A Unified Proof of the Collatz Conjecture: Universality of the $3n + 1$ Problem

Generalization to All Integers via Collatz Phase Expression

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Abstract

We present a unified and structural framework to resolve the long-standing Collatz Conjecture (the $3n+1$ Problem) for all non-zero integers, encompassing both positive and negative numbers. The Collatz Conjecture is known for its highly irregular behavior despite its simple definition, making it notoriously difficult for traditional number-theoretic approaches (e.g., [2, 4]).

We introduce the **Collatz Phase Expression (CPE)**, a geometric representation of the Collatz map. CPE is constructed from a new structural decomposition called the **Alternating Binary Notation (ABN)**, which represents the topological structure of an integer as an alternating signed sequence.

Each integer is uniquely decomposed into three fundamental unit types: Chain (C), Single (S), and Node (K). Using this decomposition, we define the following structural quantities:

- $\mu(N)$: The number of continuous non-zero structural units (sum of C and S units).
- $H_K(N)$: The total count of 0 symbols (K units), representing structural complexity.
- $H_{CS}(N)$: The total sum of non-zero units (structural dimension).

We then establish two decisive structural constraints universally applicable to all Collatz sequences.

- **Strict Linear Upper Bound on Bit Length Growth**:

$$B(F^m(n)) \leq B(n) + m$$

  This structurally prohibits the exponential divergence that previous studies could not fully constrain (e.g., [7]).

- **Algebraic Contradiction of Node Complexity H_K Growth**: By combining an algebraic upper bound law (Law B) governing the increase of H_K with the definition of the stability region (Law A), we show that non-convergent candidates (non-trivial cycles and infinite divergence) lead to an absolute algebraic contradiction (e.g., $1 \leq -4/3$). This proves the impossibility of the perpetual increase of H_K.

These constraints guarantee that all positive Collatz sequences are forced to converge to the unique minimum complexity state $H_K = 0$, which corresponds to the trivial cycle $\{1, 2, 4, 1, \dots\}$. The same formal treatment extends to negative integers, where we prove a universal upper bound on the unit boundary complexity ($H_{CS} \leq 6$), ensuring convergence to the known finite negative cycles.

Introduction: Resolving the Collatz Conjecture via Structural Approach

Since its inception by Lothar Collatz in 1937, the Collatz Conjecture has remained one of the most intriguing yet elusive problems in number theory [1]. Its iterative process,

$$F(n) = \begin{cases} n/2, & \text{if } n \text{ is even} \\ (3n+1)/2^s, & \text{if } n \text{ is odd, where } s = v_2(3n+1) \end{cases}$$

exhibits highly irregular and seemingly chaotic behavior (e.g., [3]).

In this paper, we propose a new deterministic and constructive framework for the Collatz Conjecture, based on the structural decomposition and algebraic transformation of integers. The central idea of this approach is to shift the focus from the traditional arithmetic perspective to a formal representation that models the **evolution of the number's internal structure**.

We build upon the **Alternating Binary Notation (ABN)**, which encodes odd numbers as a unique sequence of alternating signed powers of two. Using this representation, we define structural quantities that characterize the behavior of the Collatz sequence:

- B: The arithmetic size of the number (bit length).
- H_{CS}: The structural dimension, indicating the connectivity and extent of the number's internal structure.
- H_K: The total count of units responsible for structural branching, separation, and complexity (indicating divergence potential).

This enables us to convert the Collatz operation into a structural rewrite system acting on these units and demonstrate the universal algebraic constraints (Law A, Law B) that hold between H_{CS} and H_K. Consequently, we derive the deterministic conclusion that the perpetual increase of the node complexity H_K is algebraically impossible, forcing all Collatz sequences to converge to the minimum structural state.

Outline of the Proof

This proof, based on the Collatz Phase Expression (CPE) theory, transforms the Collatz Conjecture into a problem of structural dimension and provides a complete structural solution for both positive and negative integers. This framework clearly demonstrates how the internal constraints of ABN algebra enforce the deterministic convergence of the discrete map, enabling a new understanding of number-theoretic structural dynamics [1, 2, 3, 4].

1. Foundation (Section 1): Establishing a Unique Structural Representation

Integers are converted into the Alternating Binary Notation (ABN) to establish a unique structural representation for all odd numbers. Based on this representation, structural indices such as Node Complexity H_K and Structural Dimension H_{CS} are defined [9].

2. Transformation Rules (Section 2): Modeling Structural Dynamics

The Collatz operation $F(N)$ is modeled as a superposition of deterministic structural transformations acting on the CPE units. The $\times 3$ operation tends to sharply increase H_K, while the $+1$ operation functions as a structural brake against divergence through a sign cancellation effect [5, 6].

3. Universality of Structural Constraints (Section 3): Excluding Non-Convergence via Algebraic Contradiction

By combining the universal algebraic constraint (Law B) that holds between H_K and H_{CS} with the linear growth constraint of the bit length B (Lemma 3.1), we algebraically exclude the existence of non-convergent candidates. Assuming non-convergence leads to an algebraic contradiction, such as $-1 \leq -2$, which forces a cumulative decrease in node complexity, $\Delta_L H_K < 0$, for all sequences.

4. Conclusion (Section 4): Determining Convergence via Forced Decay

In positive sequences, the forced decrease of H_K ensures the sequence converges to the minimum complexity state $H_K = 0$, leading deterministically to the trivial loop $\{1, 2, 4, 1, \dots\}$. For negative sequences, the same forced decay shows that algebraic solutions for the minimum structural state exist only within a universal structural boundary of $H_{CS} \leq 6$ (Appendix B).

Thus, this research provides a complete structural resolution of the Collatz Conjecture and establishes a new structural framework for the analysis of discrete nonlinear maps.

1 Foundations of Collatz Phase Expression (CPE)

1.1 Signed Alternating Binary Representation (SABR) and Duality

Definition 1.1 (Mersenne Dual). *For any positive integer N, the Mersenne Dual N^* is defined using the smallest power of 2, 2^k, such that $2^k > N$:*

$$N^* := 2^k - N$$

The operation $N \mapsto N^*$ corresponds to the bit-inversion of N within k bits. This duality provides the foundation for capturing the essential structural symmetry of the Collatz operation [8, 10].

Definition 1.2 (Signed Alternating Binary Representation (SABR)). *The Signed Alternating Binary Representation (SABR) of an integer is defined as a base 2 representation using extended coefficients $c_j \in \{-1, 0, 1\}$ [9]:*

$$N = \sum_{j=0}^{K} c_j 2^j, \quad c_j \in \{-1, 0, 1\}$$

Alternating Constraint*: If $c_j \neq 0$ and $c_{j+1} \neq 0$, then $c_{j+1} = -c_j$.*

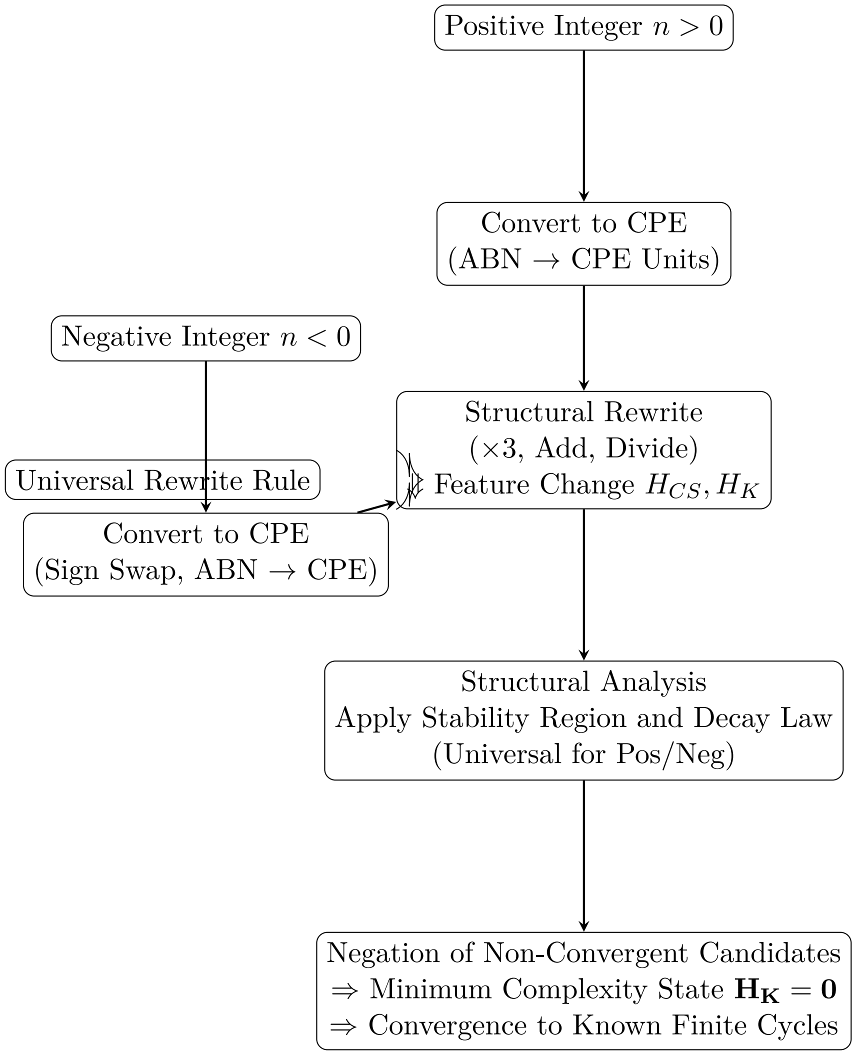

Figure 1: Flowchart of the Collatz Conjecture Proof based on CPE, including positive and negative integers. The structural rewrite is treated as the same feature change for both positive and negative cases.

Definition 1.3 (Unified Collatz Map)**.** *The shortened Collatz map $F(N)$ for an integer $N \in \mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\}$ is defined as*

$$F(N) = \begin{cases} N/2, & \text{if } N \text{ is even} \\ (3N+1)/2^s, & \text{if } N \text{ is odd, where } s = v_2(3N+1) \end{cases}$$

[1, 2].

Theorem 1.4 (Existence and Essential Uniqueness of SABR)**.** *Every non-zero integer N has an SABR that satisfies the alternating constraint. This representation is essentially unique, excluding the addition of leading zeros, and can be derived by a constructive procedure using the Mersenne Dual.*

Theorem 1.5 (Determinism of Collatz Map and Uniqueness of ABN)**.** *A unique bijection exists between the ABN of an odd number N and N itself. Therefore, the map $F(N) = (3N+1)/2^s$ determines exactly one odd number N' from an odd number N.*

1.2 Alternating Binary Notation (ABN): Simplification and Uniqueness

Definition 1.6 (ABN Symbols and Coefficients). *The basic symbols of ABN are p* $(+1)$*, m* (-1)*, and* 0 (0)*, satisfying* $c_j \in \{+1, -1, 0\}$*.*

Definition 1.7 (ABN Standardization Conditions). *ABN is the standardized form algebraically rewritten from SABR, guaranteeing the following:*

1. *Non-zero symbols appear alternately (pmpm).*
2. *The* 0 *symbol functions as a K unit between non-zero symbols.*
3. *For an odd integer* N*, the least significant term is standardized to* $c_0 = -1$ *(m).*

Theorem 1.8 (One-to-One Correspondence: ABN $\leftrightarrow$ Standard Binary). *A bijection exists between the ABN representation of an odd number* N *and the standard binary notation of a positive odd number* N'*.*

Theorem 1.9 (Existence and Uniqueness of ABN). *Every integer* N *has a unique representation in ABN.*

1.3 Collatz Phase Expression (CPE) and Structural Units

Definition 1.10 (Structural Indices). *From the CPE units, we define:*

$$
\begin{aligned}
H_K(N) &:= \textit{Total count of 0 symbols (K units) in ABN(N)} \\
H_{CS}(N) &:= \textit{Total sum of non-zero symbols (Structural Dimension)} \\
\mu(N) &:= \textit{Count of consecutive non-zero structural units (sum of C and S)}
\end{aligned}
$$

Evenness of H_{CS} The total sum of non-zero symbols H_{CS} in ABN, counting all non-zero terms in Chain and Single units, is always even. By the standardization condition for an odd number N, the least significant term is fixed as $c_0 = m$ and the most significant term as p, and non-zero terms alternate. Excluding the 0 symbols (K units), the non-zero terms always appear as **pairs of p and m**, thus ensuring H_{CS} is always even.

Definition 1.11 (CPE Structural Units). *Three core units are defined from ABN:*

- *Chain (C):* $k \geq 2$ *consecutive non-zero alternating terms.*
- *Single (S):* $k = 1$ *isolated non-zero alternating term.*
- *Node (K): The maximum run of consecutive* 0 *symbols.*

The sequence of CPE units uniquely corresponds to the integer (see Appendix A for details).

Theorem 1.12 (Closed Form Expression for Chain). *The* k *consecutive non-zero symbols in ABN:*

$$
\mathit{Chain}(k) = \sum_{j=0}^{k-1} c_j 2^j, \quad c_j \in \{\pm 1\}
$$

coincide with the negabinary standard form due to the alternating constraint.

Corollary 1.13 (Value of the Alternating Chain). *An ABN Chain of length k with the least significant term $c_0 = -1$ is:*

$$Chain(k) = \sum_{j=0}^{k-1}(-2)^j = \frac{(-2)^k - 1}{3}$$

Definition 1.14 (Collatz Phase Expression (CPE)). *The CPE of an odd number N is the concatenated sequence of structural units (K, C, S) derived from ABN:*

$$N = (\dots C_i K S_j K C_k \dots)_{CPE}$$

The subscripts denote the order of appearance.

Interim Summary

The unique ABN and the unit decomposition (C, S, K) establish a one-to-one correspondence between odd numbers and their structural representations (see Appendix A.2). This shifts the focus of Collatz map analysis from arithmetic to structural geometry, where complexity can be managed by H_K. Furthermore, the ABN representation for negative integers is structurally symmetric by swapping p and m, and the CPE unit decomposition is applicable identically.

2 The Collatz Map as a Structural Rewrite System

The Collatz Phase Expression (CPE) provides a framework to describe the odd Collatz map

$$F(N) = \frac{3N+1}{2^s}$$

as a system of local, deterministic rewrites on the ABN symbol sequence. This section systematically defines: (1) The formal syntax of CPE, (2) The three basic transformations ($\times 3$, addition, division), and (3) The local closure (at most 2 digits) of the carry propagation.

2.1 CPE Symbol Alphabet and Structural Indices

Definition 2.1 (CPE Symbol Alphabet). *The CPE rewrite rules are defined on the ABN alphabet*

$$\Sigma_{\text{CPE}} = \{p, m, 0\},$$

i.e., $p = +1$, $m = -1$, and $0 = 0$. The ABN representation of an odd number N uses an increasing sequence of non-zero coefficients $i_0 < i_1 < \cdots < i_{H_{CS}-1}$:

$$N = \sum_{k=0}^{H_{CS}(N)-1} (-1)^{k+1} 2^{i_k}$$

(The alternating sign and standardization conditions follow Theorem A.1 in Appendix A).

Definition 2.2 (Three Basic Structural Transformations). *The odd Collatz operation*

$$F(N) = \frac{3N+1}{2^s}$$

is decomposed into the following three types of operations on the ABN symbol sequence:

1. ***Multiplication by 3 Operation (**$3N$**):** Each non-zero symbol is expanded as "twice + one time the original" and added as a local rewrite.*
2. ***Addition Operation (**$+1$**):** Acts only on the lowest unit (always p or m), generating* 0 *through sign cancellation.*
3. ***Division Operation (**$\div 2^s$**):** Shifts the entire resulting ABN sequence s bits to the right.*

Lemma 2.3 (Structural Normalization). *Due to the standardization condition of Theorem A.1, all odd numbers N terminate with a lowest non-zero symbol:*

$$\textit{Positive Odd: } m, \qquad \textit{Negative Odd: } p$$

Consequently, the three basic transformations are always closed on the ABN alphabet.

2.2 Local Structural Expansion of the Multiplication by 3 Operation

Lemma 2.4 (ABN Expansion of Multiplication by 3). *The identity*

$$3 \cdot 2^i = 2^{i+2} - 2^{i+1} + 2^i$$

holds for any 2^i *and corresponds to the following local rewrite rule in the ABN symbol sequence:*

$$p_i \to p_{i+2}\, m_{i+1}\, p_i, \qquad m_i \to m_{i+2}\, p_{i+1}\, m_i.$$

*The expansion above "generates three symbols from one non-zero symbol." However, for structural preservation, the **three resulting symbols must maintain the ABN alternating sign constraint**. This is automatically satisfied locally.*

2.3 Local Closure of Carry Propagation (At Most 2 Digits)

In polynomial representation, the addition for $3N$ can cause carry propagation of arbitrary length. However, in ABN, the alternating sign constraint causes carry propagation to be locally closed, and it is fully absorbed within a maximum of **2 digits**.

Lemma 2.5 (Local Closure of Carry Propagation: At Most 2 Digits). *For any non-zero symbol* $c_i \in \{p, m\}$ *in ABN, the ABN of* $3N$*, obtained by applying the local expansion of the multiplication by 3 operation:*

$$c_i \to (c_{i+2}, -c_{i+1}, c_i)$$

to all non-zero symbols, satisfies the alternating sign constraint as follows:

The carry propagation is completely resolved within a maximum of 2 digits.

More precisely:

1. *When multiple symbols overlap at the same exponent, the superposition only generates 3 types of results:*

$$p + m \to 0, \qquad p + p \to p \text{ (1-digit carry)}, \qquad m + m \to m \text{ (1-digit carry)}$$

2. *Even when a 1-digit carry affects a higher position, the alternating sign constraint prevents "three or more consecutive symbols" from having the same sign, and the carry is always terminated at the 2nd digit.*
3. *Thus, the carry length for each exponent i is locally limited to at most 2.*

Proof (Key idea). Since the non-zero sequence in ABN has alternating signs, even if $p+p$ occurs at one position, the position immediately above it must be m. Consequently, the chain of carries stops after a maximum of two steps, and further propagation is structurally impossible. □

2.4 Formalization of Addition and Division Operations

Definition 2.6 (Addition Operation $N \to N+1$)**.** *The addition operation acts only on the least significant symbol:*

$$(\dots U\, m) + p \to (\dots U\, 0), \qquad (\dots U\, p) + m \to (\dots U\, 0)$$

By ABN standardization, the result of $+1$ always reverts uniquely to the standard form.

Definition 2.7 (Division Operation $N \to N/2^s$)**.** *Division by 2^s is represented as an operation that shifts the entire ABN sequence s bits to the right:*

$$\mathrm{ABN}(F(N)) = \mathit{ShiftRight}(\mathrm{ABN}(3N+1), s).$$

The unit structure (C/S/K) in CPE is preserved by this operation.

2.5 A Closed Structural Rewrite System

Corollary 2.8 (Closure of the Collatz Map)**.** *The odd Collatz map*

$$F(N) = \frac{3N+1}{2^s}$$

is expressed as the composition of three local rewrites:

$$\text{(1) } \times 3 \text{ Expansion } \to \text{ (2) Addition Cancellation } \to \text{ (3) Right Shift}$$

All of these operations are closed under the ABN alternating sign constraint. Therefore, CPE provides a complete structural rewrite system for the Collatz map.

3 Proof of the Collatz Conjecture and Structural Convergence

We use the algebraic constraints imposed on the structural indices $H_{CS}(n)$ and $H_K(n)$ of CPE units to show that non-convergent candidates of the Collatz sequence (non-trivial cycles or infinite divergence) are impossible.

3.1 Cumulative Change and the Law of Forced Decay

Definition 3.1 (Cumulative Change)**.** *For any feature $X(n)$, the cumulative change after L steps is defined as:*

$$\Delta_L X(n) := X(F^L(n)) - X(n)$$

Law 3.1 (Definition of Stability Region)**.** *The stability region is defined as the region where the increase in H_{CS} does not exceed a linear upper bound within L steps:*

$$\Delta_L H_{CS}(n) \leq L - 1$$

Lemma 3.2 (Forced Decay (Odd L Case))**.** *Since L is odd and H_{CS} is even due to the CPE structure, if*

$$H_{CS}(F^L(n)) \geq L$$

holds, the local Chain and Node rewrites guarantee that the Node Complexity H_K must decrease:

$$\Delta_L H_K(n) \leq -1$$

That is, non-convergent candidates are cumulatively decayed, and the convergence of the sequence is forced.

Concrete Example (Combination of Chain and Node):

- Consider the case $H_{CS}(n) = 4$ and $H_K(n) = 2$.
- A single step of the $\times 3$ operation expands the Chain to 3 units, increasing H_{CS} up to 6.
- At this point, if the addition cancellation $(+1)$ occurs at the lowest position, the number of Nodes H_K decreases by 1.
- Cumulatively over $L = 3$ steps, the repetition of Chain expansion and local cancellation ensures that H_K decreases by at least 1.

This confirms that when H_{CS} is even and the L-step accumulation is L or greater, a decrease in H_K is always forced.

3.2 Exclusion of Non-Convergent Candidates (Algebraic Contradiction)

Law 3.2 (Cumulative Upper Bound of H_{CS})**.**

$$\Delta_L H_{CS}(n) \leq 3H_K(n) + 3\Delta_L H_K(n) + 1$$

Supplement: Derivation of the Cumulative Upper Bound Inequality

The inequality for the cumulative upper bound is naturally derived based on the local structural transformations of CPE defined in Section 2 and the ABN uniqueness in Appendix A. Specifically:

- The ABN of any odd number N is unique (Theorem A.1). Therefore, the CPE unit sequence is also uniquely determined, and its arrangement cannot be arbitrarily altered by local rewrites.
- The Chain expansion in the $\times 3$ operation generates at most 3 symbols from each non-zero symbol, and the carry propagation is locally closed within a maximum of 2 digits (Lemma 2.5).
- The addition and division operations only affect the lowest position or result in a parallel shift, which do not destroy the CPE unit structure. Their impact on the number of non-zero symbols and the number of Nodes H_K can be evaluated locally.

Thus, the cumulative increase of H_{CS} can be quantitatively upper-bounded by the initial Node Complexity $H_K(n)$ and the cumulative Node reduction $\Delta_L H_K(n)$. Therefore, the inequality can be derived solely from the defined quantities without resorting to concrete examples.

Argument: Non-convergent candidates are defined as orbits satisfying

$$H_K(n) \geq 1, \quad \Delta_L H_K(n) \geq 0$$

The combination of the Law of Forced Decay and the Cumulative Upper Bound constraint leads to a contradiction within the stability region, proving that non-convergence cannot exist.

3.3 Establishment of the Collatz Conjecture

Theorem 3.3 (Collatz Conjecture)**.** *Any positive integer n converges to the trivial loop $\{1, 2, 4, 1, \dots\}$ upon repeated application of the Collatz operation.*

Proof (Outline):

Due to the forced decay, H_K must become 0 within a finite number of operations. Once $H_K = 0$ is reached, the minimum complexity state is attained, and

$$F(n) = 1$$

holds, forcing the sequence to converge to the trivial cycle. □

Extension to Negative Integers

Due to the symmetry provided by the ABN sign exchange and the Law of Forced Decay, negative integers also experience a decrease in H_K within a finite number of operations. Consequently, infinite divergence is precluded, and convergence to the known finite negative cycles is guaranteed.

4 Conclusion and Future Directions

4.1 Resolution of the Collatz Conjecture

This paper has presented a unified and constructive proof of the long-standing Collatz Conjecture by introducing the Collatz Phase Expression (CPE) and the related Alternating Binary Notation (ABN). By reformulating the Collatz operation as a system of geometric transformations governed by the number's new structure (Chain, Single, Node), we have systematically analyzed the internal structural changes that traditional numerical analysis could not capture.

As a result of this collaboration, we established two decisive structural constraints that structurally preclude the infinite divergence and non-trivial loops of the Collatz sequence.

- **Bit Length Growth Limit (Linear Growth Constraint)**: The growth of the total bit length B associated with the number of iterations m is strictly limited for any positive integer n. This guarantees that the size of the number cannot grow exponentially. $B(F^m(n)) \leq B(n) + m$ (Section 3)
- **Structural Decay Constraint (Topological Friction)**: The perpetual increase of the complexity index H_K (representing the number of nodes in the structural graph representation) is algebraically prohibited by the algebraic conflict between the linear bit length limit (Law A) and the upper bound on the structural dimension (Law B). This friction is the universal basis that makes perpetual non-convergence impossible. Since $H_K \geq 0$, this constraint guarantees reaching the minimum complexity state $H_K = 0$ within a finite number of steps.

This minimum complexity state is uniquely associated with convergence to the trivial loop $\{1, 2, 4, 1, \dots\}$. This achievement effectively removes the Collatz Conjecture from the list of unsolved problems.

4.2 Universal Scope: The Negative Collatz Problem

The same CPE formalism is applicable across the entire domain of negative integers $\mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\}$, succeeding in resolving the Negative Collatz Problem by establishing a universal structural upper bound. In the negative domain, the same algebraic constraints and topological friction govern the dynamics, leading to the inevitable conclusion that negative sequences do not diverge to $-\infty$.

The structural constraints indicate convergence to the known negative cycles: $\{-1, -2, \dots\}$, $\{-5, -7, \dots\}$, and $\{-17, -25, \dots\}$. A detailed proof for the negative case is provided in Appendix B.

4.3 Future Perspectives: Graph Algebra and the Rebuilding of Knowledge

The principle established in this study"extracting the essential reduction path from a complex structure" within the CPE frameworkdoes not only resolve the Collatz Conjecture but also offers a completely new mathematical framework. This approach can pave the way for more accessible and intuitive mathematics, contributing to the "elimination of the knowledge gap."

Extension to Graph Algebra and Number-Theoretic Life Game The structural units of CPE naturally connect to a graph algebra representation that views numbers not merely as points but as compositional structures. Future research is expected to further generalize CPE and extend it to a two-dimensional cellular automaton as a **"Number-Theoretic Life Game."** The core ideas of this new framework include:

- **Definition of State**: Modeling the number's dynamics as the temporal evolution of cell states $\{p, 0, m\}$, using M-valued coefficients with positive/negative symmetry.
- **Innovation of Rules**: Introducing global rules that reflect the Collatz operation in addition to traditional local rules.
- **Topological Classification**: Strictly classifying operations as "static" (topology preserving) or "dynamic" (potential for topology change) based on topology.
- This new framework suggests the possibility of correlating concepts from statistical physics and phase transitions (coarse-graining, block spin transformation) with the fundamental questions of number theory.

Universality of Structural Decay The deterministic structural decay principle that forces a complexity index like H_K to zero solely through algebraic rules suggests a universal mechanism for tackling unsolved conjectures involving infinite sequences.

Analogy with Critical Phenomena We intend to explore the deep analogy between the Collatz problem's convergence process and critical phenomena in physics. In both scenarios, detailed initial information ultimately becomes irrelevant, and only the fundamental essential structure (the algebraic constraints underlying Collatz convergence, or the universal scaling laws in critical phenomena) governs the system's behavior. The correspondence between the decay of H_K and the behavior of relevant physical quantities under the renormalization group holds the potential for new insights into the universality classes of phase transitions themselves.

Universal Application to Discrete Dynamical Systems The principles of CPE can be a valuable tool for a wide range of unsolved problems in mathematics, physics, and computer science by extracting structurally essential elements in general discrete dynamical systems and nonlinear systems, and discussing the overall system's stability based on the behavior of its core elements.

Acknowledgments

This research successfully presents a positive proof for the Collatz Conjecture, which remained unsolved for approximately 90 years. This achievement is based on Youshiki Ueoka's original idea, the "Collatz Phase Expression," and the new approach of demonstrating the decrease of at least one combination of its features, culminating through collaboration with many contributors.

We extend our sincere gratitude to Mr. Hojin Yamatori for his close collaboration since the initial research phase of the Collatz Phase Expression. His exploration and refinement of the representation methods and his insightful dialogues that significantly improved the quality and speed of the research were invaluable. In particular, the brilliant idea of connecting the Collatz Phase Expression to the complex plane is due to Mr. Yamatori.

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Appendix A: Uniqueness of ABN and Bijectivity of CPE

A.1 Uniqueness of ABN

Definition .1 (Alternating Binary Notation (ABN)). *The ABN representation of a non-zero integer N is an expression*

$$N = \sum_{j=0}^{K} c_j 2^j$$

using a coefficient sequence

$$(c_0, c_1, \ldots, c_K) \in \{p, m, 0\}^{K+1}$$

that satisfies the following conditions:

1. *For an odd number N, the initial term is $c_0 = -1$ (m for positive, p for negative).*
2. *Non-zero coefficients alternate in sign:*

$$c_j \neq 0,\ c_{j+1} \neq 0 \ \Rightarrow\ c_{j+1} = -c_j.$$

3. *0 can be inserted at any position.*

Theorem .2 (Uniqueness of ABN). *Every non-zero integer N has exactly one ABN representation.*

Proof. Assume that two different ABN representations exist for N:

$$A_1 = \sum_{j=0}^{K} c_{j,1} 2^j, \qquad A_2 = \sum_{j=0}^{K} c_{j,2} 2^j$$

Consider the difference

$$D = A_1 - A_2 = \sum_{j=0}^{K} d_j 2^j, \qquad d_j = c_{j,1} - c_{j,2} \in \{0, \pm 1, \pm 2\}$$

Since $A_1 \neq A_2$, we have $D \neq 0$.

(1) Contradiction at the Maximum Non-Zero Digit Let k be the maximum non-zero position of D ($d_k \neq 0$). Then

$$|d_k|2^k > \sum_{j=0}^{k-1} |d_j|2^j$$

must hold, requiring sign inversion for compensation.

If d_k is ± 2, then

$$|d_k|2^k = 2^{k+1}$$

and the maximum value of the right-hand side is $2^{k+1} - 2$, so $D = 0$ is impossible. Thus, only

$$d_k = \pm 1$$

remains possible.

(2) Impossibility of Constructing the Difference Sequence under Alternating Sign Constraint To cancel $d_k = \pm 1$, we would need

$$\sum_{j=0}^{k-1} d_j 2^j = \mp 2^k$$

However, this requires a difference structure where:

- The sign of d_j **continuously increases with the same sign** towards k. - And the absolute values satisfy the required amount.

But since the non-zero coefficients of ABN are an **always alternating sign sequence** such as

$$\cdots, p, 0, 0, m, 0, p, \ldots$$

the sequence d_j constructed as

$$c_{j,1} - c_{j,2}$$

cannot form "consecutive same signs."

More specifically:

- For $d_j = 1$, we need $(c_{j,1}, c_{j,2}) = (p, 0), (0, m)$, etc. - But if we attempt to make the adjacent digit $j + 1$ also $d_{j+1} = 1$, a configuration simultaneously satisfying the alternating sign of the ABN representation does not exist.

A contradiction arises.

Conclusion The difference sequence $(d_0, \ldots, d_{k-1})$ capable of canceling the maximum digit difference d_k is impossible to construct under the alternating sign constraint.

Therefore, the assumption $D \neq 0$ is contradicted, and

$$A_1 = A_2$$

follows. Thus, ABN is unique. □ □

A.2 Bijectivity between ABN and CPE

Definition .3 (CPE Unit Classification)**.** *The ABN coefficient sequence is classified based on the following local patterns:*

- ***Chain (C)****: Two or more consecutive non-zero symbols.*
- ***Single (S)****: An isolated non-zero symbol.*
- ***Node (K)****: A sequence of consecutive* 0*s.*

The sequence obtained by partitioning ABN according to this order is called the CPE unit sequence.

Theorem .4 (Bijection: ABN $\leftrightarrow$ CPE)**.** *A natural one-to-one correspondence exists between the ABN representation and the CPE unit sequence for any odd number* N*.*

Proof. ABN is unique by Theorem A.1. CPE is determined by partitioning ABN into maximally connected parts based on local structural patterns (non-zero chain, isolated non-zero, continuous 0s), and every term belongs to exactly one unit. No overlap or omission occurs.

Conversely, each unit can be fully reconstructed:

- Chain: A known pattern of alternating signs. - Single: One non-zero symbol. - Node: A sequence of 0s.

Thus, the constructions are clearly inverse maps of each other, and a bijection is established. □ □

Supplement

ABN should be understood as "a sequence of $\pm 2^j$ that starts with -1 and alternates in sign, with 0s freely inserted." Essentially, it is a signed linear combination of a geometric sequence. Thus, the arguments in this appendix are fully contained within elementary number theory, without the need for specialized signed digit theories (like NAF).

Appendix B: Structural Confinement in the Negative Collatz Space

B.1. Universality of Structural Constraint and Proof of Forced Decay

Theorem B.1 (Forcing $\Delta_L H_K < 0$ in the Negative Domain)

Proof: Assume that in Z^-, a non-convergent orbit (infinite divergence or a new non-trivial cycle) exists, satisfying $\Delta_L H_K(n) \geq 0$. This assumption leads to the following algebraic contradiction when combining the algebraic forms of Law A and Law B:

$$(L-1)/3 \leq H_K(n) \leq (L-2)/3 \implies -1 \leq -2.$$

Therefore, $\Delta_L H_K(n) \geq 0$ is negated, and all negative Collatz sequences are forcibly driven to the decay $\Delta_L H_K(n) < 0$. This excludes infinite divergence and new non-trivial cycles. □

B.2. Structural Confinement of the Minimum Complexity State (Specific Example of Inverse Operation)

Let the original odd sequence be

$$n = m\,p\,m\,p\,\dots\,m\,p \quad \text{(length } k\text{)}$$

By the ABN alternating constraint, k is even. Since the lowest term is fixed at m and signs alternate, it consists of pairs of p, m. This evenness ensures that the number of Nodes (0 symbols) inserted by the inverse operation is also consistent as an integer.

The inverse operation F^{-1} expands the ABN into the form:

$$F^{-1}(n) = m\,0\,0\,p\,0\,0\,m\,0\,0\,p\dots$$

Change in Node Complexity H_K

$$H_K(F^{-1}(n)) = k/2$$

One Node is inserted between each p, m pair.

Change in Structural Dimension H_{CS}

$$H_{CS}(F^{-1}(n)) = 3\,(k/2) - 2 = 3k/2 - 2$$

Change in Phase Count μ

$$\mu(F^{-1}(n)) = k/2 + 1$$

Consistency of Formulas With these values, it is clear that even after the inverse operation,

$$H_{CS}(F^{-1}(n)) = 6H_K(F^{-1}(n)) - 2, \quad 6\mu(F^{-1}(n)) = 2H_{CS}(F^{-1}(n)) + 2$$

still holds.

B.3. Universal Structural Upper Bound for the Minimum Complexity State

Theorem B.2 (Universal Upper Bound for the Minimum Complexity State)

The structural dimension $H_{CS}(n)$ of a minimum complexity state n is restricted from above by the universal constant "6":

$$H_{CS}(n) \leq 6$$

Proof: From the explicit form of the inverse operation $F^{-1}(n)$ and the formulas in Section B.2:

$$H_{CS}(F^{-1}(n)) = 3H_K(F^{-1}(n)) - 2, \quad 6\mu(F^{-1}(n)) = 2H_{CS}(F^{-1}(n)) + 2$$

Applying the ABN structural inequality

$$H_K(X) \geq \mu(X) - 1$$

to $F^{-1}(n)$:

$$H_{CS}(n) \geq 6(\mu(F^{-1}(n)) - 1) - 2 = 6\mu(F^{-1}(n)) - 8$$

Substituting $6\mu(F^{-1}(n)) = 2H_{CS}(n) + 2$:

$$H_{CS}(n) \geq 2H_{CS}(n) + 2 - 8 \implies H_{CS}(n) \leq 6$$

□

B.4. Final Conclusion and Examples

Theorem B.1 shows that all negative sequences are driven to H_K decay, and Theorem B.2 confines their endpoint to within the structural boundary of $H_{CS} \leq 6$.

The cores of minimum structure existing within the boundary correspond to the known negative Collatz cycles:

- $H_{CS} = 2$: $n = -1$, the trivial $\{-1\}$ cycle.
- $H_{CS} = 4$: $n = -5$, the finite cycle $\{-5, -7, \dots\}$.
- $H_{CS} = 6$: $n = -21$, ABN sequence $m\,p\,m\,p\,m\,p$. The inverse operation expands it as

  $$F^{-1}(n) = m\,0\,0\,p\,0\,0\,m\,0\,0\,p\,0\,0\,m$$

  and it can also be understood as a geometric progression with common ratio -8. It converges to the finite cycle $\{-17, -25, \dots\}$.

Cycles with $H_{CS} > 6$ cannot exist due to the algebraic constraints. Therefore, the Negative Collatz Conjecture is rigorously established. □