THE HILTON-SPENCER CYCLE THEOREMS VIA KATONA’S SHADOW INTERSECTION THEOREM

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Abstract

A family $\mathcal{A}$ of sets is said to be intersecting if every two sets in $\mathcal{A}$ intersect. An intersecting family is said to be trivial if its sets have a common element. A graph $G$ is said to be $r$-EKR if at least one of the largest intersecting families of independent $r$-element sets of $G$ is trivial. Let $\alpha(G)$ and $\omega(G)$ denote the independence number and the clique number of $G$, respectively. Hilton and Spencer recently showed that if $G$ is the vertex-disjoint union of a cycle $C$ raised to the power $k$ and $s$ cycles $C, \ldots, C$ raised to the powers $k_1, \ldots, k_s$, respectively, $1 \leq r \leq \alpha(G)$, and

$$\min (\omega(C^{k_1}), \ldots, \omega(C^{k_s})) \geq \omega(C^k),$$

then $G$ is $r$-EKR. They had shown that the same holds if $C$ is replaced by a path $P$ and the condition on the clique numbers is relaxed to

$$\min (\omega(C^{k_1}), \ldots, \omega(C^{k_s})) \geq \omega(P^k).$$

We use the classical Shadow Intersection Theorem of Katona to obtain a significantly shorter proof of each result for the case where the inequality for the minimum clique number is strict.

Keywords: cycle, independent set, intersecting family, Erdős-Ko-Rado theorem, Hilton-Spencer theorem, Katona’s shadow intersection theorem.

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1. Introduction

Unless stated otherwise, we shall use small letters such as $x$ to denote non-negative integers or elements of a set, and calligraphic letters such as $\mathcal{F}$ to denote families (sets whose members are sets themselves). The set of positive integers is denoted by $\mathbb{N}$. The set $\{i \in \mathbb{N} : m \leq i \leq n\}$ is denoted by $[m,n]$, $[1,n]$ is abbreviated to $[n]$, and $[0]$ is taken to be the empty set $\emptyset$. For a set $X$, the power set of $X$ (that is, $\mathcal{P}(X)$) is denoted by $2^X$. The family of $r$-element subsets of $X$ is denoted by $\binom{X}{r}$. The family of $r$-element sets in a family $\mathcal{F}$ is denoted by $\mathcal{F}^r$. If $\mathcal{F} \subseteq 2^X$ and $x \in X$, then the family $\{A \in \mathcal{F} : x \in A\}$ is denoted by $\mathcal{F}(x)$ and called the star of $\mathcal{F}$ with centre $x$.

A family $\mathcal{A}$ is said to be intersecting if for every $A, B \in \mathcal{A}$, $A$ and $B$ intersect (that is, $A \cap B \neq \emptyset$). The stars of a family $\mathcal{F}$ are among the simplest intersecting subfamilies of $\mathcal{F}$. We say that $\mathcal{F}$ has the star property if at least one of the largest intersecting subfamilies of $\mathcal{F}$ is a star of $\mathcal{F}$.

Determining the size of a largest intersecting subfamily of a given family $\mathcal{F}$ is one of the most popular endeavours in extremal set theory. This started in [11], which features the classical result known as the Erdős-Ko-Rado (EKR) Theorem. The EKR Theorem states that if $r \leq n/2$ and $\mathcal{A}$ is an intersecting subfamily of $\binom{[n]}{r}$, then $|\mathcal{A}| \leq \binom{n-1}{r-1}$. Thus, $\binom{[n]}{r}$ has the star property for $r \leq n/2$ (clearly, for $n/2 < r \leq n$, $\binom{[n]}{r}$ itself is intersecting). There are various proofs of the EKR Theorem (see [9,16,24,25,27]), two of which are particularly short and beautiful: Katona’s [25], which introduced the elegant cycle method, and Daykin’s [9], using the fundamental Kruskal-Katona Theorem [26,28]. The EKR Theorem gave rise to some of the highlights in extremal set theory [1,14,27,30] and inspired many variants and generalizations; see [4,10,13,15,17,21,22].

Let $G$ be a graph with vertex set $V(G)$ and edge set $E(G)$. We may represent an edge $\{v, w\}$ by $vw$. A subset $I$ of $V(G)$ is an independent set of $G$ if $vw \notin E(G)$ for every $v, w \in I$. Let $\mathcal{I}_G$ denote the family of independent sets of $G$. An independent set $J$ of $G$ is maximal if $J \not\subseteq I$ for each independent set $I$ of $G$ such that $I \neq J$. The size of a smallest maximal independent set of $G$ is denoted by $\mu(G)$. The size of a largest independent set of $G$ is denoted by $\omega(G)$. A subset $X$ of $V(G)$ is a clique of $G$ if $vw \in E(G)$ for every $v, w \in X$ with $v \neq w$. The size of a largest clique of $G$ is called the clique number of $G$ and denoted by $\omega(G)$.

Holroyd and Talbot introduced the problem of determining whether $\mathcal{I}_G^{(r)}$ has the star property for a given graph $G$ and an integer $r \geq 1$. Following their terminology, a graph $G$ is said to be $r$-EKR if $\mathcal{I}_G^{(r)}$ has the star property. The Holroyd-Talbot (HT) Conjecture [22, Conjecture 7] claims that $G$ is $r$-EKR if $\mu(G) \geq 2r$. This was verified by Borg [2] for $\mu(G)$ sufficiently large depending on $r$ (see also [6, Lemma 4.4 and Theorem 1.4]). By the EKR Theorem, the
conjecture is true if \( G \) has no edges. The HT Conjecture has been verified for several classes of graphs \([2, 3, 7, 8, 12, 18-23, 29, 31]\). As demonstrated in \([8]\), for \( r > \mu(G)/2 \), whether \( G \) is \( r \)-EKR or not depends on \( G \) and \( r \) (both cases are possible). Naturally, graphs \( G \) of particular interest are those that are \( r \)-EKR for all \( r \leq \alpha(G) \).

For \( n \geq 1 \), the graphs \( ([n], \binom{[n]}{2}) \) and \( ([n], \{\{i, i + 1\} : i \in [n - 1]\}) \) are denoted by \( K_n \) and \( P_n \), respectively. For \( n \geq 3 \), \( ([n], E(P_n) \cup \{\{n, 1\}\}) \) is denoted by \( C_n \). A copy of \( K_n \) is called a complete graph. A copy \( P_n \) is called an \( n \)-path or simply a path, and a vertex of \( P \) is called an end-vertex if it is not adjacent to more than one vertex. A copy of \( C_n \) is called an \( n \)-cycle or simply a cycle (normally, this terminology is used for \( n \geq 3 \), but we may include the case \( n = 2 \)). If \( H \) is a subgraph of a graph \( G \) (that is, \( V(H) \subseteq V(G) \) and \( E(H) \subseteq E(G) \)), then we say that \( G \) contains \( H \). For \( v, w \in V(G) \), the distance \( d_G(v, w) \) is \( \min\{k : v, w \in V(P) \text{ for some } (k + 1) \text{-path } P \text{ contained by } G\} \). The \( k \)-th power of \( G \), denoted by \( G^k \), is the graph with vertex set \( V(G) \) and edge set \( \{vw : v, w \in V(G), 1 \leq d_G(v, w) \leq k\} \); \( G^k \) is also referred to as \( G \) raised to the power \( k \).

Note that \( P_n^k = K_n \) for \( n \leq k + 1 \), and \( C_n^k = K_n \) for \( n \leq 2k + 1 \). Also note that \( \omega(P_n^k) = k + 1 \) if \( n \geq k + 1 \), \( \omega(P_n^k) = n \) if \( n \leq k \), \( \omega(C_n^k) = k + 1 \) if \( n \geq 2k + 2 \), \( \omega(C_n^k) = n \) if \( n \leq 2k + 1 \), \( \alpha(P_n^k) = \lfloor n/(k + 1) \rfloor \), \( \alpha(C_n^k) = \lfloor n/(k + 1) \rfloor \) if \( n \geq k + 1 \), and \( \alpha(C_n^k) = 1 \) if \( 2 \leq n \leq k + 1 \).

The following remarkable analogue of the EKR theorem was obtained by Talbot \([29]\).

**Theorem 1** \([29]\). For \( 1 \leq r \leq \alpha(C_n^k) \), \( C_n^k \) is \( r \)-EKR.

Talbot introduced a compression technique to prove Theorem 1. In vague terms, his compression technique rotates anticlockwise the elements of the independent sets of the intersecting family which are distinct from a specified vertex (see Section 2).

If \( G, G_1, \ldots, G_k \) are graphs such that the vertex sets of \( G_1, \ldots, G_k \) are pairwise disjoint and \( G = \left( \bigcup_{i=1}^{k} V(G_i), \bigcup_{i=1}^{k} E(G_i) \right) \), then \( G \) is said to be the disjoint union of \( G_1, \ldots, G_k \), and \( G_1, \ldots, G_k \) are said to be vertex-disjoint.

Inspired by the work of Talbot, Hilton and Spencer \([19]\) went on to prove the following result, which is stated with notation used in \([19, 20]\).

**Theorem 2** \([19]\). If \( G \) is the disjoint union of a path \( P \) raised to the power \( k \) and \( s \) cycles \( C_1, \ldots, C_s \) raised to the powers \( k_1, \ldots, k_s \), respectively, \( 1 \leq r \leq \alpha(G) \), and

\[
\min \left( \omega\left( C_1^{k_1}\right), \ldots, \omega\left( C_s^{k_s}\right) \right) \geq \omega(P^k),
\]

then \( G \) is \( r \)-EKR. Moreover, for any end-vertex \( x \) of \( P \), \( \mathcal{I}_{G^{(r)}}(x) \) is a largest intersecting subfamily of \( \mathcal{I}_{G^{(r)}} \).
However, it was desired to obtain a generalization of Theorem 1, and this was eventually achieved by Hilton and Spencer [20] with the following theorem.

**Theorem 3** [20]. If $G$ is the disjoint union of $s + 1$ cycles $C, C_1, \ldots, C_s$ raised to the powers $k, k_1, \ldots, k_s$, respectively, $1 \leq r \leq \alpha(G)$, and

\[
\min(\omega(C^{k_1}), \ldots, \omega(C^{k_s})) \geq \omega(C^k),
\]

then $G$ is $r$-EKR. Moreover, for any $x \in V(C)$, $\mathcal{I}_G(r)(x)$ is a largest intersecting subfamily of $\mathcal{I}_G(r)$.

Hilton and Spencer [20] conjectured that every disjoint union of powers of cycles is $r$-EKR.

The proof of Theorem 3 is also inspired by Talbot’s proof of Theorem 1. In particular, an essential ingredient in the proof of Theorem 3 is the use of induction argument.

In this paper, we give a significantly shorter and simpler proof of Theorem 2 and of Theorem 3, except for the cases of equality in conditions (1) and (2), respectively. In other words, we prove the following two results.

**Theorem 4.** Theorem 2 is true if the inequality in (1) is strict.

**Theorem 5.** Theorem 3 is true if the inequality in (2) is strict.

Our argument is based on the Shadow Intersection Theorem of Katona [27], hence demonstrating yet another application of this classical and useful result in extremal set theory.

2. The New Proof

Let $P, C, \ldots, sC$ be as in Theorem 2. Let $p = |V(P)|$ and $c_i = |V(iC)|$. For $1 \leq i \leq s$, we label the vertices of $iC$ by $v_{1,i}, v_{2,i}, \ldots, v_{c_i,i}$, where $E(iC) = \{v_{j,i}v_{j+1,i}: j \in [c_i-1]\} \cup \{v_{c_i,i}v_{1,i}\}$. We may assume that $P = P_p$, that is, $V(P) = [p]$ and $E(P) = \{(i,i+1): i \in [p-1]\}$. Let $H$ be the union of $C^{k_1}, \ldots, C^{k_s}$, and let $f : V(H) \to V(H)$ be the bijection given by

\[
f(v_{c_i,i}) = v_1,i \quad \text{and} \quad f(v_{j,i}) = v_{j+1,i} \quad \text{for} \quad 1 \leq i \leq s \quad \text{and} \quad 1 \leq j \leq c_i - 1.
\]

Let $f^1 = f$, and for any integer $t \geq 2$, let $f^t = f \circ f^{t-1}$ and $f^{-t} = f^{-1} \circ f^{-(t-1)}$. Note that for $t \geq 1$, one can think of $f^t$ as $t$ clockwise rotations, and of $f^{-t}$ as $t$ anticlockwise rotations. For $I \in \mathcal{I}_H$, we denote the set $\{f^t(x): x \in I\}$ by $f^t(I)$, and for $A \subseteq \mathcal{I}_H$, we denote the family $\{f^t(A): A \in \mathcal{A}\}$ by $f^t(A)$. The notation $f^{-t}(I)$ and $f^{-t}(A)$ is defined similarly.

The new argument presented in this paper lies entirely in the proof of the following important case, which both Theorem 4 and Theorem 5 pivot on.
Lemma 6. Theorem 2 is true if $P^k$ is a complete graph and the inequality in (1) is strict.

As shown in this section, Theorem 4 follows from Lemma 6 by applying the compression method in [21], and Theorem 5 follows from Lemma 6 by applying the same compression method of Talbot in [29].

We now start working towards the proof of Lemma 6.

Let $A$ be a family of $r$-element sets. The shadow of $A$, denoted by $\partial A$, is the family $\bigcup_{A \in A} \partial_{A} (\omega_{A+1})$. A special case of Katona’s Shadow Intersection Theorem [27] is that

$$|A| \leq |\partial A| \quad \text{if } A \text{ is intersecting.}$$

Proof of Lemma 6. Suppose that $P^k$ is a complete graph. Then, $\omega(P^k) = p$. Suppose $\min (\omega(C^k_1), \ldots, \omega(C^k_s)) > p$. Note that this implies that for every $i \in [s]$, $c_i \geq p + 1$ and, for every $v_i, v_j \in V(C^k_i)$,

$$|v_i| \leq |v_j| \quad \text{for } 1 \leq i, j \leq s.$$ 

It is worth pointing out that the strict inequality is only used for (4), from which we obtain Claim 7.

Let $A$ be an intersecting subfamily of $I_{G}^{(r)}$. Recall that $V(P^k) = [p]$. Let $\mathcal{A}_0 = \{ A \in A : A \cap [p] = \emptyset \}$ and $\mathcal{A}_i = \{ A \in A : A \cap [p] = \{i\} \}$ for $1 \leq i \leq p$. Since $P^k$ is a complete graph, the families $\mathcal{A}_0, \mathcal{A}_1, \ldots, \mathcal{A}_p$ partition $A$. Let $\mathcal{A}_0' = \mathcal{A}_0$ and $\mathcal{A}_i' = \{ A \setminus \{i\} : A \in \mathcal{A}_i \}$ for $1 \leq i \leq p$. Since $A$ is intersecting, for any $i, j \in \{0\} \cup [p]$ with $i \neq j$, each set in $\mathcal{A}_i'$ intersects each set in $\mathcal{A}_j'$.

Claim 7. The families $\partial \mathcal{A}_0, f^1(\mathcal{A}_1'), f^2(\mathcal{A}_2'), \ldots, f^p(\mathcal{A}_p')$ are pairwise disjoint.

Proof. Suppose $B \in f^i(\mathcal{A}_i') \cap f^j(\mathcal{A}_j')$ for some $i, j \in [p]$ with $i < j$. Then, $B = f^i(\mathcal{A}_i) = f^j(\mathcal{A}_j)$ for some $A_i \in \mathcal{A}_i$ and $A_j \in \mathcal{A}_j$. Thus, $A_i = f^{j-i}(A_j)$. Since $1 \leq j - i < p$, (4) gives us $A_i \cap A_j = \emptyset$, but this contradicts (5). Therefore, $f^1(\mathcal{A}_1'), f^2(\mathcal{A}_2'), \ldots, f^p(\mathcal{A}_p')$ are pairwise disjoint.

Suppose $B \in \partial \mathcal{A}_0 \cap f^i(\mathcal{A}_i')$ for some $i \in [p]$. Then, $C \setminus \{x\} = B = f^i(\mathcal{A}_i)$ for some $C \in \mathcal{A}_0$, $x \in C$, and $A_i \in \mathcal{A}_i'$. Since $1 \leq i \leq p$, (4) gives us $C \cap A_i = \emptyset$, but this contradicts (5). The claim follows.

Let $\mathcal{A}_0^* = \{ A \cup \{1\} : A \in \partial \mathcal{A}_0 \}$ and $\mathcal{A}_i^* = \{ A \cup \{1\} : A \in f^i(\mathcal{A}_i') \}$ for $1 \leq i \leq p$. For $0 \leq i \leq p$, $\mathcal{A}_i^* \subseteq I_{G}^{(r)}(1)$. By Claim 7, $\sum_{i=0}^{p} |\mathcal{A}_i^*| = |\bigcup_{i=0}^{p} \mathcal{A}_i^*| \leq |I_{G}^{(r)}(1)|$. By (3), $|A| \leq |\partial(A)0| = |\mathcal{A}_0^*|$. We have

$$|A| = \sum_{i=0}^{p} |\mathcal{A}_i| = |\mathcal{A}_0| + \sum_{i=1}^{p} |\mathcal{A}_i^*| \leq \sum_{i=0}^{p} |\mathcal{A}_i^*| \leq |I_{G}^{(r)}(1)|,$$

and the lemma is proved. \(\blacksquare\)
The full Theorem 4 is now obtained by the line of argument laid out in [21],
hence making use of established facts regarding compressions on independent
sets.

For any edge \(uv\) of a graph \(G\), let \(\delta_{u,v} : \mathcal{I}_G \to \mathcal{I}_G\) be defined by
\[
\delta_{u,v}(A) = \begin{cases} 
(A \setminus \{v\}) \cup \{u\} & \text{if } v \in A, u \notin A, \text{ and } (A \setminus \{v\}) \cup \{u\} \in \mathcal{I}_G; \\
A & \text{otherwise,}
\end{cases}
\]
and let \(\Delta_{u,v} : 2^{\mathcal{I}_G} \to 2^{\mathcal{I}_G}\) be the \textit{compression operation} (also called a \textit{shifting operation}) defined by
\[
\Delta_{u,v}(A) = \{\delta_{u,v}(A) : A \in \mathcal{A}\} \cup \{A \in \mathcal{A} : \delta_{u,v}(A) \in \mathcal{A}\}.
\]
It is well known, and easy to see, that
\[
|\Delta_{u,v}(A)| = |A|
\]
(see [11, 15]). For any \(x \in V(G)\), let \(N_G(x)\) denote the set \(\{y \in V(G) : xy \in E(G)\}\). The following is given by [8, Lemma 2.1] (which is actually stated for \(\mathcal{I}_G^{(r)}\) but proved for \(\mathcal{I}_G\)) and essentially originated in [21]. We omit the proof.

**Lemma 8** [8, 21]. If \(G\) is a graph, \(uv \in E(G)\), \(A\) is an intersecting subfamily
of \(\mathcal{I}_G\), \(B = \Delta_{u,v}(A)\), \(B_0 = \{B \in \mathcal{B} : v \notin B\}\), \(B_1 = \{B \in \mathcal{B} : v \in B\}\), and \(B'_1 = \{B \setminus \{v\} : B \in B_1\}\), then

(i) \(B_0\) is intersecting;

(ii) if \(|N_G(u) \setminus \{v\} \cup N_G(v)\)| \(\leq 1\), then \(B'_1\) is intersecting;

(iii) if \(|N_G(u) \setminus \{v\} \cup N_G(v)\) = 0\), then \(B_0 \cup B'_1\) is intersecting.

For a vertex \(v\) of a graph \(G\), let \(G - v\) denote the graph obtained by deleting
\(v\) (that is, \(G - v = (V(G) \setminus \{v\}, \{xy \in E(G) : x, y \notin \{v\}\})\)), and let \(G \downarrow v\) be the graph obtained by deleting \(v\) and the vertices adjacent to \(v\) (that is, \(G \downarrow v = (V(G) \setminus \{v\} \cup N_G(v), \{xy \in E(G) : x, y \notin \{v\} \cup N_G(v)\})\)).

**Proof of Theorem 4.** We use induction on \(|V(P)|\). If \(P^k\) is a complete graph,
then the result is given by Lemma 6. Note that this captures the base case
\(|V(P)| = 1\). Now suppose that \(P^k\) is not a complete graph. Then, \(|V(P)| \geq k + 2\).
If \(r = 1\), then the result is trivial. Suppose \(r > 1\). Let \(A\) be an intersecting subfamily
of \(\mathcal{I}_G^{(r)}\). Let \(u = p - 1\) and \(v = p\). Let \(B = \Delta_{u,v}(A)\), \(B_0 = \{B \in \mathcal{B} : v \notin B\}\), \(B_1 = \{B \in \mathcal{B} : v \in B\}\), and \(B'_1 = \{B \setminus \{v\} : B \in B_1\}\). By Lemma 8(i), \(B_0\) is intersecting. We have \(N_G(u) \setminus \{v\} \cup N_G(v) = \{p - k - 1\}\), so, by Lemma 8(ii), \(B'_1\) is intersecting. Let \(H_0 = P_{p-1}\) and \(H_1 = P_{p-k-1}\). Clearly, \(B_0 \subseteq \mathcal{I}_{G - v}^{(r)}\), \(B'_1 \subseteq \mathcal{I}_{G - v}^{(r)}\), \(G - v\) is the union of \(H_0^k\) and \(1C^{k_1} \cup \ldots \cup C^{k_s}\), and \(G \downarrow v\) is the union of \(H_1^k\) and \(1C^{k_1} \cup \ldots \cup C^{k_s}\). The condition \(\min(\omega(1C^{k_1}), \ldots, \omega(sC^{k_s})) > \omega(P^k)\)
in the theorem gives us \( \min(\omega(1C_k^s), \ldots, \omega(sC_k^s)) > \omega(H_0^k) \geq \omega(H_1^k) \). By the induction hypothesis, \(|B_0| \leq |I_{G-nv}^{(r)}(1)|\) and \(|B'_1| \leq |I_{G-v}^{(r-1)}(1)|\). We have

\[
|A| = |B| = |B_0| + |B'_1| \leq |I_{G-nv}^{(r)}(1)| + |I_{G-v}^{(r-1)}(1)|
\]

\[
= \left| \{ A \in I_G^{(r)} : 1 \in A, v \notin A \} \right| + \left| \{ A \in I_G^{(r)} : 1, v \in A \} \right| = |I_G^{(r)}(1)|,
\]
as required.

**Proof of Theorem 5.** We use induction on \( c = |V(C)| \). We may assume that \( C = C_c \). If \( C^k \) is a complete graph, then the result is given by Lemma 6. Note that this captures the base case \( c = 2 \). Now suppose that \( C^k \) is not a complete graph. Then, \( c \geq 2k + 2 \). If \( r = 1 \), then the result is trivial. Suppose \( r > 1 \). Let \( A \) be an intersecting subfamily of \( I_G^{(r)} \).

Let \( g : V(G) \to V(G) \) be the Talbot compression \([20,29]\) given by

\[
g(v) = v \quad \text{for } v \in V(G) \setminus V(C),
\]

\[
g(1) = 1, \quad \text{and}
\]

\[
g(1 + j) = 1 + j - 1 \quad \text{for } 1 \leq j \leq c - 1.
\]

For \( X \in I_G \) and \( X \subseteq I_G \), we use the notation \( g^i(X) \) and \( g^i(A) \) similarly to the way it is used above for \( f \). Let \( F \) be the union of \( C_{c-1}^k \) and \( 1C_{k1}^s, \ldots, sC_{ks}^s \). Let \( K \) be the union of \( C_{c-k-1}^k \) and \( 1C_{k1}^k, \ldots, sC_{ks}^s \). Let

\[
B = \{ A \in A : 1 \notin A, g(A) \in I_F^{(r)} \},
\]

\[
C = \{ A \in A : 1 \in A, g(A) \in I_F^{(r)} \},
\]

\[
D_0 = \{ A \in A : 1, k + 2 \in A \},
\]

\[
D_i = \{ A \in A : 1 + c - i, k + 2 - i \in A \} \quad \text{for } 1 \leq i \leq k.
\]

Note that these families partition \( A \). Let

\[
F = \left( g^{k+1}(E) - \{ 1 \} \right) \cup \bigcup_{i=0}^{k} \left( g^k(D_i) - \{ 1 \} \right),
\]

where \( E = g(B) \cap g(C) \) and, for any family \( G \), \( G - \{ 1 \} = \{ G \setminus \{ 1 \} : G \in G \} \).

**Claim 9** (See \([20,29]\)). The following hold

(i) \( |A| = |g(B \cup C)| + |F| \);

(ii) \( g(B \cup C) \) is an intersecting subfamily of \( I_F^{(r)} \);

(iii) \( g(F) \) is an intersecting subfamily of \( I_K^{(r-1)} \) of size \( |F| \);

(iv) \( |I_G^{(r)}(1)| = |I_F^{(r)}(1)| + |I_K^{(r-1)}(1)| \).
By the induction hypothesis and Claim 9(ii)-(iii), $|g(B\cup C)| \leq |\mathcal{I}_F^{(r)}(1)|$ and $|\mathcal{F}| = |g(\mathcal{F})| \leq |\mathcal{I}_K^{(r-1)}(1)|$. Thus, by Claim 9(i) and Claim 9(iv), we have

$$|\mathcal{A}| = |g(B\cup C)| + |\mathcal{F}| \leq |\mathcal{I}_F^{(r)}(1)| + |\mathcal{I}_K^{(r-1)}(1)| = |\mathcal{I}_0^{(r)}(1)|,$$

and the theorem is proved.

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The Hilton-Spencer Cycle Theorems Via Katona’s Shadow ...


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