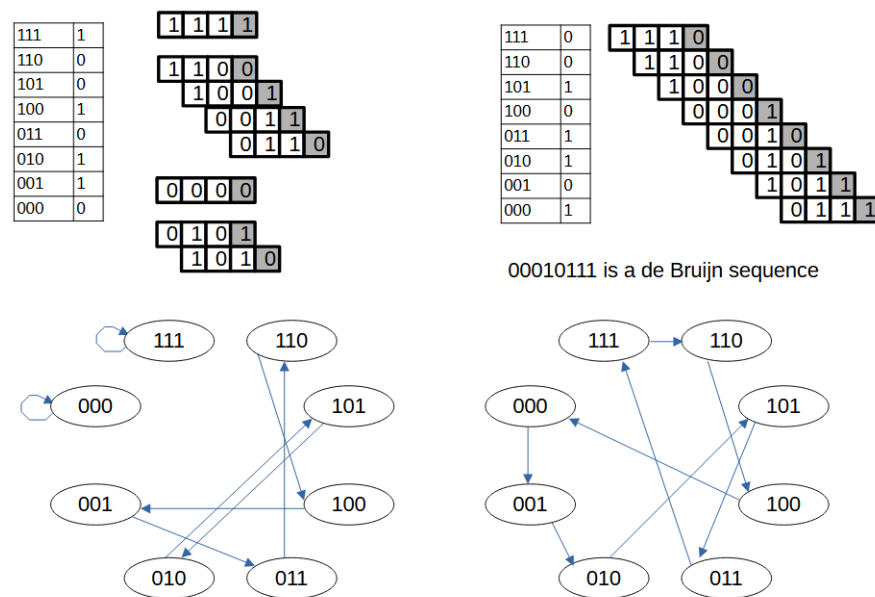


Figure 1. Two generating rules with memory $\mu = 3$. (A) Rule 150, whose binary representation is 10010110. This corresponds to the following assignments for each 3-tuple (ordered from 111 to 000): 111 → 1, 110 → 0, 101 → 0, 100 → 1, 011 → 0, 010 → 1, 001 → 1, 000 → 0. The application of this rule to four different initial triplets is shown on the right of panel (A). As observed, the resulting sequences are periodic with periods 1, 4, 1, and 2 (from top to bottom). The dynamics of this rule can be visualized as a directed graph, shown at the bottom. Each node represents a possible 3-tuple; a directed edge from node x to node y exists if applying the rule to x yields the last digit of y . This graph is not connected and does not contain a Hamiltonian path. (B) Rule 45, with binary representation 00101101, corresponds to the truth table shown on the left of panel B. In contrast to Rule 150, applying Rule 45 to any of the $2^3 = 8$ initial triplets yields the same cyclic sequence of maximum period $T_{\max} = 8$, namely, the de Bruijn sequence $s_6 = 00010111$. This rule is thus a de Bruijn rule. The associated graph, built as described above, is a de Bruijn graph because it contains a Hamiltonian path through all 2^3 nodes.

For example, when $\mu = 3$, there are $2^{2^3} = 256$ possible rules—corresponding to Wolfram’s elementary 1dCA rules. Figure 1A shows the XOR rule for $\mu = 3$, represented by the binary rule string 10010110, which corresponds to rule number 150 in Wolfram’s classification. Applying this rule to the initial configuration 010 yields

$$s_5 = 010101010 \dots$$

which has period $T_5 = 2$.

In general, for a given $\mu = 1, 2, 3, \dots$, the total number of possible generating rules is $C(\mu) = 2^{2^\mu}$ (this number corresponds with the Fermat number minus 1 [7]), and the maximum number of binary sequences generated from these rules is $2^{2^\mu + \mu}$. This number grows super-exponentially with μ , making exhaustive analysis computationally infeasible for large μ . For instance, when $\mu = 10$, there are approximately 10^{308} rules, each of which must be applied to 1024 different initial configurations.

This raises the following fundamental question: given a memory value μ and an initial configuration, is it possible to predict the asymptotic pattern and period T of the resulting sequence? While this is tractable for small μ via exhaustive enumeration, alternative methods are necessary for large μ due to the sheer size of the rule space.

It is worth noting that the 0-dimensional cellular automata (0dCA) with memory, as defined above, are equivalent to sequences generated by a Non-Linear Feedback Shift Register (NLFSR). This type of sequence has been extensively studied, and a vast body of literature exists on the subject [8–11]. In particular, significant attention has been devoted to the characterization and computation of shift register sequences with maximum period—commonly known as de Bruijn sequences [12–15]. As we will show in the next section, there exists a one-to-one correspondence between de Bruijn sequences and their generating rules, which we will refer to as de Bruijn rules.

3. Rules That Generate Maximum Period Sequences: De Bruijn Rules

For a given memory length μ , the maximum period that a generated binary sequence can attain is $T_{\max} = 2^\mu$. Naturally, the minimum period is 1, corresponding to sequences that converge to fixed points (e.g., either 0 or 1). For small values of μ , it is feasible to generate all possible sequences and compute their corresponding periods. For $\mu = 4$, Table 1 shows the number of rules that generate sequences with periods in between 1 and 2^4 for each of the 2^4 initial sequence of length 4. Note that the distributions of periods are symmetric to middle rows and that the maximum period occurs for only 16 rules, independently of the initial sequence. The proportion of rules as a function of the maximum period of the sequences that each of the 2^{2^4} generates over all the initial sequences is depicted in Figure 2 (also for the case $\mu = 4$). It is worthy to remark the nonmonotonous shape of this distribution that exhibits three relative maxima at periods $T = 1$, $T = 3$, and $T = 5$. For $T > 5$, it seems to decrease exponentially.

Sequences with a maximum period, known as de Bruijn sequences, are of particular interest. These are cyclic sequences of length 2^μ in which every possible binary substring of length μ appears exactly once. For small values of μ , it is straightforward to generate all possible de Bruijn sequences. There exists a unique de Bruijn sequence for $\mu = 2$, namely, 0011. For $\mu = 3$, there are two such sequences: 00010111 and 00011101 that are generated by rules 45 and 75, respectively (rule 45 is graphically described in Figure 1B).

Since these sequences are cyclic, their representations are not unique; by convention, we select the lexicographically least sequence (i.e., the smallest in binary order and decimal number) as the representative of the equivalence class. Specially significant is the lexicographically least sequence for each memory μ that is referred to as the granddaddy in [16].

Table 1. Number of rules that generates sequences with each of the possible periods (columns) that can appear, from 1 to 16, for $\mu = 4$, applied to the 2^4 initial sequences (rows). Notice that the total number of rules for this μ -value is $2^{2^4} = 65,536$, which equal the sum of each row. As it can be observed, the distributions of periods are symmetric to middle rows. Note that the maximum period occurs at the last column ($T = 16$) for 16 rules and for every initial condition.

Initial Sequence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
0000	36,096	3304	4944	4734	5836	3758	2472	1846	1120	758	332	144	80	48	48	16
0001	12,912	6608	9888	9468	9624	6492	3920	2924	1728	1068	440	208	96	80	64	16
0010	11,800	8976	11,780	8457	8976	5697	3552	2803	1634	995	412	200	94	80	64	16
0011	15,368	5320	9490	9252	9296	6397	3702	2981	1756	1067	444	207	96	80	64	16
0100	14,568	5524	11,588	8860	9190	5851	3570	2834	1672	1011	414	200	94	80	64	16
0101	10,520	16,384	8458	6494	8542	5755	3620	2572	1438	919	406	192	80	76	64	16
0110	12,032	6428	12,398	9128	9438	6043	3486	2975	1714	1019	422	199	94	80	64	16
0111	21,376	4956	7416	8125	8242	5637	3580	2641	1648	1025	426	208	96	80	64	16
1000	21,376	4956	7416	8125	8242	5637	3580	2641	1648	1025	426	208	96	80	64	16
1001	12,032	6428	12,398	9128	9438	6043	3486	2975	1714	1019	422	199	94	80	64	16
1010	10,520	16,384	8458	6494	8542	5755	3620	2572	1438	919	406	192	80	76	64	16
1011	14,568	5524	11,588	8860	9190	5851	3570	2834	1672	1011	414	200	94	80	64	16
1100	15,368	5320	9490	9252	9296	6397	3702	2981	1756	1067	444	207	96	80	64	16
1101	11,800	8976	11,780	8457	8976	5697	3552	2803	1634	995	412	200	94	80	64	16
1110	12,912	6608	9888	9468	9624	6492	3920	2924	1728	1068	440	208	96	80	64	16
1111	36,096	3304	4944	4734	5836	3758	2472	1846	1120	758	332	144	80	48	48	16

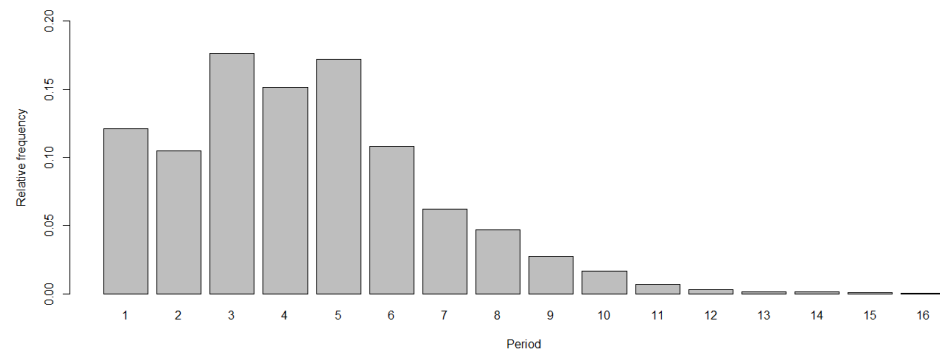


Figure 2. Bar chart of the proportion of rules as a function of the maximum period of the sequences that each of them generates over the initial sequences for a memory $\mu = 4$. Note that $T = 16$ has the lower occurrence; as a matter of fact, there are 2^{2^3-4} de Bruijn rules, which result in a relative frequency of $16/65,536 \approx 0.0002$.

The number of binary de Bruijn sequences for a given μ is given by $C(\mu) = 2^{2^\mu-1-\mu}$ [12,17]. This number grows also superexponentially with μ and reaches extremely large values even for moderate μ . For example, for $\mu = 10$, $C(10) \approx 10^{151}$. Generating all de Bruijn sequences is a challenging combinatorial problem that remains unsolved in full generality, though various efficient construction algorithms have been proposed (see, for instance, [18,19]).

De Bruijn sequences can be generated by applying certain specific rules, independently of the initial configuration of length μ . In other words, there exists a bijection between de Bruijn sequences and their corresponding rules, which we refer to as de Bruijn rules. Table 2 lists the de Bruijn rules and their de Bruijn sequences for $\mu = 1, 2, 3$, and 4, expressed both as binary maps and in their corresponding decimal representations.

For $\mu = 4$, there are $C(4) = 2^{2^3-4} = 16$ de Bruijn rules and their associated de Bruijn sequences. As it can be seen, the granddaddy sequence is 0000100110101111. The corresponding granddaddy rule is 3825, with binary representation 0000111011110001. For $\mu = 5$, the number of de Bruijn sequences is $C(5) = 2^{2^4-5} = 2048$. The granddaddy rule in this case is 0000110011111101111001100000001 (whose decimal representation is 218,034,945), which generates the granddaddy sequence 00000100011001011011101010011111.

Table 2. Correspondence between de Bruijn rules and de Bruijn sequences for $\mu = 1, 2, 3$ and 4. The table also shows the Evil Odd Number that divides each de Bruijn rule, leaving the remainder $\phi(\mu)$. The Evil Odd Numbers that correspond to de Bruijn rules for $\mu = 5$ are presented in Appendix B.

μ	Evil Odd Number	$\phi(\mu)$	Rule in Decimal	Rule in Binary	de Bruijn Sequence
1	-	-	1	01	01
2	-	3	3	0011	0011
3	3	15	45	00101101	00010111
3	5	15	75	01001011	00011101
4	3	255	765	0000001011111101	0000101101001111
4	9	255	2295	0000100011110111	0000110100101111
4	15	255	3825	0000111011110001	0000100110101111
4	17	255	4335	0001000011101111	0000111100101101
4	27	255	6885	0001101011100101	0000101111001101
4	29	255	7395	0001110011100011	0000110101111001
4	43	255	10,965	0010101011010101	0000101001101111
4	57	255	14,535	0011100011000111	00001101111100101
4	65	255	16,575	0100000010111111	0000111101001011
4	71	255	18,105	0100011010111001	0000100111101011
4	75	255	19,125	0100101010110101	0000101111010011
4	83	255	21,165	0101001010101101	0000101100111101
4	85	255	21,675	0101010010101011	0000111101011001
4	89	255	22,695	0101100010100111	0000110010111101
4	99	255	25,245	0110001010011101	0000101001111011
4	113	255	28,815	0111000010001111	0000111101100101

4. Characterization of de Bruijn Rules

As stated in the previous section, certain generating rules produce sequences with maximum period—we refer to them as *de Bruijn rules*. Therefore, a complete characterization of such rules emerges as a fundamental goal. The following properties help identify and constrain the set of de Bruijn rules and can be used to systematically search for them:

- **Boundary Conditions:** The binary representations of de Bruijn rules must start with 0 and end with 1. This condition arises from the convention in rule ordering, which arranges input strings from the highest binary value (11...11) to the lowest (00...00) and from the necessity to avoid fixed points (e.g., if $R(11...11) = 1$, the sequence remains constant). This constraint immediately reduces the number of candidate rules by a factor of 4. For example, for $\mu = 4$, the number of potentially valid rules is reduced from $2^{2^4} = 65,536$ to 16,384.
- **Symmetry and Parity:** The binary representations of de Bruijn rules are symmetric with respect to their midpoint, such that each half is the complement of the other. This symmetry ensures parity: the number of 0s equals the number of 1s, although the balance may be broken within each half. Under this constraint, valid de Bruijn rules correspond to multiples of certain Numbers derived from sequences of Evil Odd numbers [20], multiplied by factors denoted as $\phi(\mu)$ (see Appendix A). Let R_μ be a rule for a given μ . Then,

$$R_\mu = \phi(\mu) (A + 1) \tag{5}$$

In Appendix A, we show that the factor $\phi(\mu)$ is

$$\phi(\mu) = 2^{2^{\mu-1}} - 1 \tag{6}$$

For instance, $\phi(2) = 3$, $\phi(3) = 15$, $\phi(4) = 255$, and $\phi(5) = 65,535$. The consideration of this property causes a huge reduction in the feasible set of the de Bruijn rules, from 16,384 to 64 for the case $\mu = 4$.

- **Evil Odd Number divisibility**
It is also empirical evidence that factor $A + 1$ in Equation (5) must be an Evil Odd Number for R_μ to be a de Bruijn rule. For each μ , there is a unique ϕ that divides R_μ ,

which results in multiple remainders that are Evil Odd Numbers. To consider that, it is convenient to denote this factor as $A(\mu)_k$, representing the Evil Odd Numbers for $k = 1, 2, \dots, C(\mu)$. For instance,

$$A(2, 1) = 1 \times 3 = 3, \quad A(3, 1) = 3 \times 15 = 45, \quad A(3, 2) = 5 \times 15 = 75$$

Table 2 presents all de Bruijn rules for $\mu = 4$ whose decimal representations are products of an Evil Odd Number and the corresponding $\phi(\mu)$. Note, however, that not all Evil Odd Numbers yield valid de Bruijn rules, and the problem of determining which ones do remains open for larger values of μ . For $\mu = 4$, applying these conditions reduce the feasible set of de Bruijn rules to 32.

- **Constrained Position Pairs:** There exist pairs of positions in the binary representation of de Bruijn rules that cannot simultaneously take the same value (1 for even μ -values and 0 for odd ones). This condition is applied only to the first half of the binary string for symmetry (according to the previous item) and depends on μ according to a recursive pattern.

Let p_μ^j be the binary value of the j position in a de Bruijn rule of memory μ . For $\mu = 2$, the constrained positions are $p_2^1 = 1$ and $p_2^2 = 2 p_2^1$, and

- If $\mu = 2k + 1$, then $p_{2k+1}^1 = p_{2k}^2$ and $p_{2k+1}^2 = 2 p_{2k+1}^1 - 1$.
- If $\mu = 2(k + 1)$, then $p_{2(k+1)}^1 = p_{2k+1}^2$ and $p_{2(k+1)}^2 = 2 p_{2(k+1)}^1$.

for $k = 1, 2, \dots$

This structural condition eliminates 1/4 of the remaining candidates. For example, for $\mu = 3$, these positions are $p_3^1 = 2$ and $p_3^2 = 3$. For $\mu = 4$, $p_4^1 = 3$ and $p_4^2 = 6$, and for $\mu = 5$, $p_5^1 = 6$ and $p_5^2 = 11$.

Remarkably, for $\mu = 4$, the final count of feasible de Bruijn rules after applying all constraints is 24. In general, for all values of $\mu > 3$, the feasible set exceeds the actual number of de Bruijn rules (see Table 3).

- **Symmetric Rule Invariance:** If a rule of the form

$$0 a_1 a_2 \dots a_{k-1} a_k 0 1 1 - a_1 1 - a_2 \dots 1 - a_{k-1} 1 - a_k 1$$

is a de Bruijn rule, then its *mirrored* version

$$0 a_k a_{k-1} \dots a_2 a_1 0 1 1 - a_k 1 - a_{k-1} \dots 1 - a_2 1 - a_1 1$$

is also a de Bruijn rule.

This property reflects the inherent symmetry and reversibility in de Bruijn rule structure. It ensures that for each valid de Bruijn rule constructed in this way, a corresponding reverse-complement rule also exists within the de Bruijn set.

Let us summarize the reduction procedure that results from the application of these properties for the case $\mu = 4$. There are 65,536 rules that are filtered as follows:

- After applying the boundary conditions, 16,384 rules remain feasible.
- Applying symmetry, i.e., dividing by $\phi(4) = 255$, 64 rules remain.
- The requirement that the remainder is an Evil Odd Number reduces the previous number to 32 rules.
- Verifying the constrained position pairs reduces the feasible set to 24 rules.

From these 24 feasible rules, only 16 are de Bruijn (see Table 2).

The application of the properties stated in the previous paragraphs to the entire set of generating rules significantly reduces the number of feasible rules that can yield de Bruijn sequences (an example can be found in Appendix C). Table 3 presents the total number of

rules, the number of de Bruijn sequences, the number of feasible rules after applying the constraints, and the corresponding ratios. As can be observed, the number of feasible rules that need to be checked to find de Bruijn rules is drastically smaller than the total number of rules for each μ value. For instance, when $\mu = 6$, the reduction factor is approximately 10^{-11} . In the same case, the ratio between the number of rules that actually yield de Bruijn sequences and the number of feasible rules is around 0.17. For such low values of μ , a brute-force approach may still be used to generate all de Bruijn sequences. However, a more efficient and structured methodology will be presented in the next section.

Table 3. Table resulting from the application of the properties described in Section 4. The second column, $C(\mu)$, indicates the total number of rules for each value of μ . The third column shows the number of feasible rules remaining after applying the constraints detailed in Section 4. The fourth column lists the number of de Bruijn rules. The remaining columns present ratios between these subsets. Particularly noteworthy is the fifth column, which displays the ratio between the feasible subset and the total number of rules. As μ increases, the reduction in the search space for de Bruijn rules becomes dramatic — for example, for $\mu = 9$, the feasible subset constitutes only about 10^{-79} of the full rule set.

μ	$C(\mu)$	# Feasible	# de Bruijn	Feasible/Total	de Bruijn/Total	de Bruijn/Feasible
2	16		1		0.0625	
3	256	2	2	0.0078125	0.0078125	1
4	65,536	24	16	0.000366211	0.00024414	0.66666667
5	4,294,967,296	6144	2048	1.4305×10^{-6}	4.7683×10^{-7}	0.33333333
6	1.84467×10^{19}	402,653,184	67,108,864	2.1827×10^{-11}	3.6379×10^{-12}	0.16666667
7	3.40282×10^{38}	1.7293×10^{18}	1.4411×10^{17}	5.0820×10^{-21}	4.2351×10^{-22}	0.08333333
8	1.15792×10^{77}	3.1901×10^{37}	1.3292×10^{36}	2.7550×10^{-40}	1.1479×10^{-41}	0.04166667
9	1.3408×10^{154}	1.0855×10^{76}	2.2615×10^{74}	8.0964×10^{-79}	1.6867×10^{-80}	0.02083333

5. Neural Networks to Classify de Bruijn Rules

An alternative approach to identifying de Bruijn rules is to apply machine learning methods. In particular, neural networks are especially well suited for classification tasks [21]. In this section, we present a neural network model for classifying the feasible rules into two categories: de Bruijn rules (coded by 1) and the rest (0). Although classification based on the sequence period is also possible, it would require accounting for dependence on initial conditions. The classification is performed for $\mu = 5$ and $\mu = 6$ (see Table 4).

We implemented a binary classification model using a feedforward neural network in R (version 4.5.0) [22]. The analysis followed these main steps:

1. Data loading and preprocessing: The input data consisted of a character string representing a binary sequence and a binary integer label.
2. Feature extraction: Each rule was split into individual bits transforming the strings into a matrix where each column corresponds to a bit (bit₁ to bit_{2 μ}). According to the necessary properties of de Bruijn rules (see Section 4), only the first $\mu/2$ bits were retained for further analysis. The first and the $2^{\mu-1}$ bits were also removed because they are necessarily 0.
3. Dataset splitting: The data were randomly split into training (80%) and testing (20%) subsets to evaluate model performance on unseen data. The validation set was chosen to be 20% of the training set in all cases.
4. Model specification and training: A feedforward neural network was constructed using the keras package (version 2.15.0) with a TensorFlow (version 2.16.0) backend [22,23].

Feedforward neural networks are highly suitable for structured, tabular data, such as the bit vectors extracted from rule representations. They can capture complex, non-linear relationships between input features without requiring explicit feature engineering. In our

case, the binary inputs represent discrete features, and their interactions are not trivially captured by simpler linear models. The multi-layer architecture enables hierarchical feature learning, significantly improving classification accuracy.

For the case $\mu = 5$, the neural network architecture includes the following:

- An input layer with 14 features (bits);
- A hidden dense layer with 32 units and ReLU activation;
- A second hidden dense layer with 16 units and ReLU activation;
- An output layer with 1 unit and sigmoid activation for binary classification.

The model was compiled using the Adam optimizer (learning rate = 0.001), binary cross-entropy loss function, and accuracy as a performance metric. The dataset includes the complete set of 6144 feasible rules, one-third of which are de Bruijn rules (see Table 3). Training was performed over 100 epochs with a batch size of 4. Model evaluation was conducted on the test set by calculating accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity (see Table 4). Class labels were assigned using a threshold of 0.5 on the predicted probabilities. The resulting classifier achieved outstanding performance, with an accuracy exceeding 99% for $\mu = 5$.

The more challenging case of $\mu = 6$ involves a rule space of size on the order of 10^{19} , with approximately 67 million de Bruijn rules (see Table 3). As a matter of fact, we can only use a sample of the total rule space that is randomly analyzed and classified into the two classes. To get this sample of the feasible rule space, we used brute force to generate 1 million de Bruijn rules. In parallel, we generated a larger number of non-de Bruijn feasible rules and randomly selected 1 million of them. Note that the ratio of de Bruijn to feasible rules is about 0.17 (Table 3), which means that approximately 6 million feasible rules must be generated by brute force to obtain 1 million de Bruijn rules.

Optimal results were achieved using a slightly deeper neural network with the following architecture:

- Three hidden dense layers with 64, 64, and 8 units, respectively;
- ReLU activations in all hidden layers;
- A sigmoid output unit for binary classification.

Training used a batch size of 64 and a learning rate of 0.001. The dataset consists of a sample of 2×10^6 feasible rules, half of which are de Bruijn rules. As before, 80% of the dataset was used for training, with 20% used for validation and the remainder for testing. A threshold of 0.5 was again applied to the output probabilities to assign class labels. As shown in Table 4, this model also demonstrated excellent classification metrics.

Table 4. Evaluation metrics for the neural network models applied to classify the de Bruijn rules for memories with $\mu = 5$ and $\mu = 6$. Total refers to the sum $TP + FP + TN + FN$ and corresponds to one fifth of the whole dataset. The positive class considered $1 \rightarrow$ de Bruijn.

Metric, Definition	$\mu = 5$	$\mu = 6$
True Positives (TP)	397	198,563
False Positives (FP)	3	19,839
True Negatives (TN)	820	180,668
False Negatives (FN)	9	930
Accuracy, $(TP + TN)/Total$	0.9902	0.9481
Sensitivity (Recall), $TP/(TP + FN)$	0.9778	0.9953
Specificity, $TN/(TN + FP)$	0.9964	0.9011
Precision (PPV), $TP/(TP + FP)$	0.9925	0.9092
Negative Predictive Value (NPV), $TN/(TN + FN)$	0.9891	0.9949
Balanced Accuracy, $(Sens. + Spec.)/2$	0.9871	0.9482
Detection Rate, $TP/Total$	0.3230	0.4964
Detection Prevalence, $(TP + FP) / Total$	0.3255	0.5460
True Prevalence, $(TP + FN) / Total$	0.3303	0.4987

Once the neural network model is available, any given rule can be evaluated to determine, with high probability, whether it is a de Bruijn rule. If the prediction is positive, the rule is then applied to generate the corresponding binary sequence, which must ultimately be verified to confirm that it satisfies the de Bruijn sequence properties.

6. Discussion

The successive application of updating rules to an initial configuration of $\{0, 1\}$ generates a binary sequence that becomes asymptotically periodic. The size of the initial configuration depends on the memory of the rule, denoted by μ , which is the number of digits required to update the next one. For large values of μ , the number of possible generating rules becomes so large that an exhaustive analysis of the resulting patterns is infeasible. Particularly relevant is a specific and highly constrained subset of rules that we named as de Bruijn rules and that generate sequences of maximum period, known as de Bruijn sequences. Although these sequences represent only a tiny fraction of the entire set of possible sequences, their sheer number for large μ remains enormous, and the complete and effective generation of all such sequences is still an open problem.

In this paper, we have presented a novel approach to compute de Bruijn sequences that combines two complementary methodologies. First, by exploiting structural properties of de Bruijn rules—i.e., those rules that generate maximum period sequences—a drastic reduction in the full set of candidate rules can be achieved. Table 3 summarizes the reduction ratios for several values of μ . Second, we applied a machine learning approach to this feasible subset in order to accurately identify the de Bruijn rules. As shown in Section 5, the use of a classical neural network model for $\mu = 5$ and 6 allows for a nearly complete classification of the de Bruijn rules in the smaller cases and achieves over 99% and 94% accuracy for $\mu = 5$ and $\mu = 6$, respectively. Once the de Bruijn rules are identified, the corresponding de Bruijn sequences are straightforward to construct. This would allow one to find the *granddaddy* sequence that represents the lexicographically smallest member for each μ -value.

The rule-based approach for generating de Bruijn sequences presented in this paper is, to the best of our knowledge, unique in the literature. It employs a hybrid methodology that integrates machine learning techniques within the framework of cellular automata. Specifically, we use rules with memory μ to generate sequences from an initial configuration of μ bits. Rules that generate sequences with a maximum period $T = 2^\mu$ —the so-called de Bruijn sequences—are referred to as the de Bruijn rules. By characterizing these rules based on certain empirical properties, we achieve a significant reduction in the overall rule set. However, even after this reduction, a huge set of feasible rules remains for larger μ -values, which still needs to be classified. To address this, we employ a neural network, which has been shown to perform well for $\mu = 5$ and $\mu = 6$. We believe that further development of this machine learning methodology can yield excellent results for computing de Bruijn sequences with much larger μ -values. It is also worth noting that existing methods based on Nonlinear Feedback Shift Registers have yet to definitively solve the problem. Thus, we consider the results presented in this paper a significant advancement in the study and generation of this important class of sequences.

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Appendix A

In this appendix, we show that a natural number x_n whose binary representation of $2n$ bits has the form

$$x_n \equiv [a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n, 1 - a_1, 1 - a_2, \dots, 1 - a_n]$$

for $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $a_i \in \{0, 1\}$ are divisible by

$$M_n = 2^n - 1$$

The decimal representation of x_n can be written as

$$x_n = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \cdot 2^{2n-i} + \sum_{i=1}^n (1 - a_i) \cdot 2^{n-i}$$

which can be manipulated as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} x_n &= \sum_{i=1}^n (a_i \cdot 2^{2n-i} + (1 - a_i) \cdot 2^{n-i}) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^n (a_i(2^{2n-i} - 2^{n-i}) + 2^{n-i}) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \cdot 2^{n-i}(2^n - 1) + \sum_{i=1}^n 2^{n-i} \end{aligned}$$

The last sum is geometric and can be summed as

$$\sum_{i=1}^n 2^{n-i} = 2^n - 1.$$

and, denoting $A = \sum_{i=1}^n a_i \cdot 2^{n-i}$, the decimal expression of x_n can be rewritten:

$$x_n = (2^n - 1)(A + 1)$$

Therefore, factor M_n divides x_n for $n \in \mathbb{N}$.

This result can be applied to a de Bruijn rule with period $T = 2^\mu$. In this case, $n = 2^{\mu-1}$, and, then, $\phi(\mu) = M_n = 2^{2^{\mu-1}} - 1$. In this way, we obtain the factors that appear in Table 2:

- $n = 4 \Rightarrow \mu = 3$ and $\phi(3) = 2^4 - 1 = 15 = 3 \cdot 5$.
- $n = 8 \Rightarrow \mu = 4$ and $\phi(4) = 2^8 - 1 = 255 = 3 \cdot 5 \cdot 17$.
- $n = 16 \Rightarrow \mu = 5$ and $\phi(5) = 2^{16} - 1 = 65535 = 3 \cdot 5 \cdot 17 \cdot 257$.
- $n = 32 \Rightarrow \mu = 6$ and $\phi(6) = 2^{32} - 1 = 4294967295 = 3 \cdot 5 \cdot 17 \cdot 257 \cdot 65537$.

The other factors $A + 1$ are all Evil Odd Numbers [20] as we have shown empirically for low values of μ (see Section 4).

Therefore, the decimal representation of any de Bruijn rule for any μ can be decomposed into two terms, one being $\phi(\mu)$ and the other an Evil Odd Number.

Appendix B

The decimal representation of the de Bruijn rules for each μ is divisible for $\phi(\mu)$. The remainder of this division are Evil Odd Numbers. In Table 2, the Evil Odd Numbers

corresponding to $\mu = 2, 3,$ and 4 are depicted. In this appendix, we show the Evil Odd Numbers that divide the de Bruijn rules for $\mu = 5$. In total, there are 2048 Evil Odd Numbers, one for each de Bruijn rule.

Table A1. This table continues Table 2 and depicts the subset of Evil Odd Numbers for $\mu = 5$. The corresponding ϕ -value is $\phi(5) = 65,535$.

39	2599	3751	6245	7565	9127	10,203	12,729	13,977	16,431	18,993	20,127	22,689	23,941	25,531	26,573	29,173	30,311
43	2605	3763	6255	7571	9139	10,205	12,771	13,983	16,433	18,999	20,143	22,695	23,951	25,533	26,585	29,177	30,323
45	2611	3789	6257	7573	9141	10,221	12,777	13,999	16,439	19,003	20,155	22,701	23,963	25,581	26,659	29,223	30,341
51	2617	3801	6263	7589	9199	10,233	12,785	14,011	16,551	19,053	20,175	22,713	23,965	25,593	26,665	29,229	30,353
57	2623	3807	6267	7593	9211	10,403	12,837	14,021	16,555	19,065	20,187	22,719	23,969	25,601	26,683	29,235	30,359
63	2671	3823	6309	7599	9213	10,409	12,849	14,031	16,557	19,071	20,231	22,755	23,975	25,607	26,727	29,241	30,375
65	2683	3835	6313	7601	9219	10,427	12,855	14,033	16,563	19,111	20,237	22,757	23,981	25,613	26,731	29,247	30,387
169	2725	3845	6319	7611	9225	10,471	12,903	14,039	16,569	19,117	20,243	22,767	23,987	25,625	26,733	29,285	30,407
175	2735	3855	6321	7613	9243	10,475	12,915	14,043	16,575	19,123	20,245	22,769	23,989	25,631	26,739	29,295	30,419
177	2737	3857	6327	7619	9255	10,477	12,967	14,055	16,679	19,129	20,249	22,775	23,993	25,635	26,745	29,297	30,469
183	2743	3867	6369	7625	9259	10,483	12,973	14,067	16,683	19,135	20,261	22,779	24,001	25,637	26,751	29,303	30,479
293	2747	3869	6379	7633	9261	10,489	12,979	14,087	16,685	19,183	20,273	22,823	24,007	25,647	26,913	29,307	30,481
297	2797	3885	6387	7649	9267	10,495	12,985	14,099	16,691	19,195	20,303	22,827	24,013	25,649	26,923	29,349	30,491
303	2809	3897	6435	7655	9273	10,657	12,991	14,101	16,693	19,239	20,315	22,829	24,019	25,655	26,937	29,361	30,493
305	2815	3917	6437	7661	9279	10,667	13,029	14,117	16,805	19,245	20,317	22,835	24,021	25,659	26,981	29,367	30,509
315	2853	3929	6447	7667	9287	10,681	13,059	14,129	16,809	19,251	20,333	22,837	24,025	25,669	26,985	29,415	30,521
317	2863	3975	6459	7669	9291	10,725	13,041	14,149	16,815	19,253	20,345	22,883	24,077	25,673	26,991	29,427	30,535
423	2865	3981	6461	7673	9293	10,729	13,047	14,161	16,817	19,257	20,357	22,889	24,089	25,679	26,993	29,477	30,541
427	2875	3987	6497	7685	9299	10,735	13,051	14,213	16,827	19,311	20,367	22,897	24,095	25,681	27,003	29,487	30,547
429	2877	3989	6503	7697	9305	10,737	13,095	14,223	16,829	19,323	20,369	22,947	24,111	25,687	27,005	29,489	30,549
435	2925	3993	6509	7703	9311	10,747	13,107	14,225	16,941	19,325	20,379	22,949	24,123	25,689	27,175	29,499	30,553
437	2937	4005	6515	7731	9351	10,919	13,157	14,237	16,959	19,375	20,397	22,971	24,143	25,709	27,187	29,543	30,577
559	2983	4017	6521	7751	9357	10,925	13,169	14,253	17,071	19,377	20,409	22,973	24,145	25,715	27,193	29,549	30,599
575	2989	4047	6521	7751	9357	10,925	13,169	14,253	17,071	19,377	20,409	22,973	24,145	25,715	27,193	29,549	30,599
685	2995	4059	6567	7763	9369	10,931	13,221	14,265	17,083	19,387	20,429	23,009	24,151	25,721	27,199	29,555	30,611
697	2997	4061	6571	7821	9375	10,937	13,231	14,279	17,199	19,389	20,441	23,015	24,155	25,727	27,247	29,557	30,613
703	3001	4077	6573	7833	9379	10,943	13,233	14,285	17,211	19,437	20,513	23,021	24,167	25,731	27,259	29,561	30,629
813	3055	4089	6579	7839	9381	10,991	13,243	14,291	17,213	19,449	20,523	23,027	24,179	25,737	27,259	29,607	30,641
825	3067	4131	6581	7855	9391	11,003	13,245	14,293	17,325	19,457	20,531	23,029	24,197	25,755	27,439	29,619	30,661
943	3069	4133	6627	7867	9393	11,173	13,287	14,297	17,337	19,467	20,643	23,033	24,209	25,767	27,441	29,621	30,663
955	3075	4143	6633	7877	9399	11,183	13,293	14,309	17,413	19,475	20,645	23,085	24,215	25,771	27,451	29,669	30,753
957	3081	4145	6641	7887	9403	11,185	13,299	14,321	17,417	19,491	20,655	23,097	24,231	25,773	27,453	29,681	30,759
1031	3099	4151	6693	7889	9413	11,195	13,301	14,497	17,423	19,493	20,657	23,103	24,243	25,779	27,501	29,699	30,765
1035	3111	4155	6705	7895	9417	11,197	13,305	14,503	17,425	19,503	20,663	23,141	24,263	25,785	27,513	29,705	30,777
1037	3115	4257	6711	7899	9423	11,245	13,313	14,509	17,431	19,505	20,667	23,151	24,275	25,791	27,651	29,723	30,783
1043	3117	4267	6759	7911	9425	11,257	13,319	14,521	17,447	19,511	20,771	23,153	24,335	25,799	27,657	29,735	30,819
1049	3123	4275	6771	7923	9431	11,395	13,325	14,527	17,451	19,515	20,777	23,159	24,347	25,803	27,675	29,739	30,821
1055	3129	4385	6829	7943	9447	11,401	13,337	14,563	17,453	19,525	20,785	23,163	24,349	25,805	27,687	29,741	30,831
1157	3135	4391	6841	7955	9451	11,419	13,343	14,565	17,459	19,529	20,897	23,205	24,365	25,811	27,691	29,747	30,833
1161	3143	4397	6847	7957	9453	11,431	13,347	14,575	17,465	19,535	20,903	23,217	24,377	25,817	27,693	29,753	30,839
1167	3147	4403	6885	7973	9459	11,435	13,349	14,577	17,471	19,537	20,909	23,223	24,391	25,823	27,699	29,759	30,843
1169	3149	4405	6895	7985	9465	11,437	13,359	14,583	17,543	19,543	20,915	23,271	24,397	25,859	27,709	29,761	31,011
1175	3155	4409	6897	8005	9471	11,443	13,361	14,587	17,547	19,559	20,917	23,283	24,403	25,861	27,711	29,771	31,013
1191	3161	4515	6903	8017	9473	11,449	13,367	14,755	17,549	19,563	20,921	23,343	24,405	25,871	27,719	29,779	31,023
1195	3167	4521	6907	8079	9483	11,455	13,371	14,757	17,555	19,565	21,029	23,355	24,409	25,883	27,723	29,795	31,035
1197	3201	4529	6951	8091	9497	11,463	13,379	14,767	17,561	19,571	21,039	23,357	24,421	25,885	27,725	29,797	31,037
1203	3211	4647	6963	8093	9509	11,467	13,381	14,779	17,567	19,577	21,041	23,399	24,433	25,889	27,731	29,807	31,073
1209	3219	4659	6965	8109	9513	11,469	13,391	14,781	17,671	19,583	21,047	23,405	24,455	25,895	27,737	29,809	31,079
1215	3235	4773	7013	8121	9519	11,475	13,393	14,817	17,675	19,587	21,051	23,411	24,467	25,901	27,743	29,815	31,085
1285	3237	4783	7025	8135	9521	11,481	13,399	14,823	17,677	19,593	21,159	23,413	24,469	25,907	27,905	29,819	31,091
1289	3247	4785	7087	8141	9531	11,487	13,403	14,829	17,683	19,611	21,171	23,417	24,485	25,909	27,915	29,825	31,093
1295	3249	4791	7099	8147	9533	11,649	13,443	14,835	17,685	19,623	21,287	23,463	24,497	25,913	27,929	29,831	31,097
1297	3255	4795	7101	8149	9541	11,659	13,449	14,837	17,701	19,627	21,293	23,475	24,517	25,927	27,941	29,837	31,269
1307	3259	4901	7143	8153	9545	11,673	13,467	14,841	17,705	19,629	21,299	23,477	24,529	25,931	27,945	29,849	31,281
1309	3269	4913	7149	8165	9551	11,685	13,479	15,013	17,711	19,635	21,301	23,525	24,609	25,933	27,951	29,855	31,287
1415	3273	5031	7155	8177	9553	11,689	13,483	15,025	17,713	19,641	21,305	23,537	24,615	25,939	27,953	29,859	31,335
1419	3279	5037	7157	8227	9563	11,695	13,485	15,031	17,723	19,647	21,413	23,557	24,621	25,941	27,963	29,861	31,347
1421	3281	5043	7161	8233	9565	11,697	13,491	15,079	17,725	19,655	21,425	23,561	24,633	25,957	27,965	29,871	31,527
1427	3287	5045	7169	8251	9603	11,707	13,497	15,091	17,797	19,659	21,505	23,567	24,639	25,961	27,973	29,873	31,539
1429	3303	5049	7175	8295	9605	11,709	13,503	15,271	17,801	19,661	21,515	23,569	24,677	25,967	27,977	29,879	31,541
1445	3307	5123	7181	8299	9615	11,717	13,505	15,283	17,807	19,667	21,523	23,575	24,681	25,969	27,983	29,883	31,589
1449	3309	5125	7193	8301	9627	11,721	13,515	15,285	17,809	19,673	21,539	23,591	24,687	25,979	27,985	29,891	31,601
1455	3315	5135	7199	8307	9629	11,727	13,523	15,333	17,819	19,679	21,541	23,595	24,689	25,981	27,995	29,893	31,745
1457	3321	5137	7203	8													

Table A1. Cont.

2295	3567	5787	7429	8755	9951	12,457	13,769	15,829	18,729	19,931	22,163	23,827	25,209	26,331	28,913	30,145	32,261
2337	3569	5799	7439	8761	9967	12,475	13,777	15,833	18,737	19,933	22,279	23,829	25,215	26,375	28,919	30,151	32,273
2347	3579	5811	7451	8767	9979	12,513	13,793	16,005	18,791	19,973	22,285	23,845	25,255	26,387	28,923	30,157	32,279
2361	3581	5893	7453	8815	9989	12,523	13,799	16,017	18,795	19,983	22,291	23,849	25,261	26,389	28,961	30,163	32,295
2405	3591	5905	7457	8827	9999	12,531	13,805	16,023	18,797	19,985	22,293	23,855	25,267	26,405	28,971	30,165	32,307
2409	3597	6029	7463	8869	10,001	12,579	13,811	16,039	18,803	19,991	22,297	23,857	25,273	26,417	28,985	30,169	32,339
2415	3603	6029	7469	8881	10,011	12,581	13,813	16,051	18,805	19,995	22,309	23,867	25,279	26,447	29,027	30,215	32,339
2417	3609	6035	7475	8887	10,013	12,591	13,817	16,071	18,849	20,007	22,321	23,869	25,327	26,459	29,033	30,221	32,519
2427	3615	6037	7477	8941	10,019	12,603	13,829	16,083	18,859	20,019	22,405	23,875	25,339	26,461	29,041	30,227	32,531
2429	3631	6041	7481	8953	10,041	12,605	13,841	16,263	18,873	20,045	22,417	23,881	25,383	26,477	29,091	30,233	32,533
2467	3643	6053	7489	8959	10,061	12,641	13,847	16,275	18,917	20,057	22,565	23,889	25,395	26,489	29,093	30,239	32,549
2473	3663	6065	7495	8997	10,073	12,647	13,863	16,277	18,921	20,063	22,569	23,905	25,397	26,501	29,103	30,255	32,561
2481	3675	6177	7501	9007	10,119	12,653	13,875	16,293	18,927	20,079	22,575	23,911	25,455	26,511	29,115	30,267	32,581
2535	3717	6183	7507	9009	10,131	12,659	13,895	16,305	18,929	20,091	22,577	23,917	25,467	26,513	29,117	30,277	32,593
2539	3727	6189	7509	9019	10,133	12,661	13,907	16,325	18,939	20,103	22,583	23,923	25,469	26,523	29,153	30,287	32,599
2541	3729	6201	7513	9021	10,149	12,665	13,959	16,337	18,941	20,109	22,625	23,925	25,509	26,525	29,159	30,289	32,599
2547	3735	6207	7519	9069	10,161	12,705	13,965	16,421	18,981	20,115	22,635	23,929	25,519	26,541	29,165	30,295	32,599
2549	3739	6243	7563	9081	10,191	12,715	13,971	16,425	18,991	20,121	22,643	23,939	25,521	26,553	29,171	30,299	32,599

Appendix C

As an application of the methodology presented in this paper, we can generate sequences with large periods, $T = 2^\mu$, by tuning the memory parameter μ . We have proven that, once μ is chosen, all de Bruijn rules share the same divisor: $\phi(\mu) = 2^{\mu-1} - 1$, and the remainders are Evil Odd Numbers. Therefore, to obtain a candidate to de Bruijn rule, take a very large Evil Odd Number and multiply it by $\phi(\mu)$. Check the resulting rule and, if valid, apply the rule to any initial binary sequence of length μ to obtain the de Bruijn sequence.

Due to computational limitations, we can only offer an example for $\mu = 8$, which provides a sequence of period of $T = 256$. For this case,

$$\phi(8) = 2^{2^7} - 1 = 340282366920938463463374607431768211455$$

and take the Evil Odd Number 155640396308704138405661716133499575.

Multiply both to obtain the decimal representation of the de Bruijn rule:

$$R_8 = 52961682444438738040038706846647584952275525588128484521019054507752631625$$

The binary representation of this de Bruijn rule is

```
000000000011101111110011010100111111011100101001010000100111111
1001100000011011011001001111010110000001000001001101001010110110
1111111111100010000001100101011000000100011010110101111011000000
011001111110010010011011000010100111111011110110010110101001001
```

Applying this rule to the initial configuration 00000000 yields the following de Bruijn sequence:

```
0000000010001111101100111000111011011100100010000110000001110011
000101101010101011011000110011011010011010000010101110100010100111
1000100111010111100111111010010111000001101111010100100110010100
011010110000111101110111111100001011111001011001001010100001001
```

This sequence of period $T = 256$ repeats infinitely under the application of the above de Bruijn rule.

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