Hierarchies of Function Classes
Defined by the First-Value Operator
(Extended Abstract)

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Abstract
The first-value operator assigns to any sequence of partial functions of the same type a new such function. Its domain is the union of the domains of the sequence functions, and its value at any point is just the value of the first function in the sequence which is defined at that point.

In this paper, the first-value operator is applied to establish hierarchies of classes of functions under various settings. For effective sequences of computable discrete functions, we obtain a hierarchy connected with Ershov’s one within $\Delta^0_2$. The non-effective version over real functions is connected with the degrees of discontinuity and yields a hierarchy related to Hausdorff’s difference hierarchy in the Borel class $\Delta^B_2$. Finally, the effective version over approximately computable real functions forms a hierarchy which provides a useful tool in computable analysis.

Keywords: Hierarchies of functions, degree of discontinuity, computable analysis, effective descriptive set theory, Hausdorff hierarchy, Ershov hierarchy

1 Introduction and basic notions
Let $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$ be a finite or transfinite sequence of partial functions of some type. This means that $f_\xi : A \rightarrow B$, for sets $A$ and $B$, $\alpha$ is an ordinal number, and $\xi$ runs through the set $\{\xi : \xi < \alpha\} = \{\xi : \xi \in \alpha\} = \alpha$. The
first-value operator, $\Phi$, assigns to $\mathcal{F}$ the function $\overline{f}: A \rightarrow B$ defined by

$$
\overline{f}(x) \simeq \begin{cases} 
    f_\xi(x) & \text{if } \{ \xi < \alpha : f_\xi(x) \downarrow \} \neq \emptyset \text{ and } \xi_x = \min\{ \xi < \alpha : f_\xi(x) \downarrow \}, \\
    \uparrow & \text{if } f_\xi(x) \uparrow \text{ for all } \xi < \alpha.
\end{cases}
$$

It was introduced by Epstein-Haas-Kramer [3] in order to describe the Ershov hierarchy of classes of discrete sets $M \subseteq \mathbb{N}^k$. In [6,7], we transferred this idea to Hausdorff’s hierarchy establishing a substructure of the Borel class $\Delta^B_2$, as well as to the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy within $\Delta^B_{2^\mathbb{N}}$, the effective counterpart of $\Delta^B_2$. In all these cases, emphasis was put on functions of type $f: A \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ characterizing sets as $M_f = \{ x : f(x) = 1 \}$.

In the present paper, the interest is directed to classes of functions themselves. The (minimal) length of sequences, which is needed to obtain a function by means of the first-value operator from some basic class $\mathfrak{F}$, determines the level (or degree) of that function w.r.t. $\mathfrak{F}$. This approach both yields a unifying view to some well-known concepts of classical computability theory and descriptive set theory, as well as it leads to some new features and tools concerning subjects of effective analysis.

We begin with explaining the fundamentals of the non-effective versions of first-value hierarchies. Let $\mathfrak{F}$ be a non-empty basic class of partial functions $f: A \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ characterizing sets as $M_f = \{ x : f(x) = 1 \}$.

For any ordinal number $\alpha$, put

$$
\nabla_\alpha(\mathfrak{F}) = \{ \Phi(\mathcal{F}) : \mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}, \text{ where } f_\xi \in \mathfrak{F} \text{ for all } \xi < \alpha \}.
$$

So, $\nabla_0(\mathfrak{F}) = \{ \emptyset \}$, where $\emptyset$ is the empty function, and $\nabla_1(\mathfrak{F}) = \mathfrak{F}$. Moreover,

$$
\nabla_{\alpha+1}(\mathfrak{F}) = \{ f : f(x) \simeq \begin{cases} 
    g(x) & \text{if } g(x) \downarrow, \\
    h(x) & \text{otherwise},
\end{cases} \text{ for } g \in \nabla_\alpha(\mathfrak{F}) \text{ and } h \in \mathfrak{F} \}.
$$

From $\emptyset \in \mathfrak{F}$, it follows $\nabla_\alpha(\mathfrak{F}) \subseteq \nabla_\beta(\mathfrak{F})$ whenever $\alpha \leq \beta$. If $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) \supseteq \text{dom}(f_\xi)$, then the function $f_\xi$ does not influence the result of the sequence, $\Phi(\mathcal{F})$. Thus, given a sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$, by transfinite recursion one can define a sequence $\mathcal{F}' = (f_\xi')_{\xi < \alpha'}$ such that $\alpha' \leq \alpha$, $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta') \subset \bigcup_{\eta \leq \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta')$ and $\Phi(\mathcal{F}) = \Phi(\mathcal{F}')$. So, for countable universes $A$, we can restrict ourselves to sequences $\mathcal{F}$ whose lengths $\alpha$ belong to the second number class, $\mathbb{C}_II$, which consists of all ordinal numbers of finite or countably infinite cardinality. Also if $A$ is a separable topological space and all $f \in \mathfrak{F}$ have open domains, sequences of lengths $\alpha \in \mathbb{C}_II$ are sufficient to obtain all possible results of the first-value operator applied to arbitrary sequences built of functions from $\mathfrak{F}$.

The main subject of this paper is to explore properties of linear hierarchies $(\nabla_{\alpha'}(\mathfrak{F}))_{\alpha \in \mathbb{C}_II}$, under several settings concerning the universes $A$ and the basic class $\mathfrak{F}$, possibly combined with requirements concerning the sequences $\mathcal{F}$ to which the operator $\Phi$ has to be applied. They will be indicated by upper
For a first illustration, let $A = B = \mathbb{N}$ and consider the basic classes
\[
\mathcal{F}_{\text{sing}} = \{ f : f : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}, \text{card}(f) \leq 1 \} \quad \text{and} \quad \mathcal{F}_{\text{fin}} = \{ f : f : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N}, \text{card}(f) < \omega \}.
\]
Obviously, \(\nabla_n(\mathcal{F}_{\text{sing}}) = \{ f : \text{card}(f) \leq n \}\) and \(\nabla_\alpha(\mathcal{F}_{\text{sing}}) = \{ f : f : \mathbb{N} \to \mathbb{N} \}\) for all \(\alpha \geq \omega\).

Quite analogous results hold for functions of type \(f : \mathbb{N}^k \to \mathbb{N}\), \(k \geq 1\), as well as for many other similar settings. So, the non-effective versions of first-value hierarchies over discrete universes collapse already at level \(\omega\) with the largest possible class of partial functions, even for simple basic classes \(\mathcal{F}\).

To obtain more interesting results over discrete universes, the operator \(\Phi\) will be restricted to effective sequences. This is just the subject of the next section. Then we shall consider real-valued functions over Euclidean spaces, \(f : \mathbb{R}^k \to \mathbb{R}\). The non-effective setting studied in Section 3 provides the basic background of the effective version which is elaborated in Section 4.

### 2 The Ershov hierarchy for discrete functions

Now we are going to study the first-value operator on effective sequences of computable functions of type \(f : \mathbb{N}^k \to \mathbb{N}\). The related notions and results are essentially known from the recursion theoretic setting around Ershov’s hierarchy, cf. [3].

Effectivity for transfinite sequences is defined by means of constructive ordinals. We report some fundamental facts and denotations employed in the sequel. For more details, the reader may consult [16]. Let \((\phi_n : n \in \mathbb{N})\) be the Kleene numbering of the partial recursive functions.

A naming system (of ordinals), \(S\), is given by a numbering \(\nu_S : \mathbb{N} \to \text{C}_\text{II}\) such that

- \(\text{ran}(\nu_S)\) is an initial segment of ordinals, \(\text{ran}(\nu_S) = \alpha = \{ \xi : \xi < \alpha \}\) for some \(\alpha \in \text{C}_\text{II}\);
- for any \(n \in \text{dom}(\nu_S)\), it is decidable (by a partial recursive function \(k_S\)) whether \(\nu_S(n) = 0\) or whether \(\nu_S(n)\) is a successor or a limit number;
- for any number \(n\), where \(\nu_S(n)\) is a successor, a number \(n'\) is computable (by a partial recursive function \(p_S\)) such that \(n \in \nu_S^{-1}(\nu_S(n') + 1)\);
- and for any name \(n \in \nu_S^{-1}(\lambda)\) of a limit number \(\lambda\), an index \(n'\) is computable (by a partial recursive function \(q_S\)) such that \(\phi_{n'}\) is a total function and \((\nu_S(\phi_{n'}(m)))_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) is an increasing sequence of ordinals converging to \(\lambda\).

More precisely, \(S = (\nu_S, k_S, p_S, q_S)\). An ordinal \(\alpha \in \text{C}_\text{II}\) is called con-
structural iff there is a naming system $S$ for which $\alpha \in \text{ran}(\nu_S)$. $S$ is called recursively related iff the set \{$(n, n') : n, n' \in \text{dom}(\nu_S), \nu_S(n) \leq \nu_S(n')$\} is recursive, it is called univalent iff $\nu_S$ is injective. To any constructive ordinal $\alpha$, there is a recursively related, univalent (briefly, r.r.u.) system $S$ assigning a name to that ordinal. So we can restrict ourselves to such special naming systems which are denoted in the form $\alpha/S$. For $\alpha \leq \omega$ the canonical naming system with the identical mapping as numbering is always used, w.l.o.g.

For a naming system $S$, $S$-computability of a function $f : \mathbb{N}^k \times C_{\Pi} \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$, $k \in \mathbb{N}$, means that there is a recursive function $\varphi : \mathbb{N}^k \times \mathbb{N} \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ such that $\varphi(\bar{x}, n) \simeq f(\bar{x}, \nu_S(n))$ for all $\bar{x} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ and $n \in \text{dom}(\nu_S)$. For a naming system $\alpha/S$, an $\alpha$-sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$ of functions $f_\xi : \mathbb{N}^k \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ is said to be $S$-computable iff there is an $S$-computable function $\overline{f} : \mathbb{N}^k \times C_{\Pi} \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ such that $\overline{f}(\bar{x}, \xi) \simeq f_\xi(\bar{x})$ for all $\bar{x} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ and all ordinals $\xi < \alpha$. Then, if $S$ is recursively related, the domain of the function $\Phi(\mathcal{F})$ is r.e.: $\text{dom}(\Phi(\mathcal{F})) = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} \text{dom}(f_\xi) \in \Sigma^0_1$.

A function $f : \mathbb{N}^k \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ is called $\alpha/S$-recursive iff $f = \Phi(\mathcal{F})$ for an $S$-computable $\alpha$-sequence $\mathcal{F}$ of $k$-ary partial recursive functions; $f$ is said to be $\alpha$-recursive iff it is $\alpha/S$-recursive for some r.r.u. naming system $\alpha/S$. So we get the following Ershov classes of functions, in the notation-dependent and the notation-independent version, i.e., with and without “$/S$”, respectively:

$$\nabla^E_{\alpha/S} = \{f : f$ is an $\alpha$/-$S$-recursive function from some $\mathbb{N}^k$ into $\mathbb{N}\}.$$

Obviously, $\nabla^E_{\alpha/S} \subseteq \nabla^E_{(\alpha+1)/S}$ if $S$ is a naming system for $\alpha + 1$ too. Let

$$\nabla^E_{<\alpha/S} = \bigcup_{\beta < \alpha} \nabla^E_{\beta/S}.$$

**Proposition 2.1** For all r.r.u. naming systems $(\alpha + 1)/S$ and $\lambda/S$, with limit numbers $\lambda$,

$$\nabla^E_{\alpha/S} \subset \nabla^E_{(\alpha+1)/S} \quad \text{and} \quad \nabla^E_{<\lambda/S} \subset \nabla^E_{\lambda/S}.$$

This follows immediately from analog results for the classes $\Delta^E_{\alpha/S}$ of the original Ershov hierarchy, cf. [4,3,7]. These classes consist of the so-called $\alpha/S$-recursive subsets of $\mathbb{N}^k$, which are characterized by the $\alpha/S$-recursivity of their total characteristic functions in the above defined sense. Thus, due to the classical results, there are even total $\{0,1\}$-valued discrete functions in $\nabla^E_{(\alpha+1)/S} \setminus \nabla^E_{\alpha/S}$ and $\nabla^E_{\lambda/S} \setminus \nabla^E_{<\lambda/S}$, respectively. □

The following proposition characterizes the functions occurring in the Ershov hierarchy. It also shows that the notation-independent hierarchy collapses at level $\omega^2$. Recall that $f \leq_T 0'$ means that the function $f$ is $0'$-computable. A function $f : \mathbb{N}^k \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ is called limit-computable iff there is a total recursive function $\varphi : \mathbb{N}^{k+1} \longrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ such that $f(\bar{x}) \simeq \lim_{n \to \infty} \varphi(\bar{x}, n)$. 
Proposition 2.2 For any function $f : \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ are equivalent:

(i) $f \in \nabla_{\alpha/S}^E$, for a constructive ordinal $\alpha$ and a r.r.u. system $\alpha/S$;
(ii) $f \leq_T O'$ and $\text{dom}(f)$ is r.e.;
(iii) $f$ is limit-computable and $\text{dom}(f)$ is r.e.;
(iv) $f \in \nabla_{\omega^2}^E$.

The equivalence (ii) $\Leftrightarrow$ (iii) is well-known. (iv) $\Rightarrow$ (i) is trivial, and (i) $\Rightarrow$ (iii) is easily shown. Finally, (iii) $\Rightarrow$ (iv) was proved in [3].

3 The Hausdorff hierarchy for real functions

Hausdorff’s difference hierarchy within the Borel class $\Delta^B_2$ over (complete and separable) topological spaces was essentially established in [5]. This topological setting was mainly directed to classes of pointsets and is not directly transferable to function classes. Moreover, in topology it is less customary to deal with partial functions, a basic feature in applying the operator $\Phi$. A considerable progress to a related classification of functions was made by Hertling-Weihrauch and Hertling who introduced and studied the levels of discontinuity of functions, see [10,8,9]. Finally, in [7] we have shown how the Hausdorff hierarchy of classes of pointsets can be characterized by means of the first-value operator. This setting is now transferred to a classification of certain real-valued functions over Euclidean spaces.

By a real function, we mean any partial function $f : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, for an arbitrary dimension $k \in \mathbb{N}_+$. It is said to be continuous iff for all open $G \subseteq \mathbb{R}$ the preimages $f^{-1}[G]$ are open pointsets too. In particular, $\text{dom}(f) = f^{-1}[\mathbb{R}]$ has to be open. The basic class of the hierarchy we are going to introduce will be that of continuous functions,

$\mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}} = \{ f : f \text{ is a continuous real function} \}$.

For an ordinal $\alpha \in C_{II}$, a real function $f$ is said to be $\alpha$-continuous iff there is an $\alpha$-sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$ of continuous functions $f_\xi \in \mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}}$ such that $f = \Phi(\mathcal{F})$. Notice that then $\text{dom}(f) = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} \text{dom}(f_\xi)$ is open too. The 1-continuous functions are just the members of $\mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}}$.

The classes of the Hausdorff hierarchy for real functions are defined as

$\nabla^H_{\alpha} = \{ f : f \text{ is an } \alpha\text{-continuous real function} \}$ and $\nabla^H_{\beta < \alpha} = \bigcup_{\beta < \alpha} \nabla^H_{\beta}$.

Proposition 3.1 For all ordinals $\alpha$ and limit numbers $\lambda$ with $\alpha, \lambda \in C_{II}$,

$\nabla^H_{\alpha} \subset \nabla^H_{\alpha+1}$ and $\nabla^H_{\lambda} \subset \nabla^H_{\lambda}$.

This follows from related properties of the usual Hausdorff hierarchy for
the classes $\Delta^H_{\alpha}$, cf. [7]. They consist of the $\alpha$-clopen pointsets $A$, which are just those whose total characteristic functions $\chi_A$ are $\alpha$-continuous. Thus, there are total $\{0, 1\}$-valued real functions in $\nabla_{(\alpha+1)} \setminus \nabla^H_{\alpha}$ and $\nabla^H_{\lambda} \setminus \nabla^H_{<\lambda}$, respectively.

Another characterization of Hausdorff’s hierarchy of functions can be obtained by the technique of *depth analysis*. It goes also back to Hausdorff [5], who showed that the resolvable sets are exactly the members of $\Delta^B_2$. In [6,7], we have combined his method with features of Ershov’s hierarchy [4] within $\Delta^0_2$. Before that, Hertling-Weihrauch [10] and Hertling [8,9] had applied Hausdorff’s method to functions over topological spaces and introduced related levels of discontinuity. Here we essentially follow their setting, even if the notations are modified in order to remain in accordance with [7] and to prepare for a smooth passage to the effective version in the following section.

For a closed set $F \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k$ and an arbitrary $A \subseteq F$, let $A|_{F}$ denote the *interior* of $A$ relatively to $F$. Thus, $A|_{F} = \bigcup\{B \cap F : B \cap F \subseteq A, B \text{ is open in } \mathbb{R}^k\}$.

Given a real function $f: \mathbb{R}^k \twoheadrightarrow \mathbb{R}$, let the pointsets $C^{\xi}_f, U^{\xi}_f \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k$ for all ordinals $\xi$, be defined by transfinite recursion as follows:

\[ C^0_f = \{ \vec{x} : f(\vec{x}) \downarrow, \text{ and } f \text{ is continuous in } \vec{x} \} \cap_{\mathbb{R}^k}, \]

this is the interior of the domain of continuity of $f$. For $\xi > 0$, put

\[ U^{\xi}_f = \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} C^\eta_f \text{ and } C^{\xi}_f = \{ \vec{x} \in U^{\xi}_f : f(\vec{x}) \downarrow, f|_{U^{\xi}_f} \text{ is continuous in } \vec{x} \} \cap_{U^{\xi}_f}. \]

Herein and throughout the paper, the overline denotes the complement of a set. Since $U^0_f = \bigcap \emptyset = \mathbb{R}^k$, the initial step is included in the general recursion step. By transfinite induction, it follows that any union $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^\eta_f$ is open in $\mathbb{R}^k$ and all *universes* $U^{\xi}_f$ are closed pointsets. Moreover, $C^\eta_f \cap C^{\xi}_f = \emptyset$ if $\eta \neq \xi$, and

\[ \mathbb{R}^k = U^0_f \supseteq U^1_f \supseteq \ldots \supseteq U^{\xi}_f \supseteq U^{\xi+1}_f \supseteq \ldots \supseteq \overline{\text{dom}(f)}. \]

Thus, there is a least ordinal $\alpha \in C^\Pi$ such that $U^\alpha_f = U^{\alpha+1}_f$ or, equivalently, $C^\alpha_f = \emptyset$. Then we have $U^\eta_f \supseteq U^{\xi}_f$ and $C^\eta_f \neq \emptyset$ for all $\eta < \xi \leq \alpha$, but $U^\alpha_f = U^{\xi}_f$ and $C^\xi_f = \emptyset$ for all $\xi \geq \alpha$.

The function $f$ is called *resolvable* iff $U^\alpha_f = \overline{\text{dom}(f)}$ for this least ordinal $\alpha$, at which the sequence of universes becomes stationary. In this case, we have

\[ \text{dom}(f) = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} C^{\xi}_f, \]

and we define the *local depth* of a point $\vec{x} \in \text{dom}(f)$ w.r.t. function $f$ by

\[ \text{depth}_f(\vec{x}) = \xi \text{ iff } \vec{x} \in C^{\xi}_f, \]
whereas the global depth of $f$ is given by

$$\text{udepth}(f) = \min \{ \xi : U^\xi_f = \overline{\text{dom}(f)} \}.$$ 

There are close relationships between resolvability and $\alpha$-continuity.

**Lemma 3.2** Let $f = \Phi(F)$ with $F = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$, $f_\xi \in \mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}}$, $\alpha \in \mathcal{C}_{\text{II}}$. Then, for all ordinals $\xi < \alpha$,

$$\bigcup_{\eta \leq \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta \leq \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \overline{\text{dom}(f_\eta)}.$$

This holds for $\xi = 0$, i.e., $\text{dom}(f_0) \subseteq C^0_\eta$, since $C^0_\eta$ is the largest open set on which $f$ is continuous, $f_0$ coincides with $f$ on $\text{dom}(f_0)$ and $f_0$ is continuous.

Now let the assertion be fulfilled for all $\xi' < \xi$. Then,

$$U^\xi_f = \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \overline{C^n_\eta} = \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \overline{\text{dom}(f_\eta)}.$$

$C^\xi_j$ is the largest relatively open subset of $U^\xi_f$ on which $f|_{U^\xi_f}$ is continuous. Moreover, $f_\xi(\vec{x}) = f(\vec{x})$ for all $\vec{x} \in \text{dom}(f_\xi) \setminus (\bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta)) = \text{dom}(f_\xi) \cap \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \text{dom}(f_\xi) \cap U^\xi_f$, and $f_\xi$ is continuous. Thus, $\text{dom}(f_\xi) \cap U^\xi_f \subseteq C^\xi_j$, and $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \text{dom}(f_\xi) \cup \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) \subseteq \text{dom}(f_\xi) \cup \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq (\text{dom}(f_\xi) \cap U^\xi_f) \cup \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta$.

From Lemma 3.2 one obtains the resolvability of any real function, which is $\alpha$-continuous for some $\alpha \in \mathcal{C}_{\text{II}}$. Indeed, if $f = \Phi(F)$ with a sequence $F = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$, $f_\xi \in \mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}}$, then $\bigcup_{\eta < \alpha} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \text{dom}(f)$. Since $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \text{dom}(f)$ for all ordinals $\xi$, it follows $C^\alpha_f = \emptyset$. Thus, $f$ is resolvable.

Moreover, by Lemma 3.2, $\text{udepth}(f)$ is a lower bound of the lengths of sequences of continuous functions, $F$, with $\Phi(F) = f$.

**Lemma 3.3** If a real function $f$ is resolvable, then there is a sequence $F = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \text{udepth}(f)}$ such that $f = \Phi(F)$ and, moreover,

$$f_\xi \in \mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}} \quad \text{and} \quad \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \quad \text{for all} \quad \xi < \text{udepth}(f).$$

Put $f_0 = f|_{C^\xi_f}$, and the requirement $(+)$ is fulfilled for $\xi = 0$.

Suppose $f_\eta$ has been defined for all $\eta < \xi$ such that $(+)$ holds. Then we have $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta$. By definition of $C^\xi_f$, there is an open set $G \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k$ such that $C^\xi_f = U^\xi_f \cap G$, i.e., $G \subseteq \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta \subseteq \text{dom}(f)$. Moreover, $f|_{C^\xi_f}$ is a continuous function on $C^\xi_f$, considered as a closed subset of the normal space $G$. Thus, by the Tietze-Ürysohn theorem, see [2], $f|_{C^\xi_f}$ can be extended to a continuous function $f_\xi$ over $G$. So we have $\text{dom}(f_\xi) = G$ and $f_\xi(\vec{x}) = f(\vec{x})$ for all $\vec{x} \in C^\xi_f$. It follows $\bigcup_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) = \bigcup_{\eta < \xi} C^n_\eta$, and $(+)$ is fulfilled.

**Proposition 3.4** A real function is resolvable iff it is $\alpha$-continuous for some
\( \alpha \in C_{\Pi} \). More precisely, for any \( \alpha \in C_{\Pi} \),
\[
\nabla^H_\alpha = \{ f : f \text{ is a resolvable real function, and } \text{udepth}(f) \leq \alpha \} .
\]

This only summarizes some results obtained so far. This only summarizes some results obtained so far.

A sequence of real functions, \( F = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha} \), is called greedy iff, for \( f = \Phi(F) \) and any \( \vec{x} \in \text{dom}(f) \), \( \vec{x} \in \text{dom}(f_\xi) \) whenever \( \text{depth}(\vec{x}) = \xi \).

Notice that the length \( \alpha \) of a greedy sequence for function \( f \) can obviously be restricted to \( \text{udepth}(f) \). Now Lemma 3.3 can be expressed as follows.

**Corollary 3.5** Any resolvable real function can be obtained as \( \Phi(F) \), with a greedy sequence \( F \) of continuous functions.

The following result, shown by Hertling [8] for total functions over metric spaces, stresses that the resolvable functions belong to a rather low level of complexity within the framework of descriptive set theory. Here the notion of \( \Gamma \)-measurable function is employed, cf. [11,15]: Given a class of pointsets, \( \Gamma \), a real function is called \( \Gamma \)-measurable iff \( f^{-1}[G] \in \Gamma \) for all open \( G \subseteq \mathbb{R} \).

**Lemma 3.6** Any resolvable real function is \( \Delta^B_2 \)-measurable.

This can be proved by means of set resolvability, cf. [8]. Here we sketch a direct proof by means of Proposition 3.2, which can be effectivized in a rather straightforward way, cf. Section 4.

Let \( f = \Phi(F) \) with a sequence \( F = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}, f_\xi \in \mathcal{F}_{\text{cont}}, \) and let \( G \subseteq \mathbb{R} \) be an open set. Then \( f^{-1}[G] = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} (f_\xi^{-1}(G) \cap \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta)) \). The open pointsets \( f_\xi^{-1}[G] \) are unions of countably many closed sets: \( f_\xi^{-1}[G] = \bigcup_{i<\omega} F_{\xi,i} \), with closed \( F_{\xi,i} \). The sets \( F_{\xi} = \bigcap_{\eta < \xi} \text{dom}(f_\eta) \) are closed too. Hence
\[
f^{-1}[G] = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} (\bigcup_{i<\omega} F_{\xi,i} \cap F_{\xi}) = \bigcup_{\xi < \alpha} \bigcup_{i<\omega} (F_{\xi,i} \cap F_{\xi}) .
\]
This means that \( f^{-1}[G] \in \Sigma^B_2 \), as a countable union of closed sets. A related representation of the complement is obtained analogously.

For any set \( A \in \Delta^B_2, A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k \), the real function \( f_A = A \times \{1\} \) is \( \Delta^B_2 \)-measurable. However, it cannot be resolvable if \( \text{dom}(f_A) = A \notin \Sigma^B_1 \). It is an open question whether the conversion of Lemma 3.6 holds for functions with open domains or, equivalently, as one can show, for total functions.

4 The Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy for real functions

The Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy for functions is obtained by a suitable combination of ingredients both of Ershov’s hierarchy for discrete functions and of the Hausdorff hierarchy for real functions. One feature of effectivity, that
We take over from Ershov's setting, consists in the restriction to constructive ordinals as order types of sequences of real functions. Moreover, these functions have to be computable, and this is defined within the framework of computable analysis, cf. [17]. We briefly recall some related basic ideas and notations. For more details, see [6,7].

Real numbers (and tuples) are represented by fast converging Cauchy sequences of (tuples of) rational numbers. Let be fixed a numbering of effectively converging Cauchy sequences, i.e., by sequences of the set \( \mathbb{CF} = \{ \sigma \in \mathbb{N}^\omega : \| \overline{q}_\sigma(n) - \overline{x} \| < 2^{-n} \text{ for all } n \in \mathbb{N} \} \). A function-oracle Turing machine (OTM) \( \mathcal{M} \) gets a natural number \( n \) as input and a sequence \( \sigma = (i_0, i_1, i_2, \ldots) \in \mathbb{N}^\omega \) as oracle, and it has produced an output \( \mathcal{M}^\sigma(n) \in \mathbb{N} \) when it halts. In the course of its work, it can put oracle queries “\( m? \)”, for \( m \in \mathbb{N} \), which are answered by the \( (m + 1) \text{st} \) element \( i_m \) of the sequence \( \sigma \).

A real function is called (approximately) computable iff there is an OTM \( \mathcal{M} \) such that for all \( \overline{x} \in \mathbb{R}^k \):

(i) if \( f(\overline{x}) \downarrow \), then \( \mathcal{M}^\sigma(n) \) exists for all \( \sigma \in \mathbb{CF} \) and \( n \in \mathbb{N} \), and it holds \( (\mathcal{M}^\sigma(n))_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \in \mathbb{CF}_{f(\overline{x})} \);

(ii) if \( f(\overline{x}) \uparrow \) and \( \sigma \in \mathbb{CF} \), there is an input \( n \in \mathbb{N} \) for which \( \mathcal{M}^\sigma(n) \uparrow \).

Ko-Friedman used a more restrictive notion. Instead of (ii), they required

\( \text{(ii') if } f(\overline{x}) \uparrow, \text{ then } \mathcal{M}^\sigma(n) \text{ is undefined for all } \sigma \in \mathbb{CF} \) and all \( n \in \mathbb{N} \).

We call a function \( f \) KF-computable iff (i) and (ii') for an OTM \( \mathcal{M} \).

\( \Pi^m \) is the class of complements of members of \( \Sigma^m \), \( m \in \mathbb{N}_+ \), and a pointset \( A \) belongs to \( \Sigma^m \) iff, for a total recursive function \( \varphi : \mathbb{N}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{N} \),

\[
A = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll}
\bigcup_{n_1 \in \mathbb{N}} \bigcap_{n_2 \in \mathbb{N}} \cdots \bigcup_{n_m \in \mathbb{N}} \text{ball}_{\varphi(n_1,n_2,\ldots,n_m)} & \text{if } m \text{ is odd}, \\
\bigcup_{n_1 \in \mathbb{N}} \bigcap_{n_2 \in \mathbb{N}} \cdots \bigcup_{n_m \in \mathbb{N}} \overline{\text{ball}_{\varphi(n_1,n_2,\ldots,n_m)}} & \text{if } m \text{ is even}.
\end{array} \right.
\]
If $\varphi$ is allowed to be an arbitrary discrete function, (*) is the typical representation of a Borel set $A \in \Sigma^B_m$. Whereas the domains of approximately computable functions form exactly the class $\Pi^2_{ta}$ in the effective Borel hierarchy ($\Sigma^ta_m : m \in \mathbb{N}_+$), the domains of KF-computable functions are just the r.e. open sets, i.e., the members of $\Sigma^1_{ta}$. More precisely, we have

**Lemma 4.1** A pointset $A$ is r.e. open iff $A = \text{dom}(f)$ for a KF-computable real function $f$. An approximately computable real function $f$ is KF-computable iff $\text{dom}(f)$ is r.e. open.

The first part is due to Ko-Friedman [13], the second one follows easily.\(\Box\)

Due to Lemma 4.1 and since computable functions are continuous on their domains, the KF-computable real functions form an appropriate effective counterpart of the class of continuous functions, $\mathfrak{F}_{\text{cont}}$. Thus, we take

$$\mathfrak{F}_{\text{KF}} = \{ f : f \text{ is a KF-computable real function} \}$$

as the basic class of the effective first-value hierarchy. Effectivity of a transfinite sequence of functions from $\mathfrak{F}_{\text{KF}}$ is defined w.r.t. some r.r.u. naming system $\alpha/S$. A sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi<\alpha}$ is said to be $S$-KF-computable iff there is an OTM $M$ such that, for all points $\vec{x}$ and ordinals $\xi < \alpha$,

(i) if $f_\xi(\vec{x}) \downarrow$, then $M^{\sigma}(\langle m, n \rangle) \downarrow$ for all $\sigma \in \text{CF}_{\vec{x}}$ and all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, where $m = \nu_S^{-1}(\xi)$, and it holds $(M^{\sigma}(\langle m, n \rangle))_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \in \text{CF}_{f_\xi(\vec{x})}$;

(ii) if $f_\xi(\vec{x}) \uparrow$, then $M^{\sigma}(\langle m, n \rangle) \uparrow$ for all $\sigma \in \text{CF}_{\vec{x}}$, all $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and $m = \nu_S^{-1}(\xi)$.

Obviously, it follows $f_\xi \in \mathfrak{F}_{\text{KF}}$ for all $\xi < \alpha$.

A real function $f$ is called $\alpha/S$-toprecursive iff $f = \Phi(\mathcal{F})$ for an $S$-KF-computable sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi<\alpha}$. $\alpha$-toprecursivity means $\alpha/S$-toprecursivity w.r.t. some r.r.u. naming system $\alpha/S$. The 1-toprecursive functions are just the KF-computable ones. Each $\alpha$-toprecursive function is $\alpha$-continuous and has an r.e. open domain.

For constructive ordinals $\alpha$ (and r.r.u. $\alpha/S$), the notation-dependent and notation-independent, respectively, versions of the Hausdorff-Ershov classes of functions are defined as

$$\nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha(S)} = \{ f : f \text{ is an } \alpha(S) \text{-toprecursive real function} \}.$$

By reasons of cardinality, we have $\nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha(S)} \subseteq \nabla^H_{\alpha}$, for $\alpha \neq 0$, and even

$$\bigcup \{ \nabla^{\text{HE}}_\alpha : \alpha \text{ is a constructive ordinal} \} \subseteq \bigcup_{\alpha \in \mathbb{C}_{\text{II}}} \nabla^H_{\alpha}.$$ Properties of the related hierarchy of classes of pointsets yield

**Proposition 4.2** For all constructive ordinals $\alpha$, constructive limits $\lambda$ (and corresponding r.r.u. naming systems $(\alpha + 1)/S$ and $\lambda/S$, respectively),

$$\nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha(S)} \subseteq \nabla^{\text{HE}}_{(\alpha+1)(/S)} \quad \text{and} \quad \nabla^{\text{HE}}_{<\lambda(S)} \subseteq \nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\lambda(S)}.$$
Indeed, a pointset \( A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k \) belongs to \( \Delta_{\alpha(S)}^{\text{HE}} \) in the sense of [7] iff its total characteristic function \( \chi_A \) belongs to \( \nabla_{\alpha(S)}^{\text{HE}} \). Therefore, using results from [7], we get the strict inclusions.

To localize the functions occurring in classes of the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy, Lemma 3.6 can straightforwardly be effectivized within the framework of computable analysis. We sketch this briefly. For details of the definitions and proof techniques, the reader is referred to [1].

Let \( \mathcal{N}_m \) be the set of all discrete total functions \( \varphi : \mathbb{N}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{N} \), \( m \in \mathbb{N}_+ \). They can be represented by sequences \( \sigma_\varphi \in \mathbb{N}^\omega \) in a canonical, bijective way. For example, put \( \sigma_\varphi(n) = \varphi(\gamma_m(n)) \), where \( \gamma_m \) is an effective standard bijection of \( \mathbb{N} \) onto \( \mathbb{N}^m \). Thus, the sets \( A \in \Sigma^B_m \) can also be represented by the sequences \( \sigma \in \mathbb{N}^\omega \), namely if \( \sigma = \sigma_\varphi \) for some \( \varphi \in \mathcal{N}_m \) satisfying the typical equation (\( * \)) given above. Now, a real function \( f \) is called effectively \( \Sigma^B_m \)-measurable iff there is an (approximately) computable function \( g : \mathbb{N}^\omega \rightarrow \mathbb{N}^\omega \) such that, whenever a sequence \( \sigma \) represents an open set \( A \in \Sigma^B_m \), \( A \subseteq \mathbb{R} \), the sequence \( g(\sigma) \) represents the preimage \( f^{-1}[A] \) as a member of \( \Sigma^B_m \).

Analogously, we call a real function \( f \) effectively \( \Delta^B_m \)-measurable iff there are (approximately) computable functions \( g, \overline{g} : \mathbb{N}^\omega \rightarrow \mathbb{N}^\omega \) such that, whenever a sequence \( \sigma \) represents an open set \( A \subseteq \mathbb{R} \), the sequence \( g(\sigma) \) represents the preimage \( f^{-1}[A] \) and \( \overline{g}(\sigma) \) represents the complement, \( f^{-1}[\overline{A}] \), both as members of \( \Sigma^B_m \). By the effective analogue of the proof of Lemma 3.6, with some technical effort using tools prepared in [1], one shows

**Lemma 4.3** If a real function is \( \alpha/S \)-toprecursive w.r.t. some r.r.u. naming system \( \alpha/S \), then it is effectively \( \Delta^B_2 \)-measurable. ∎

For classes of pointsets, relationships between the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy and the Ershov hierarchy have been obtained by considering the discrete parts \( A \cap \mathbb{N}^k \) of pointsets \( A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k \). For functions, the situation is not so simple, since the restrictions of real functions \( f : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \) to \( \mathbb{N}^k \) are not necessarily discrete. Conversely, non-empty discrete functions, \( f : \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N} \), if they are considered as real functions, are not continuous in the sense of Section 3, since the domains are not open. Nevertheless, the Ershov hierarchy of discrete functions can be embedded into the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy by means of the operator \( \varrho \) assigning to a discrete function \( f : \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N} \) the continuous function \( \varrho(f) : \mathbb{R}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \) defined as \( \varrho(f) = \bigcup \{ \text{Ball}_4(\vec{x}) \times \{f(\vec{x})\} : \vec{x} \in \text{dom}(f) \} \).

**Proposition 4.4** For any \( f : \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N} \) and every r.r.u. system \( \alpha/S \),

\[
f \in \nabla_{\alpha/S} \iff \varrho(f) \in \nabla_{\alpha/S}^{\text{HE}}.
\]

Indeed, for an \( S \)-computable sequence \( \mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha} \) of discrete functions \( f_\xi \), the sequence of real functions \( \varrho(\mathcal{F}) = (\varrho(f_\xi))_{\xi < \alpha} \) is \( S \)-computable too, in
the related sense. Moreover, $\Phi(\varrho(\mathcal{F})) = \varrho(\Phi(\mathcal{F}))$. Conversely, if $\varrho(f) = \Phi(\mathcal{F})$ for an $S$-computable sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$ of $k$-ary real functions, then the sequence $\mathcal{F}' = (f'_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$, where $f'_\xi = f_\xi|_{\mathbb{N}^k}$, consists of discrete functions and is $S$-computable in the sense of Section 2. Moreover, $\Phi(\mathcal{F}') = f$. \hfill $\square$

So, the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy of function classes is at least as rich as the related Ershov hierarchy. Propositions 2.1 and 4.4 show that each class $\nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha/S}$ contains continuous functions which do not belong to any lower class $\nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha'/S}$ for $\alpha' < \alpha$. In other words, there are real functions $f \in \nabla^1_{\text{cont}}$, which have the level $\alpha/S$ in the notation-dependent Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy, i.e., $f \in \nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha/S} \setminus \nabla^{\text{HE}}_{\alpha'/S}$. So the level of toprecursivity of a real function can be arbitrarily higher than its level of continuity.

Those functions which admit computable greedy sequences, representing them by means of the first-value operator, are of special interest. For such a function, its level in the Hausdorff hierarchy coincides with that in the Hausdorff-Ershov hierarchy. Moreover, for each point $\vec{x}$ from the domain, the computation of the function value in $\vec{x}$ can be performed by computing $f_\xi(\vec{x})$, just at the first stage $\xi$ which is possible at all, by topological reasons.

So, a real function $f$ is called weakly $(\alpha/S)$-computable iff there is an $S$-KF-computable greedy sequence $\mathcal{F} = (f_\xi)_{\xi < \alpha}$ with $f = \Phi(\mathcal{F})$.

A sharper condition requires that, moreover, if $f_\xi(\vec{x}) \downarrow$, then there is a point $\vec{y}$ close to $\vec{x}$ such that depth$f(\vec{y}) = \xi$, thus, $f(\vec{y}) = f_\xi(\vec{y}) \downarrow$.

More precisely, a real function $f$ is called safely $(\alpha/S)$-computable iff there is an $S$-KF-computable double sequence $\mathcal{D} = (f_{n,\xi})_{n<\omega, \xi < \alpha}$ such that the sequences $\mathcal{F}_n = ((f_{n,\xi})_{\xi < \alpha}$ are greedy and $\Phi(\mathcal{F}_n) = f$, for all $n \in \mathbb{N}$, and whenever $f_{n,\xi}(\vec{x}) \downarrow$, then there is a point $\vec{y} \in \text{Ball}_{2^{-n}}(\vec{x})$ with depth$f(\vec{y}) = \xi$. $S$-KF-computability of $\mathcal{D}$ means that there is an OTM $\mathcal{M}$ such that, for all points $\vec{x}$, numbers $n \in \mathbb{N}$ and ordinals $\xi < \alpha$,

(i) if $f_\xi(\vec{x}) \downarrow$, then $\mathcal{M}^\sigma((n, m, l)) \downarrow$ for all $\sigma \in \mathcal{C}_\vec{x}$, $n, l \in \mathbb{N}$ and $m = \nu_S^{-1}(\xi)$, and it holds $(\mathcal{M}^\sigma((n, m, l))_{l \in \mathbb{N}} \in \mathcal{C}_{f_\xi(\vec{x})}$;

(ii) if $f_\xi(\vec{x}) \uparrow$, then $\mathcal{M}^\sigma((n, m, l)) \uparrow$ for all $\sigma \in \mathcal{C}_\vec{x}$, all $n, l \in \mathbb{N}$ and $m = \nu_S^{-1}(\xi)$.

By examples constructed in [7], we have

**Lemma 4.5** To any r.r.u. system $\alpha/S$, there is a safely $\alpha/S$-computable function $f_{\alpha/S} : \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \{0, 1\}$ with udepth$(f_{\alpha/S}) = \alpha$. \hfill $\square$

So, $f_{\alpha/S}$ witnesses that there are safely $\alpha/S$-computable, hence also weakly $\alpha/S$-computable, functions that are of level $\alpha$ in the (non-effective) Hausdorff hierarchy. From the discussion in [7], it also follows that there are weakly computable (total) functions which are not safely computable.
By means of the notion of r.e. closed set, the safely computable functions can be characterized among the weakly computable ones. Recall that a pointset $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^k$ is said to be r.e. closed iff $A = \emptyset$ or there is a total recursive function $\varphi : \mathbb{N}^2 \longrightarrow \mathbb{N}$ such that there is a sequence $(\vec{x}_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ of points $\vec{x}_n \in \mathbb{R}^k$ satisfying $\|q^\varphi(n,m) - \vec{x}_n\| < 2^{-m}$ for all $n, m \in \mathbb{N}$, and $A = \text{cl}(\{\vec{x}_n : n \in \mathbb{N}\})$, where cl denotes the closure of a set.

If a real function $f$ is safely $\alpha/S$-computable, then the closures of the domains of continuity, i.e., the sets $\text{cl}(C^\xi_f), \xi < \alpha$, are uniformly r.e. closed. This means that there is a recursive function $\varphi : \mathbb{N}^3 \rightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ such that the functions $\varphi_\xi : \mathbb{N}^2 \rightarrow\!\!\!\rightarrow \mathbb{N}$, defined by $\varphi_\xi(n, m) \simeq \varphi(\nu_s^{-1}(\xi), n, m)$, are total and witness that the sets $\text{cl}(C^\xi_f)$ are r.e. closed sets in the above sense.

Conversely, given a weakly $\alpha/S$-computable function $f$ such that the sets $\text{cl}(C^\xi_f), \xi < \alpha$, are uniformly r.e. closed, the safe $\alpha/S$-computability can easily be shown. So we have

**Lemma 4.6** A weakly $\alpha/S$-computable function $f$ is safely $\alpha/S$-computable iff the sets $\text{cl}(C^\xi_f), \xi < \alpha$, are uniformly r.e. closed. $\Box$

Here we conclude. The notions and results presented in this paper provide a unified framework for non-effective and effective hierarchies of classes of real functions which all are $\Delta^B_2$-measurable and effectively $\Delta^B_2$-measurable, respectively. This establishes a useful tool in classifying certain functions both from the viewpoint of descriptive set theory as well as of computable analysis. Nevertheless, it should be remarked that we know only some basic facts and relationships so far, many questions are still open.

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