THE CHERN COEFFICIENTS OF LOCAL RINGS

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Abstract. The Chern numbers of the title are the first coefficients (after the multiplicities) of the Hilbert functions of various filtrations of ideals of a local ring \((R, \mathfrak{m})\). For a Noetherian (good) filtration \(A\) of \(\mathfrak{m}\)-primary ideals, the positivity and bounds for \(e_1(A)\) are well-studied if \(R\) is Cohen-Macaulay, or more broadly, if \(R\) is a Buchsbaum ring or mild generalizations thereof. For arbitrary geometric local domains, we introduce techniques based on the theory of maximal Cohen-Macaulay modules and of extended multiplicity functions to establish the meaning of the positivity of \(e_1(A)\), and to derive lower and upper bounds for \(e_1(A)\).

1. Introduction

Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring of dimension \(d > 0\), and let \(I\) be an \(\mathfrak{m}\)-primary ideal. One of our goals is to study the set of \(I\)-good filtrations of \(R\). More concretely, we will consider the set of multiplicative, decreasing filtrations of \(R\) ideals, \(A = \{I_n, I_0 = R, I_{n+1} = II_n, n \gg 0\}\), integral over the \(I\)-adic filtration, conveniently coded in the corresponding Rees algebra and its associated graded ring

\[
R(A) = \sum_{n \geq 0} I_n t^n, \quad \text{gr}_A(R) = \sum_{n \geq 0} I_n/I_{n+1}.
\]

We will study certain strata of these algebras. For that we will focus on the role of the Hilbert polynomial of the Hilbert function \(\lambda(R/I_{n+1})\),

\[
H^1_A(n) = P^1_A(n) = \sum_{i=0}^{d} (-1)^i e_i(A) \binom{n + d - i}{d - i},
\]

particularly of its coefficients \(e_0(A)\) and \(e_1(A)\). Two of our main issues are to establish relationships between the coefficients \(e_i(A)\), for \(i = 0, 1\), and marginally \(e_2(A)\). If \(R\) is a Cohen-Macaulay ring, there are numerous related developments, noteworthy ones being given and discussed in [8] and [28]. The situation is very distinct in the non Cohen-Macaulay case. Just to illustrate the issue, suppose \(d > 2\) and consider a comparison between \(e_0(I)\) and \(e_1(I)\), a subject that has received considerable attention. It is often possible to pass to a reduction \(R \rightarrow S\), with \(\dim S = 2\), or even \(\dim S = 1\), so that \(e_0(I) = e_0(IS)\) and \(e_1(I) = e_1(IS)\). If \(R\) is Cohen-Macaulay, this is straightforward. However, in general the relationship between \(e_0(IS)\) and \(e_1(IS)\) may involve other invariants of \(S\), some of which may not be easily traceable all the way to \(R\).

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Our perspective is partly influenced by the interpretation of the coefficient $e_1$ as a *tracking number* (see [6] for the original terminology and [26]), that is, as a numerical positional tag of the algebra $R(A)$ in the set of all such algebras with the same multiplicity. The coefficient $e_1$ under various circumstances is also called the *Chern number or coefficient* of the algebra.

This paper is organized around a list of questions and conjectural statements about the values of $e_1$ for very general filtrations associated to the $m$–primary ideals of a local Noetherian ring $(R, m)$:

1. (Conjecture 1: the negativity conjecture) For every ideal $J$, generated by a system of parameters, $e_1(J) < 0$ if and only if $R$ is not Cohen-Macaulay.

2. (Conjecture 2: the positivity conjecture) For every $m$–primary ideal $I$, for its integral closure filtration $A$

$$e_1(A) \geq 0.$$ 

3. (Conjecture 3: the uniformity conjecture) For each Noetherian local ring $R$, there exist two functions $f_l(\cdot)$, $f_u(\cdot)$ defined with some extended multiplicity degree over $R$, such that for each $m$–primary ideal $I$ and any $I$-good filtration $A$

$$f_l(I) \leq e_1(A) \leq f_u(I).$$ 

4. For any two minimal reductions $J_1$, $J_2$ of an $m$-primary ideal $I$,

$$e_1(J_1) = e_1(J_2).$$ 

For general local rings the conjectures may fail for reasons that will be illustrated by examples. We will settle Conjecture 1 for domains that are essentially of finite type over fields by making use of the existence of special maximal Cohen-Macaulay modules (Theorem 3.2). The lower bound in Conjecture 3 is also settled for general rings through the use of extended degree functions (Corollary 7.7). The upper bound uses the technique of the Briançon-Skoda theorem on perfect fields (Theorem 6.1). We bring no real understanding to the last question.

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2. $e_1$ AS A TRACKING NUMBER

Let $(R, m)$ be a Noetherian local domain of dimension $d$, which is a quotient of a Gorenstein ring. For an $m$–primary ideal $I$, we are going to consider the set of all graded subalgebras $A$ of the integral closure of $R[It]$, 

$$R[It] \subset A \subset \hat{A} = R[It].$$ 

We will assume that $\hat{A}$ is a finite $R[It]$-algebra. We denote the set of these algebras by $\mathfrak{S}(I)$. If the algebra

$$A = \sum I_n t^n$$

comes with a filtration that is decreasing $I_1 \supseteq I_2 \supseteq I_3 \supseteq \cdots$, it has an associated graded ring

$$\text{gr}(A) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} I_n/I_{n+1}.$$
Proposition 2.1. If \( A \) has the condition \( S_2 \) of Serre, then \( \{I_n, n \geq 0\} \) is a decreasing filtration.

Proof. See [34, Proposition 4.6].

We are going to describe the role of the Hilbert coefficient \( e_1(\cdot) \) in the study of normalization of \( R[It] \), following [26] and [25]. For each \( A = \sum A_n t^n \in \mathcal{G}(I) \), we consider the Hilbert polynomial (for \( n \gg 0 \))

\[
\lambda(R/A_{n+1}) = \sum_{i=0}^{d} (-1)^i e_i(A) \binom{n+d-i}{d-i}.
\]

The multiplicity \( e_0(A) \) is constant across the whole set \( \mathcal{G}(I) \), \( e_0(A) = e_0(I) \). The next proposition shows the role of \( e_1(A) \) in tracking \( A \) in the set \( \mathcal{G}(I) \).

Proposition 2.2. Let \((R, m)\) be a normal, Noetherian local domain which is a quotient of a Gorenstein ring, and let \( I \) be an \( m \)-primary ideal. For algebras \( A, B \) of \( \mathcal{G}(I) \):

1. If the algebras \( A \) and \( B \) satisfy \( A \subseteq B \), then \( e_1(A) \leq e_1(B) \).
2. If \( B \) is the \( S_2 \)-ification of \( A \), then \( e_1(A) = e_1(B) \).
3. If the algebras \( A \) and \( B \) satisfy the condition \( S_2 \) of Serre and \( A \subseteq B \), then \( e_1(A) = e_1(B) \) if and only if \( A = B \).

Proof. The first two assertions follow directly from the relationship between Krull dimension and the degree of Hilbert polynomials. The exact sequence of graded \( R[It] \)-modules

\[ 0 \rightarrow A \rightarrow B \rightarrow B/A \rightarrow 0 \]

gives that the dimension of \( B/A \) is at most \( d-1 \). Moreover, \( \dim B/A = d-1 \) if and only if its multiplicity is

\[ \deg(B/A) = e_1(B) - e_1(A) > 0. \]

The last assertion follows because with \( A \) and \( B \) satisfying \( S_2 \), the quotient \( B/A \) is nonzero, will satisfy \( S_1 \) and therefore has Krull dimension \( d-1 \).

Corollary 2.3. Given a sequence of distinct algebras in \( \mathcal{G}(I) \),

\[ A_0 \subseteq A_1 \subseteq \cdots \subseteq A_n = R[It], \]

that satisfy the condition \( S_2 \) of Serre, then

\[ n \leq e_1(R[It]) - e_1(A_0) \leq e_1(R[It]) - e_1(I). \]

This highlights the importance of having lower bounds for \( e_1(I) \) and upper bounds for \( e_1(R[It]) \). For simplicity we denote the last coefficient as \( \bar{e}_1(I) \). In the Cohen-Macaulay case, for any parameter ideal \( J \), \( e_1(J) = 0 \). Upper bounds for \( \bar{e}_1(I) \) were given in [26]. For instance, [26, Theorem 3.2(a),(b)] shows that if \( R \) is a Cohen-Macaulay algebra of type \( t \), essentially of finite type over a perfect field \( k \) and \( \delta \) is a non zerodivisor in the Jacobian ideal \( \text{Jac}_k(R) \), then

\[ \bar{e}_1(I) \leq \frac{t}{t+1} [(d-1)e_0(I) + e_0(I + \delta R/\delta R)] \]

and

\[ \bar{e}_1(I) \leq (d-1)[e_0(I) - \lambda(R/T)] + e_0(I + \delta R/\delta R). \]
3. COHEN-MACULARAYNESS AND THE NEGATIVITY OF \( e_1 \)

Given the role of the Hilbert coefficient \( e_1 \) as a tracking number in the normalization of blowup algebras, it is of interest to know its signature.

Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring of dimension \( d \). If \( R \) is Cohen-Macaulay, for an ideal \( J \) generated by a system of parameters, \( J = (x_1, \ldots, x_d) \), \( e_1(J) = 0 \). As a consequence, for any \( \mathfrak{m} \)-primary ideal \( I \), \( e_1(I) \geq 0 \). If \( d = 1 \), the property \( e_1(J) = 0 \) is characteristic of Cohen-Macaulayness. For \( d \geq 2 \), the situation is somewhat different. Consider the ring \( R = k[x, y, z]/(z(x, y, z)) \). Then for \( T = H^0_{\mathfrak{m}}(R) \) and \( S = k[x, y] = R/T, e_1(R) = e_1(S) = 0 \).

We are going to argue that the negativity of \( e_1(J) \) is an expression of the lack of Cohen-Macaulayness of \( R \) in numerous classes of rings. To provide a framework, we state:

**Conjecture 3.1.** Let \( R \) be a Noetherian local ring that admits an embedding into a big Cohen-Macaulay module. Then for a parameter ideal \( J \), \( e_1(J) < 0 \) if and only if \( R \) is not Cohen-Macaulay.

This places restrictions on \( R \), in particular \( R \) must be unmixed and equidimensional. As a matter of fact, we will be concerned almost exclusively with integral domains that are essentially of finite type over a field.

We next establish the small version of the conjecture.

**Theorem 3.1.** Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring of dimension \( d \geq 2 \). Suppose there is an embedding

\[
0 \rightarrow R \rightarrow E \rightarrow C \rightarrow 0,
\]

where \( E \) is a finitely generated maximal Cohen-Macaulay \( R \)-module. If \( R \) is not Cohen-Macaulay, then \( e_1(J) < 0 \) for any parameter ideal \( J \).

**Proof.** We may assume that the residue field of \( R \) is infinite. We are going to argue by induction on \( d \). For \( d = 2 \), let \( J \) be a parameter ideal. If \( R \) is not Cohen-Macaulay, depth \( C = 0 \).

Let \( J = (x, y) \); we may assume that \( x \) is a superficial element for the purpose of computing \( e_1(J) \) and is also superficial relative to \( C \), that is, \( x \) is not contained in any associated prime of \( C \) distinct from \( \mathfrak{m} \).

Tensoring the exact sequence above by \( R/(x) \), we get the exact complex

\[
0 \rightarrow T = \text{Tor}_1^R(R/(x), C) \rightarrow R/(x) \rightarrow E/xE \rightarrow C/xC \rightarrow 0,
\]

where \( T \) is a nonzero module of finite support. Denote by \( S \) the image of \( R' = R/(x) \) in \( E/xE \). \( S \) is a Cohen-Macaulay ring of dimension 1. By the Artin-Rees Theorem, for \( n \gg 0 \), \( T \cap (y^n)R' = 0 \), and therefore from the diagram

\[
\begin{array}{ccccccccc}
0 & \rightarrow & T \cap (y^n)R' & \rightarrow & (y^n)R' & \rightarrow & (y^n)S & \rightarrow & 0 \\
\downarrow & & \downarrow & & \downarrow & & \downarrow & & \\
0 & \rightarrow & T & \rightarrow & R' & \rightarrow & S & \rightarrow & 0
\end{array}
\]

the Hilbert polynomial of the ideal \( yR' \) is

\[ e_0n - e_1 = e_0(yS)n + \lambda(T). \]
Thus
\[ e_1(J) = -\lambda(T) < 0, \]
as claimed.

Assume now that \( d \geq 3 \), and let \( x \) be a superficial element for \( J \), and the modules \( E \) and \( C \). In the exact sequence
\[ 0 \to T = \text{Tor}_1^R(R/(x), C) \to R' = R/(x) \to E/xE \to C/xC \to 0, \]
\( T \) is either zero, and we would go on with the induction procedure, or \( T \) is a nonzero module of finite support.

Let us point out first an elementary rule for the calculation of Hilbert coefficients. Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring, and let \( \mathcal{A} = \{I_n, n \geq 0\} \) be a filtration as above. For a finitely generated \( R \)-module \( M \), denote by \( e_i(M) \) the Hilbert coefficients of \( M \) for the filtration \( \mathcal{A}M = \{I_nM, n \geq 0\} \).

**Proposition 3.2.** Let
\[ 0 \to A \to B \to C \to 0 \]
be an exact sequence of finitely generated \( R \)-modules. If \( r = \dim A < s = \dim B \), then \( e_i(B) = e_i(C) \) for \( i < s - r \).

To continue with the proof, if in the exact sequence (2) \( T \neq 0 \), by Proposition 3.2 we have that \( e_1(JR') = e_1(J(R'/T)) \), and the resulting embedding \( R'/T \hookrightarrow E/xE \). By the induction hypothesis, it suffices to prove that if \( R'/T \) is Cohen-Macaulay then \( R' \), and therefore \( R \), will be Cohen-Macaulay. This is the content of \([18, \text{Proposition 2.1}]\). For convenience, we give the details.

We may assume that \( R \) is a complete local ring. Since \( R \) is embedded in a maximal Cohen-Macaulay module, any associated prime of \( R \) is an associated prime of \( E \) and therefore it is equidimensional. Consider the exact sequences
\[ 0 \to T \to R' \to S = R'/T \to 0, \]
\[ 0 \to R \to R' \to 0. \]
From the first sequence, taking local cohomology,
\[ 0 \to H^0_\mathfrak{m}(T) \to T \to H^0_\mathfrak{m}(R') \to H^0_\mathfrak{m}(S) = 0, \]
since \( H^i_\mathfrak{m}(T) = 0 \) for \( i > 0 \) and \( S \) is Cohen-Macaulay of dimension \( \geq 2 \); one also has \( H^1_\mathfrak{m}(S) = H^1_\mathfrak{m}(R') = 0 \). From the second sequence, since the associated primes of \( R \) have dimension \( d \), \( H^1_\mathfrak{m}(R) \) is a finitely generated \( R \)-module. Finally, by Nakayama Lemma \( H^1_\mathfrak{m}(R) = 0 \), and therefore \( T = H^0_\mathfrak{m}(R') = 0 \).

We now analyze what is required to extend the proof to big Cohen-Macaulay cases. We are going to assume that \( R \) is an integral domain and that \( E \) is a big balanced Cohen-Macaulay module (see \([31, \text{Chapter 8}], [30]\)). Embed \( R \) into \( E \),
\[ 0 \to R \to E \to C \to 0. \]
The argument above \((d \geq 3)\) will work if in the induction argument we can pick \( x \in J \) superficial for the Hilbert polynomial of \( J \), avoiding the finite set of associated primes of \( E \).
and all associated primes of $C$ different from $\mathfrak{m}$. It is this last condition that is the most troublesome.

There is one case when this can be overcome, to wit, when $R$ is a complete local ring and $E$ is countably generated. Indeed, $C$ will be countably generated and Ass($C$) will be a countable set. The prime avoidance result of [4, Lemma 3] allows for the choice of $x$. Let us apply these ideas in an important case.

**Theorem 3.2.** Let $(R, \mathfrak{m})$ be a Noetherian local integral domain essentially of finite type over a field. If $R$ is not Cohen-Macaulay, then $e_1(J) < 0$ for any parameter ideal $J$.

**Proof.** Let $A$ be the integral closure of $R$ and $\hat{R}$ its completion. Tensor the embedding $R \subset A$ to obtain

$$0 \rightarrow \hat{R} \rightarrow \hat{R} \otimes_R A = \hat{A}.$$  

From the properties of pseudo-geometric local rings ([21 Section 37]), $\hat{A}$ is a reduced semi-local ring with a decomposition

$$\hat{A} = A_1 \times \cdots \times A_r,$$

where each $A_i$ is a complete local domain, of dimension $\dim R$ and finite over $\hat{R}$.

For each $A_i$ we make use of [11 Theorem 3.1] and [12 Proposition 1.4] and pick a countably generated big balanced Cohen-Macaulay $A_i$-module and therefore $\hat{R}$-module. Collecting the $E_i$ we have an embedding

$$\hat{R} \rightarrow A_1 \times \cdots \times A_r \rightarrow E = E_1 \oplus \cdots \oplus E_r.$$  

As $E$ is a countably generated big balanced Cohen-Macaulay $\hat{R}$-module, the argument above shows that if $\hat{R}$ is not Cohen-Macaulay then $e_1(J\hat{R}) < 0$. This suffices to prove the assertion about $R$. \qed

**Remark 3.3.** There are other classes of local rings admitting big balanced Cohen-Macaulay modules. A crude way to handle it would be: Let $E$ be such a module and assume it has a set of generators of cardinality $s$. Let $X$ be a set of indeterminates of cardinality larger than $s$. The local ring $S = R[X]_{\mathfrak{m}[X]}$ is $R$-flat and has the same depth as $R$. If $E' = S \otimes_R E$ is a big balanced Cohen-Macaulay $S$-module, with its residue field of cardinality larger than that of the corresponding module $C$, prime avoidance would again work. Experts have cautioned that $E'$ may not be balanced.

**Example 3.4.** We will consider some classes of examples.

(i) Let $(R, \mathfrak{m})$ be a regular local ring and let $F$ be a nonzero (f.g.) free $R$-module. For any non-free submodule $N$ of $F$, the idealization (trivial extension) of $R$ by $N$, $S = R \oplus N$ is a non Cohen-Macaulay local ring. Picking $E = R \oplus F$, the theorem above implies that for any parameter ideal $J \subset S$, $e_1(J) < 0$. It is not difficult to give an explicit formula for $e_1(J)$ in this case.

(ii) Let $R = \mathbb{R} + (x, y)\mathbb{C}[x, y] \subset \mathbb{C}[x, y]$, for $x, y$ distinct indeterminates. $R$ is not Cohen-Macaulay but its localization $S$ at the maximal irrelevant ideal is a Buchsbaum ring. It is easy to verify that $e_1(x, y) = -1$ and that $e_1(S) = 0$ for the $\mathfrak{m}$-adic filtration of $S$. 
Note that $R$ has an isolated singularity. For these rings, \cite{25} Theorem 5 can be extended (does not require the Cohen-Macaulay condition), and therefore describes bounds for $e_1(\overline{A})$ of integral closures. Thus, if $A$ is the Rees algebra of the parameter ideal $J$, one has

$$e_1(\overline{A}) - e_1(J) \leq (d - 1 + \lambda(R/L))e_0(J),$$

where $L$ is the Jacobian of $R$.

In the example above, one has $d = 2$, $\lambda(R/L) = 1$, $e_1(\overline{A}) - e_1(J) \leq 2e_0(J)$.

(iii) Let $k$ be a field of characteristic zero and let $f = x^3 + y^3 + z^3$ be a polynomial of $k[x, y, z]$. Set $A = k[x, y, z]/(f)$ and let $R$ be the Rees algebra of the maximal irrelevant ideal $\mathfrak{m}$ of $A$. Using the Jacobian criterion, $R$ is normal. Because the reduction number of $\mathfrak{m}$ is 2, $R$ is not Cohen-Macaulay. Furthermore, it is easy to verify that $R$ is not contained in any Cohen-Macaulay domain that is finite over $R$. Let $S = R_M$, where $M$ is the irrelevant maximal ideal of $R$. The first superficial element (in the reduction to dimension two) can be chosen to be prime. Now one takes the integral closure of $S$, which will be a maximal Cohen-Macaulay module.

The argument extends to geometric domains in any characteristic if depth $R = d - 1$.

**Remark 3.5.** Uniform lower bounds for $e_1$ are rare but still exist in special cases. For example, if $R$ is a generalized Cohen-Macaulay ring, then according to \cite{10} Theorem 5.4,

$$e_1(J) \geq -\sum_{i=1}^{d-1} \binom{d-2}{i-1} \lambda(H^i_m(R)),$$

with equality if $R$ is Buchsbaum.

It should be observed that uniform lower bounds may not always exist. For instance, if $A = k[x, y, z]$, and $R$ the idealization of $(x, y)$, then for the ideal $J = (x, y, z^n)$, $e_1(J) = -n$.

The Koszul homology modules $H_i(J)$ of $J$ is a first place where to look for bounds for $e_1(J)$. We recall \cite{3} Theorem 4.6.10, that the multiplicity of $J$ is given by the formula

$$e_0(J) = \lambda(R/J) - \sum_{i=1}^{d} (-1)^{i-1}h_i(J),$$

where $h_i(J)$ is the length of $H_i(J)$. The summation term is non-negative and only vanishes if $R$ is Cohen-Macaulay. Unfortunately it does not gives a bounds for $e_1(J)$. There is a formula involving these terms in the special case when $J$ is generated by a $d$-sequence. Then the corresponding approximation complex is acyclic, and the Hilbert-Poincaré series of $J$ (\cite{14} Corollary 4.6) is

$$\sum_{i=0}^{d} (-1)^i h_i(J)t^i \left(1 - t\right)^d,$$

and therefore

$$e_1(J) = \sum_{i=1}^{d} (-1)^i h_i(J).$$
Later we shall prove the existence of lower bounds more generally, by making use of extended degree functions.

4. Bounds on $\tau_1(I)$ via the Briançon–Skoda number

We discuss the role of Briançon–Skoda type theorems (see [1], [20]) in determining some relationships between the coefficients $e_0(I)$ and $\tau_1(I)$. We follow the treatment given in [26, Theorem 3.1] and [25, Theorem 5], but formulated for the non Cohen-Macaulay case. We are going to provide a short proof along the lines of [20] for the special case we need: $m$–primary ideals in a local ring. The general case is treated by Hochster and Huneke in [16, 1.5.5 and 4.1.5]. Let $k$ be a perfect field, let $R$ be a reduced and equidimensional $k$–algebra essentially of finite type, and assume that $R$ is affine with $d = \dim R$ or $(R, m)$ is local with $d = \dim R + \text{trdeg}_k(R/m)$. Recall that the Jacobian ideal $\text{Jac}_k(R)$ of $R$ is defined as the $d$–th Fitting ideal of the module of differentials $\Omega^1_R$ – it can be computed explicitly from a presentation of the algebra. By varying Noether normalizations one deduces from [20, Theorem 2] that the Jacobian ideal $\text{Jac}_k(R)$ is contained in the conductor $R : R$ of $R$ (see also [23, 3.1] and [15, 2.1]); here $\overline{R}$ denotes the integral closure of $R$ in its total ring of fractions.

**Theorem 4.1.** Let $k$ be a perfect field, let $R$ be a reduced local $k$–algebra essentially of finite type with the property $S_2$ of Serre, and let $I$ be an ideal with a minimal reduction generated by $g$ elements. Denote by $D = \sum_{n \geq 0} D_n t^n$ the $S_2$–ification of $R[It]$. Then for every integer $n$,

$$\text{Jac}_k(R) \{t^{n+g-1} \} \subseteq D_n.$$ 

**Proof.** The proof is lifted from [26, 3.1], with the modification required by the use of $D$ at the end.

We may assume that $k$ is infinite. Then, passing to a minimal reduction, we may suppose that $I$ is generated by $g$ generators. Let $S$ be a finitely generated $k$–subalgebra of $R$ so that $R = S_p$ for some $p \in \text{Spec}(S)$, and write $S = k[x_1, \ldots, x_e] = k[X_1, \ldots, X_e]/a$ with $a = (h_1, \ldots, h_t)$ an ideal of height $c$. Notice that $S$ is reduced and equidimensional. Let $K = (f_1, \ldots, f_g)$ be an $S$–ideal with $K_p = I$, and consider the extended Rees ring $B = S[It, t^{-1}]$. Now $B$ is a reduced and equidimensional affine $k$–algebra of dimension $e - c + 1$.

Let $\varphi : k[X_1, \ldots, X_e, T_1, \ldots, T_g, U] \rightarrow B$ be the $k$–epimorphism mapping $X_i$ to $x_i$, $T_i$ to $f_i t$ and $U$ to $t^{-1}$. Its kernel has height $c + g$ and contains the ideal $b$ generated by $\{h_i, T_j U - f_j | 1 \leq i \leq t, 1 \leq j \leq g\}$. Consider the Jacobian matrix of these generators,

$$\Theta = \begin{pmatrix}
\frac{\partial h_i}{\partial X_j} & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\
-1 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\
\vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\
U & T_1 & \cdots & T_g 
\end{pmatrix}.$$ 

Notice that $I_{c+g}(\Theta) \supset I_c((\frac{\partial h_i}{\partial X_j})) U^{g-1}(T_1, \ldots, T_g)$. Applying $\varphi$ we obtain $\text{Jac}_k(B) \supset I_{c+g}(\Theta) B \supset \text{Jac}_k(S) K t^{-g+2}$. Thus $\text{Jac}_k(S) K t^{-g+2}$ is contained in the conductor of $B$. 

Localizing at $p$ we see that $\text{Jac}_k(R)t^{g+2}$ is in the conductor of the extended Rees ring $R[It, t^{-1}]$. Hence for every $n$, $\text{Jac}_k(R)I^{n+g-1} \subset I^{n+1}$, which yields

$$\text{Jac}_k(R)I^{n+g-1} \subset I^{n+1} : I \subset D_{n+1} : I = D_n,$$

as $\text{gr}(D)_+$ has positive grade.

This result, with an application of [25] Theorem 5], gives the following estimation.

**Corollary 4.1.** Let $k$ be a perfect field, let $(R, m)$ be a normal, reduced local $k$-algebra essentially of finite type of dimension $d$ and let $I$ be an $m$-primary ideal. If the Jacobian ideal $L$ of $R$ is $m$-primary, then for any minimal reduction $J$ of $I$,

$$e(I) - e(J) \leq (d + \lambda(R/L) - 1)e_0(I).$$

Moreover, if $L \neq R$ and $I \neq m$, one replaces $-1$ by $-2$.

5. Lower bounds for $\tilde{e}_1$

Let $(R, m)$ be a Noetherian local ring of dimension $d \geq 1$ and let $I$ be an $m$-primary ideal. If $R$ is Cohen-Macaulay, the original lower bound for $e_1(I)$ was provided by Narita ([22]) and Northcott ([24]),

$$e_1(I) \geq e_0(I) - \lambda(R/I).$$

It has been improved in several ways (see a detailed discussion in [29]). For non Cohen-Macaulay rings, estimates for $e_1(I)$ are in a state of flux.

We are going to experiment with a special class of non Cohen-Macaulay rings and methods in seeking lower bounds for $\tilde{e}_1(I)$. We are going to assume that $R$ is a normal domain and the minimal reduction $J$ of $I$ is generated by a $d$-sequence. This is the case of normal Buchsbaum rings, examples of which can be constructed by a machinery developed in [9] (see also [31]).

Let $A = R[Jt]$ and $B = R[It]$. The corresponding Sally module $S_{B/A}$ is defined by the exact sequence

$$0 \to B_1tA \to B_+ \to S_{A}(B) = \bigoplus_{n \geq 2} B_n/B_1J^{n-1} \to 0.$$

**Lemma 5.1.** Let $(R, m)$ be an analytically unramified local ring and let $J$ be an ideal generated by a system of parameters $= (x_1, \ldots, x_d)$. Then

$$R/J \otimes_R \text{gr}_J(R) \simeq R/J[T_1, \ldots, T_d].$$

**Proof.** Let $R[T_1, \ldots, T_d] \to A$ be a minimal presentation of $A = R[It]$. According to [27] Theorems 3.1, 3.6], the presentation ideal $L$ has all coefficients in $J$, that is $L \subset J[R[T_1, \ldots, T_d]]$. \hfill $\square$

**Proposition 5.2.** Let $(R, m)$ be a normal, analytically unramified local domain and let $J$ be an ideal generated by a system of parameters $J = (x_1, \ldots, x_d)$ of linear type. The Sally module $S_J(B)$ defined above is either 0 or a module of dimension $d$ and multiplicity

$$e_0(S_J(B)) = \deg(S_J(B)) = \tilde{e}_1(I) - e_0(I) - e_1(J) + \lambda(R/I).$$
Proof. By [14] Corollary 4.6, since $R$ is normal of dimension $d \geq 2$, depth $\text{gr}_J(R) \geq 2$. Now we make use of [17, Lemma 1.1] (see also [34, Proposition 3.11]), depth $R[Jt] \geq 2$ as well. Now using [34, Theorem 3.53], we have that $R[Jt]$ has the condition $S_2$ of Serre.

Consider the exact sequence

$$0 \to B_1 R[Jt] \to R[Jt] \to R/J \otimes_R \text{gr}_J(R) \to 0.$$  

By the Lemma, the last algebra is a polynomial ring in $d$ variables. Therefore $B_1 R[Jt]$ satisfies the condition $S_2$ of Serre. Thus in the defining sequence (3) of $S_J(B)$, either $S$ vanishes (and $B_n = B_1 J^n$ for $n \geq 2$) or $\dim S_J(B) = d$. In the last case, the calculation of the Hilbert function (see [34, Remark 2.17]) of $S_J(B)$ gives the asserted expression for its multiplicity.

6. Existence of general bounds

We shall now treat bounds for $e_1(I)$ for several classes of geometric local rings. Suppose $\dim R = d > 0$. Let $I$ be an $m$-primary ideal and let $\mathcal{A} = \{A_n, n \geq 0\}$ be a filtration integral over the $I$-adic filtration. We may assume that $I = J = (x_1, \ldots, x_d)$ is a parameter ideal. We will consider some reductions on $R \to R'$ such that $e_i(\mathcal{A}) = e_i(\mathcal{A}')$, $i = 0, 1$, for $\mathcal{A}' = \{A_n R', n \geq 0\}$.

The use of superficial sequences of length $d - 1$, $x = \{x_1, \ldots, x_{d-1}\}$ is the technique of choice for Cohen-Macaulay rings. In general, as in the equality (1), one needs more control over $H^0_m(R/(x))$. Let us examine first the case of generalized Cohen-Macaulay local rings by examining the effect of certain reductions.

(1) If $d \geq 2$ and $R' = R/H^0_m(R)$, then $e_i(\mathcal{A}) = e_i(\mathcal{A}')$, for $i = 0, 1$, by Proposition 3.2. In addition $H^i_m(R) = H^i_m(R')$ for $i \geq 1$.

(2) Another property is that if $d \geq 2$ and $x_1$ is a superficial element for $\mathcal{A}$ (that is $R$-regular if $d = 2$), the preservation will hold passing to $R_1 = R/(x_1)$. As for the lengths of the local cohomology modules, in case $x_1$ is $R$-regular, from

$$0 \to R \xrightarrow{x} R \to R_1 \to 0$$

we have the exact sequence

$$0 \to H^0_m(R_1) \to H^1_m(R) \to H^1_m(R) \to H^2_m(R) \to \cdots,$$

that gives

$$\lambda(H^0_m(R_1)) \leq \lambda(H^1_m(R)),$$

$$\lambda(H^1_m(R_1)) \leq \lambda(H^1_m(R)) + \lambda(H^2_m(R)),$$

$$\vdots$$

$$\lambda(H^{d-2}_m(R_1)) \leq \lambda(H^{d-2}_m(R)) + \lambda(H^{d-1}_m(R)).$$

(3) Let us combine the two transformations. Let $T = H^0_m(R)$, set $R' = R/T$, let $x \in I$ be a superficial element for $\mathcal{A} R'$ and set $R_1 = R'/\langle x \rangle$. As $x$ is regular on $R'$, we have the exact sequence

$$0 \to T/xT \to R/(x) \to R'/xR' \to 0,$$
and the associated exact sequence

\[ 0 \rightarrow T/xT \rightarrow H^0_m(R/(x)) \rightarrow H^0_m(R'/xR') \rightarrow 0, \]

since \( H^1(T/xT) = 0 \). Note that this gives

\[ R/(x)/H^0_m(R/(x)) \simeq R'/xR'/H^0_m(R'/xR'). \]

There are two consequences to this calculation:

\[
\begin{align*}
\lambda(H^0_m(R/(x))) & \leq \lambda(H^0_m(R)) + \lambda(H^0_m(R'/xR')) \\
& \leq \lambda(H^0_m(R)) + \lambda(H^1_m(R)) \\
\lambda(H^i_m(R/(x))) & \leq \lambda(H^i_m(R)) + \lambda(H^{i+1}_m(R)), \quad 1 \leq i \leq d - 2
\end{align*}
\]

**Proposition 6.1.** Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a generalized Cohen-Macaulay local ring of positive depth, with \(I\) and \(A\) as above. If \(d \geq 2\), consider a sequence of \(d - 1\) reductions of the type \(R \rightarrow R/(x)\), and denote by \(S\) the ring \(R/(x_1, \ldots, x_{d-1})\). Then \(\dim S = 1\) and

\[ \lambda(H^0_m(S)) \leq T(R) = \sum_{i=1}^{d-1} \left( d - 2 \atop i - 1 \right) \lambda(H^i_m(R)). \]

Moreover, if \(R\) is a Buchsbaum ring, equality holds.

Let us illustrate another elementary but useful kind of reduction. Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local domain of dimension \(d \geq 2\) and let \(I\) be an \(\mathfrak{m}\)-primary ideal. Suppose \(R\) has a finite extension \(S\) with the condition \(S_2\) of Serre,

\[ 0 \rightarrow R \rightarrow S \rightarrow C \rightarrow 0. \]

Consider the polynomial ring \(R[x, y]\) and tensor the sequence by \(R' = R[x, y]_m[x, y]\). Then there are \(a, b \in I\) such that the ideal generated by polynomial \(f = ax + by\) has the following type of primary decomposition:

\[ (f) = P \cap Q, \]

where \(P\) is a minimal prime of \(f\) and \(Q\) is \(\mathfrak{m}R'\)-primary. In the sequence

\[ 0 \rightarrow R' \rightarrow S' = R' \otimes_R S \rightarrow C' = R' \otimes_R C \rightarrow 0 \]

we can find \(a \in I\) which is superficial for \(C\), and pick \(b \in I\) so that \((a, b)\) has codimension 2. Now reduce the second sequence modulo \(f = ax + by\). Noting that \(f\) will be superficial for \(C'\), we will have an exact sequence

\[ 0 \rightarrow T \rightarrow R'/f \rightarrow S'/fS' \rightarrow C'/fC' \rightarrow 0, \]

in which \(T\) has finite length and \(S'/fS'\) is an integral domain since \(a, b\) is a regular sequence in \(S\). This suffices to establish the assertion.

Finally we consider generic reductions on \(R\). Let \(X = \mathbb{A}^d = (x_{ij}) \) in \(d(d - 1)\) indeterminates and let \(C\) be the local ring \(R[X]_m[X]\). The filtration \(AC\) has the same Hilbert polynomial as \(A\). If \(I = (x_1, \ldots, x_d)\) we now define the ideal

\[ (f_1, \ldots, f_{d-1}) = (x_1, \ldots, x_d) \cdot X. \]
Proposition 6.2. Let $R$ be an analytically unramified, generalized Cohen-Macaulay integral domain and $I$ and $A$ defined as above. Then $S = C/(f_1, \ldots, f_{d-1})$ is a local ring of dimension one such that $\lambda(H^0_m(S)) \leq T(R)$ and $S/H^0_m(S)$ is an integral domain.

The next result shows the existence of bounds for $\bar{e}_1(I)$ as in [26].

We outline the strategy to find bounds for $e_1(A)$. Suppose $(R, \mathfrak{m})$ is a local domain essentially of finite type over a field and $I$ is an $\mathfrak{m}$-primary ideal, and denote by $A$ a filtration as above. We first achieve a reduction to a one dimensional ring $R \rightarrow R'$, where $e_0(I) = e_0(IR')$, $e_1(A) = e_1(AR')$, and in the sequence

$$0 \rightarrow T = H^0_m(R') \rightarrow R' \rightarrow S \rightarrow 0,$$

$T$ is a prime ideal. Since $S$ is a one-dimensional integral domain

Proposition 6.3. In these conditions,

$$e_1(A) = e_1(AR') = e_1(AS) - \lambda(T),$$

$$e_1(AS) \leq \bar{e}_1(I) = \lambda(\bar{S}/S),$$

where $\bar{S}$ is the integral closure of $S$.

This shows that to find bounds for $e_1(A)$ one needs to trace back to the original ring $R$ the properties of $T$ and $S$. As to $T$, this is realized if $R$ is a generalized Cohen-Macaulay ring for the reductions described in Proposition 6.1.

Theorem 6.1 (Existence of Bounds). Let $(R, \mathfrak{m})$ be a local integral domain of dimension $d$, essentially of finite type over a perfect field, and let $I$ be an $\mathfrak{m}$-primary ideal. If $R$ is a generalized Cohen-Macaulay ring and $\delta$ is a nonzero element of the Jacobian ideal of $R$ then for any $I$-good filtration $A$ as above,

$$e_1(A) < (d - 1)e_0(I) + e_0((I, \delta)/(\delta)) - T.$$

Proof. It is a consequence of the proof of [26, Theorem 3.2(a)]. The assertion there is that

$$\bar{e}_1(I) \leq \frac{t}{t+1}[(d-1)e_0(I) + e_0((I + \delta R)/\delta R)],$$

where $t$ is the Cohen-Macaulay type of $R$. Here we apply it to the reduction in Proposition 6.3

$$\bar{e}_1(IS) < (d - 1)e_0(I) + e_0((I + \delta R)/\delta R),$$

dropping the term involving $t$, over which we lose control in the reduction process. Key to the conclusion is the fact that the element $\delta$ survives the reduction. $\square$

7. Extended degrees and lower bounds for $e_1$

The derivation of upper bounds for $e_1(A)$ above required that $R$ be a generalized Cohen-Macaulay ring. Let us do away with this requirement by working with the variation of the extended degree function $\text{hdeg}$ ([7, 33]) labelled $\text{hdeg}_I$ (see [19, 34, p. 142]). The same method will provide lower bounds for $e_1(I)$. 
Cohomological degrees. Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring (or a standard graded algebra over an Artinian local ring) of infinite residue field. We denote by \(\mathcal{M}(R)\) the category of finitely generated \(R\)-module (or the corresponding category of graded \(R\)-modules).

A general class of these functions was introduced in [7], while a prototype was defined earlier in [33]. In his thesis ([13]), T. Gunston carried out a more formal examination of such functions in order to introduce his own construction of a new cohomological degree. One of the points that must be taken care of is that of an appropriate generic hyperplane section. Let us recall the setting.

**Definition 7.1.** If \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) is a local ring, a notion of genericity on \(\mathcal{M}(R)\) is a function

\[
U : \{\text{isomorphism classes of } \mathcal{M}(R)\} \rightarrow \{\text{non-empty subsets of } \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2\}
\]

subject to the following conditions for each \(A \in \mathcal{M}(R)\):

(i) If \(f - g \in \mathfrak{m}^2\) then \(f \in U(A)\) if and only if \(g \in U(A)\).

(ii) The set \(U(A) \subseteq \mathfrak{m}/\mathfrak{m}^2\) contains a non-empty Zariski-open subset.

(iii) If depth \(A > 0\) and \(f \in U(A)\), then \(f\) is regular on \(A\).

There is a similar definition for graded modules. We shall usually switch notation, denoting the algebra by \(S\).

Another extension is that associated to an \(\mathfrak{m}\)-primary ideal \(I\) ([19]): A notion of genericity on \(R\) with respect to \(I\) is a function

\[
U : \{\text{isomorphism classes of } \mathcal{M}(R)\} \rightarrow \{\text{non-empty subsets of } I \setminus \mathfrak{m}I\}
\]

subject to the following conditions for each \(A \in \mathcal{M}(R)\):

(i) If \(f - g \in \mathfrak{m}I\) then \(f \in U(A)\) if and only if \(g \in U(A)\).

(ii) The set \(U(A) \subseteq I/\mathfrak{m}I\) contains a non-empty Zariski-open subset.

(iii) If depth \(A > 0\) and \(f \in U(A)\), then \(f\) is regular on \(A\).

Fixing a notion of genericity \(U(\cdot)\) one has the following extension of the classical multiplicity.

**Definition 7.2.** A cohomological degree, or extended multiplicity function, is a function

\[
\text{Deg}(\cdot) : \mathcal{M}(R) \mapsto \mathbb{N},
\]

that satisfies the following conditions.

(i) If \(L = \Gamma_\mathfrak{m}(M)\) is the submodule of elements of \(M\) that are annihilated by a power of the maximal ideal and \(\overline{M} = M/L\), then

\[
\text{Deg}(M) = \text{Deg}(\overline{M}) + \lambda(L),
\]

where \(\lambda(\cdot)\) is the ordinary length function.

(ii) (Bertini’s rule) If \(M\) has positive depth, there is \(h \in \mathfrak{m} \setminus \mathfrak{m}^2\), such that

\[
\text{Deg}(M) \geq \text{Deg}(M/hM).
\]

(iii) (The calibration rule) If \(M\) is a Cohen-Macaulay module, then

\[
\text{Deg}(M) = \text{deg}(M),
\]

where \(\text{deg}(M)\) is the ordinary multiplicity of \(M\)
In the case of a notion of genericity relative to an \( m \)-primary ideal \( I \), \( \deg(M) = e(I; M) \), the Samuel’s multiplicity of \( M \) relative to \( I \).

The existence of cohomological degrees in arbitrary dimensions was established in [33]:

**Definition 7.3.** Let \( M \) be a finitely generated graded module over the graded algebra \( A \) and \( S \) a Gorenstein graded algebra mapping onto \( A \), with maximal graded ideal \( m \). Set \( \dim S = r, \dim M = d \). The homological degree of \( M \) is the integer
\[
\text{hdeg}(M) = \deg(M) + \sum_{i=r-d+1}^{r} \binom{d-1}{i-r+d-1} \cdot \text{hdeg}(\text{Ext}^i_S(M, S)).
\]

This expression becomes more compact when \( \dim M = \dim S = d > 0 \):
\[
\text{hdeg}(M) = \deg(M) + \sum_{i=1}^{d} \binom{d-1}{i-1} \cdot \text{hdeg}(\text{Ext}^i_S(M, S)).
\]

**Remark 7.4.** Note that this definition morphs easily into an extended degree noted \( \text{hdeg}_I \) where Samuel multiplicities relative to \( I \) are used. The definition of \( \text{hdeg} \) can be extended to any Noetherian local ring \( S \) by setting \( \text{hdeg}(M) = \text{hdeg}(\hat{S} \otimes_S M) \). On other occasions, we may also assume that the residue field of \( S \) is infinite, an assumption that can be realized by replacing \( (S, m) \) by the local ring \( S[X]_{mS[X]} \). In fact, if \( X \) is any set of indeterminates, the localization is still a Noetherian ring, so the residue field can be assumed to have any cardinality, as we shall assume in the proofs.

**Specialization and torsion.** One of the uses of extended degrees is the following. Let \( M \) be a module and \( x = \{x_1, \ldots, x_r\} \) be a superficial sequence for the module \( M \) relative to \( I \) are used. The definition of \( \text{hdeg} \) can be extended to any Noetherian local ring \( S \) by setting \( \text{hdeg}(M) = \text{hdeg}(\hat{S} \otimes_S M) \). On other occasions, we may also assume that the residue field of \( S \) is infinite, an assumption that can be realized by replacing \( (S, m) \) by the local ring \( S[X]_{mS[X]} \). In fact, if \( X \) is any set of indeterminates, the localization is still a Noetherian ring, so the residue field can be assumed to have any cardinality, as we shall assume in the proofs.

Let us consider the case of \( r = 1 \). Let \( H = H^0_m(M) \) and write
\[
0 \to H \longrightarrow M' \longrightarrow 0.
\]
Reduction modulo \( x_1 \) gives the exact sequence
\[
0 \to H/x_1H \longrightarrow M/x_1M \longrightarrow M'/x_1M' \longrightarrow 0.
\]
From the first sequence we have \( \text{Deg}(M) = \text{Deg}(H) + \text{Deg}(M') \), and from the second
\[
\text{Deg}(M/x_1M) - \text{Deg}(H/x_1H) = \text{Deg}(M'/x_1M') \leq \text{Deg}(M').
\]
Taking local cohomology of the second exact we get the short exact sequence
\[
0 \to H/x_1H \longrightarrow H^0_m(M/x_1M) \longrightarrow H^0_m(M'/x_1M') \longrightarrow 0,
\]
from we have the estimation
\[
\text{Deg}(H^0_m(M/x_1M)) = \text{Deg}(H/x_1H) + \text{Deg}(H^0_m(M'/x_1M')) \\
\leq \text{Deg}(H/x_1H) + \text{Deg}(M'/x_1M') \\
\leq \text{Deg}(H) + \text{Deg}(M') = \text{Deg}(M).
\]
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We resume these observations as:

**Proposition 7.5.** Let $M$ be a module and let \( \{x_1, \ldots, x_r\} \) be a superficial sequence relative to $M$ and $\text{Deg}$. Then

\[
\lambda(H^0_m(M/(x_1, \ldots, x_r)M)) \leq \text{Deg}(M).
\]

Now we derive a more precise formula using $h\text{deg}$. It will be of use later.

**Theorem 7.1.** Let $M$ be a module of dimension $d \geq 2$ and let $x = \{x_1, \ldots, x_{d-1}\}$ be a superficial sequence for $M$ and $h\text{deg}$. Then

\[
\lambda(H^0_m(M/(x)M)) \leq \lambda(H^0_m(M)) + T(M).
\]

**Proof.** Consider the exact sequence

\[
0 \to H = H^0_m(M) \to M \to M' \to 0.
\]

We have $\text{Ext}^i_S(M, S) = \text{Ext}^i_S(M', S)$ for $d > i \geq 0$, and therefore $T(M) = T(M')$. On the other hand, reduction mod $x$ gives

\[
\lambda(H^0_m(M/(x)M)) \leq \lambda(H^0_m(M'/(x)M')) + \lambda(H/(x)H)
\]

\[
\leq \lambda(H^0_m(M'/(x)M')) + \lambda(H),
\]

which shows that it is enough to prove the assertion for $M'$.

If $d > 2$, the argument in the main theorem of \[33\] can be used to pass to $M'/x_1M'$. This reduces all the way to the case $d = 2$. Write $h = x$. The assertion requires that $\lambda(H^0_m(M/hM)) \leq h\text{deg}(\text{Ext}^1_S(M, S))$. We have the cohomology exact sequence

\[
\text{Ext}^1_S(M, S) \xrightarrow{h} \text{Ext}^1_S(M, S) \to \text{Ext}^2_S(M/hM, S) \to \text{Ext}^0_S(M, S) = 0,
\]

where

\[
\lambda(H^0_m(M/hM)) = h\text{deg}(\text{Ext}^2_S(M/hM, S)).
\]

If $\text{Ext}^1_S(M, S)$ has finite length the assertion is clear. Otherwise $L = \text{Ext}^1_S(M, S)$ is a module of dimension 1 over a discrete valuation domain $V$ with $h$ for its parameter. By the fundamental theorem for such modules,

\[
V = V^r \oplus (\bigoplus_{j=1}^s V/h^{e_j}V),
\]

so that multiplication by $h$ gives

\[
\lambda(L/hL) = r + s \leq r + \sum_{j=1}^s e_j = h\text{deg}(L).
\]

An alternative argument at this point is to consider the exact sequence (we may assume $\dim S = 1$)

\[
0 \to L_0 \to L \xrightarrow{h} L \to L/hL \to 0,
\]

where both $L_0$ and $L/hL$ have finite length. If $H$ denotes the image of the multiplication by $h$ on $L$, dualizing we have the short exact sequence

\[
0 \to \text{Hom}_S(L, S) \xrightarrow{h} \text{Hom}_S(L, S) \to \text{Ext}^1_S(L/hL, S) \to \text{Ext}^1_S(L, S),
\]
which shows that
\[ \lambda(L/hL) \leq \deg(L) + \lambda(L_0) = \hdeg(L), \]
as desired. \qed

We now employ the extended degree \( \hdeg_I \) to derive lower bounds for \( e_1(I) \). We begin by making a crude comparison between \( \hdeg(M) \) and \( \hdeg_I(M) \).

**Proposition 7.6.** Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring and let \( I \) be an \( \mathfrak{m} \)-primary ideal. Suppose \( \mathfrak{m}^r \subseteq I \). If \( M \) is an \( R \)-module of dimension \( d \), then
\[ \hdeg_I(M) \leq r^d \cdot \deg(M) + r^{d-1} \cdot (\hdeg(M) - \deg(M)). \]

**Proof.** If \( r \) is the index of nilpotency of \( R/I \), for any \( R \)-module \( L \) of dimension \( s \),
\[ \lambda(L/(\mathfrak{m}^r)^n L) \geq \lambda(L/I^n L). \]
The Hilbert polynomial of \( L \) gives
\[ \lambda(L/(\mathfrak{m}^r)^n L) = \deg(M) \frac{s^s}{s!} n^s + \text{lower terms.} \]
We now apply this estimation to the definition of \( \hdeg(M) \), taking into account that its terms are evaluated at modules of decreasing dimension. \qed

**Theorem 7.2.** Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring and let \( I \) be an \( \mathfrak{m} \)-primary ideal, and let \( M \) be a finitely generated \( R \)-module of dimension \( d \geq 1 \). Let \( \mathbf{x} = \{x_1, \ldots, x_r\} \) be a superficial sequence in \( I \) relative to \( M \) and \( \hdeg_I \). Then
\[ \hdeg_I(M/(\mathbf{x})M) \leq \hdeg_I(M). \]
Moreover, if \( r < d \) then
\[ H^0(M/(\mathbf{x})M) \leq \hdeg_I(M) - e(I; M). \]

If we apply this to \( R \), passing to \( R' = R/(x_1, \ldots, x_{d-1}) \), we have the estimation for \( H^0_\mathfrak{m}(R') \) so that the formula \( \Pi \) can be used:

**Corollary 7.7** (Lower Bound for \( e_1(I) \)). Let \((R, \mathfrak{m})\) be a Noetherian local ring of dimension \( d \geq 1 \). If \( I \) is an \( \mathfrak{m} \)-primary ideal, then
\[ e_1(I) \geq -\hdeg_I(R) + e_0(I). \]
(Note that \( \hdeg_I(R) - e_0(I) \) is the Cohen-Macaulay deficiency of \( R \) relative to the degree function \( \hdeg_I \).)

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