# Two-Dimensional Cellular Automata and the Analysis of Correlated Time Series 

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#### Abstract

Correlated time series are time series that, by virtue of the underlying process to which they refer, are expected to influence each other strongly. We introduce a novel approach to handle such time series, one that models their interaction as a two-dimensional cellular automaton and therefore allows them to be treated as a single entity. We apply our approach to the problems of filling gaps and predicting values in rainfall time series. Computational results show that the new approach compares favorably to Kalman smoothing and filtering.


Keywords: Correlated time series, Two-dimensional cellular automata.

## 1 Introduction

Let $P$ be a set comprising $p$ members, and for each $i \in P$ consider the sequence $X_{i}=\left\langle x_{i}^{1}, \ldots, x_{i}^{T}\right\rangle$, where $x_{i}^{t}$ is a real number for $1 \leq t \leq T$. In this paper we consider scenarios in which the sequences $X_{1}, \ldots, X_{p}$ are correlated time series, that is, the $t$ that provides indices into each sequence is a time parameter, and moreover for distinct $i$ and $j$ the constituents of $X_{i}$ cannot be assumed to be independent of those of $X_{j}$.

Typical situations in which such a scenario arises are those in which $P$ stands for a set of points in geographic space (assumed flat, for simplicity) and each $X_{i}$ stands for a series of periodic measurements related to some natural process at point $i$, such as rainfall, temperature, and several others. Important problems related to the processing of such time series are the estimation of missing values and also the prediction of values before they are measured. The former problem

[^0]is normally posed on the set of full sequences, that is, after they have each acquired $T$ entries, even though some of these entries may in fact be tags for missing values, henceforth called gaps. The latter problem, in turn, can be posed for each point $i$ at all instants $t=2, \ldots, T$ and requires that $x_{i}^{t}$ be predicted after only $t-1$ instants have elapsed.

Despite the fact that $X_{1}, \ldots, X_{p}$ are dependent on one another, the usual approach to either of the two problems mentioned above is to handle each sequence separately via some of the several known methods of time-series completion or prediction, as the case may be [8]. According to this approach, filling a gap in sequence $i$ at time $t$ (that is, estimating the missing $x_{i}^{t}$ ) results from a function of the non-gap values in $X_{i}$. Likewise, predicting $x_{i}^{t}$ is achieved as a function of $x_{i}^{1}, \ldots, x_{i}^{t-1}$. To the best of our knowledge, no approaches have yet been put forward that allows for the expansion of such dependencies to reflect the underlying reality that the $p$ sequences are in fact correlated time series. Clearly, an approach resulting from such an expansion would compute the missing $x_{i}^{t}$ as a function of the non-gap values in all of $X_{1}, \ldots, X_{p}$ or yet predict the value of $x_{i}^{t}$ as a function of the first $t-1$ values in all the $p$ sequences.

Our contribution in this paper is to introduce a new approach to the treatment of correlated time series. Our approach can be used for both gap filling and value prediction. Qualitatively, it relies on expanding the dependencies alluded to above so that the inherent correlation between constituents of distinct time series is taken into account. As its core premise, we postulate the existence of functions $f_{1}, \ldots, f_{p}$ such that, for $1 \leq i \leq p$ and $t>1, x_{i}^{t}=f_{i}\left(x_{1}^{t-1}, \ldots, x_{p}^{t-1}\right)$. In essence, this is to say that we do take inter-series dependencies into account, but do so in a sort of "memoryless" framework that lets values corresponding to time $t$ depend on past values only as far back as $t-1$.

When the points in $P$ are located in some two-dimensional space, as they are in the examples mentioned above, the postulated functions $f_{1}, \ldots, f_{p}$ can be regarded as the update functions of a hybrid two-dimensional cellular automaton. We review these automata in Section 2 and from then on they provide the abstraction to be used in the remainder of the paper. Given the appropriate cellular automaton, we show in Section 3 how to use it for filling gaps in the time series and also for predicting future values. Determining the cellular automaton, however, requires in essence that we find suitable functions $f_{1}, \ldots, f_{p}$. In Section 4 we formulate this problem as a problem of learning from examples and show how to solve it by a genetic algorithm. We then proceed to a discussion of computational results on rainfall time series in Section 5 and close in Section 6 with concluding remarks.

## 2 Two-dimensional cellular automata

Cellular automata are discrete-time abstract devices 4. They were introduced decades ago as models of computation and are currently thought by many to be the quintessential model for the emergence of complex behavior in several domains, including various of the fundamental processes of nature 11. The one-
dimensional variants of cellular automata have been the ones to be most widely and deeply studied 10. They are for this reason the best known variants, even though the two-dimensional variant known as the Life game is highly popular [1].

In this section we steer our review directly toward the two-dimensional case, which is the one that, as we will see, relates closely to the time-series problems we are considering. Normally a two-dimensional cellular automaton is defined by placing a simple processing element (a cell) at each of the nodes of a twodimensional grid. In this brief review we start with a more general cell placement and let one cell exist for each of the members of $P$, which is henceforth used to denote the set of cells as well. Each cell $i$ has a neighborhood within $P$, which is a subset of $P$ that we denote by $N_{i}$ and necessarily includes $i$ itself. We let $n_{i}=\left|N_{i}\right|$.

Each cell $i$ is a simple automaton whose state at discrete time $t$, for $t \geq 1$, we denote by $s_{i}^{t}$ and let be given by one of the members of a discrete set $S$ (common to all cells). Starting at the initial states $s_{1}^{1}, \ldots, s_{1}^{p}$, the $p$ cells evolve synchronously in time in such a way that, for $t>1, s_{i}^{t}$ is a function of every $s_{j}^{t-1}$ such that $j \in N_{i}$. This function is the so-called update rule for cell $i$; if we denote it by $g_{i}$ and let $N_{i}=\left\{j_{1}, \ldots, j_{n_{i}}\right\}$, then the evolution of the cell's state is such that $s_{i}^{t}=g_{i}\left(s_{j_{1}}^{t-1}, \ldots, s_{j_{n_{i}}}^{t-1}\right)$.

As we look back on the time series $X_{1}, \ldots, X_{p}$ introduced in Section 1 the correspondence between $X_{i}$ and the state sequence $\left\langle s_{i}^{1}, \ldots, s_{i}^{T}\right\rangle$ becomes clear if only we allow each $x_{i}^{t}$ occurring in $X_{i}$ to be approximately represented by the integer giving the interval into which $x_{i}^{t}$ falls in some discretization of its range. This given, all that the correspondence requires is that we equate each $x_{i}^{t}$ with $s_{i}^{t}$, and similarly each $f_{i}$ with $g_{i}$, provided $S$ is the set of integers implied by the underlying discretization.

We then see that, in principle, two-dimensional cellular automata provide a suitable abstraction of our new approach to handling correlated time series. The crux of the approach, therefore, is now shifted toward finding appropriate functions $g_{1}, \ldots, g_{p}$. Each $g_{i}$ is a map leading from $S^{n_{i}}$ to $S$, so the number of different possibilities for $g_{i}$ is $s^{s^{n_{i}}}$, where $s=|S|$. This quantity becomes unthinkably large very quickly as $n_{i}$ is increased, so finding $g_{i}$ may very quickly become an impossible task. Also, it is conceivable that representing $g_{i}$ once it is determined requires as much as $O\left(s^{n_{i}}\right)$ space, which also grows exponentially with $n_{i}$.

One common approach to try and curb such explosive growth is to follow Life's update-rule style and adopt the so-called outer-totalistic update rules [7]. We say that $g_{i}$ is outer-totalistic if it is a function of $s_{i}^{t-1}$ and of the sum of the remaining $n_{i}-1$ states of the cells in $N_{i}$ at time $t-1$. What we do in this paper is to partition $N_{i} \backslash\{i\}$ into the $q_{i} \geq 1$ sets $N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$, respectively of sizes $n_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, n_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$, and then to generalize outer-totality as follows. The update rule $g_{i}$ is made to depend on $s_{i}^{t-1}$ and on $q_{i}$ sums of states at time $t-1$, each computed inside one of the sets $N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$. Once this is done, the
number of distinct possibilities for $g_{i}$ becomes $s^{n_{i}^{(1)} \ldots n_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)} s^{1+q_{i}}}$; the worst-case space required for representing $g_{i}$, likewise, becomes $O\left(n_{i}^{(1)} \ldots n_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)} s^{1+q_{i}}\right)$.

However, it is very important to note that, once an outer-totalistic rule style is adopted, the correspondence between the set of $p$ time series and the synchronous evolution of the two-dimensional cellular automaton on $p$ cells has to be reexamined carefully. The reason is that this correspondence depends crucially on the set $S$ that summarizes the discretization of the original real numbers, but adding up members of $S$ retains no meaning in the time-series setting. We then henceforth assume that, even though $S$ remains an invariant set, the meaning of each of the $s$ intervals it represents depends on which quantity is being referred to. If such a quantity is one of the original time-series elements, then the intervals' meaning is as we have discussed. But when we refer to a sum of states for outer-totality, then we assume that first the sum is computed on the original real numbers and only then is discretization applied. If the number of states to be summed up is $z$, then the range of such discretization is $z$ times that of the individual numbers.

Adopting our generalized outer-totalistic style substitutes an exponential dependency on $q_{i}$ for one on $n_{i}$. While we expect this to have substantial impact on the search for $g_{i}$, representing each of $g_{1}, \ldots, g_{p}$ may still be overly costly. However, being as they are necessarily learned from examples, each of these functions is in all likelihood only approximately representable, as the diversity of examples to represent them otherwise is itself exponentially large with $q_{i}$ and not very many examples are in general available. Moreover, whichever examples we have to work with are derived from in-situ measurements, which are themselves subject to error.

Based on these considerations, we split the determination of the update rule $g_{i}$ into two phases. The first phase promotes the learning from examples of $N_{i}$ together with the value of $q_{i}$ and the sets $N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$. We note that the number of possible outcomes for fixed $n_{i}$ amounts to what is called the ( $n_{i}-1$ )th Bell number [2]. We postpone discussing this phase until Section 4]

The second phase is the determination of $g_{i}$ itself once $N_{i}, q_{i}$, and the sets $N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$ have been determined. This determination is dependent upon the specific problem to be solved, as for example the problems of gap filling and value prediction discussed in Section 1 In any event, we choose to represent $g_{i}$ as a table $T_{i}$ to be computed from the input corpus available for the problem at hand. Each row in this table corresponds to a possible input to $g_{i}$ (but not conversely, since many possible inputs are likely to be unrepresented in that corpus), that is, to a sequence of $1+q_{i}$ integers. Also, the table has three columns, denoted as follows at row $r$ : $I_{i}^{r}$ is the input itself, $O_{i}^{r}$ is an output on that input, and $C_{i}^{r}$ is a count related to the occurrence of the pair $\left(I_{i}^{r}, O_{i}^{r}\right)$ in the input corpus (it is meant to account for the aforementioned possibility of data inconsistency).

In what follows, we discuss how to build and use this table in the cases of gap filling and of value prediction. The neighborhood $N_{i}$ and the partition
of $N_{i} \backslash\{i\}$ into $N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}$ are assumed to be known and to remain fixed throughout.

## 3 Gap filling and value prediction

### 3.1 Gap filling

For gap filling we assume that the sequence $\left\langle s_{i}^{1}, \ldots, s_{i}^{T}\right\rangle$ is known beforehand for every $i \in P$, and also which entries are tags for gaps. These $p$ sequences can then be regarded as referring to actual data coming from $T$ successive measurement rounds performed on some underlying process at the $p$ points.

The first step is to build the tables $T_{1}, \ldots, T_{p}$, which is achieved as follows. For $t=2, \ldots, T$ and $i=1, \ldots, p$, if $s_{i}^{t}$ is not a gap then we check whether the input to cell $i$ corresponding to time $t-1$ depends on none of the gaps that may exist in $s_{1}^{t-1}, \ldots, s_{p}^{t-1}$. In the affirmative case, we compute the $q_{i}$ sums that the partition dictates. If the resulting input is already present in $T_{i}$ with $s_{i}^{t}$ as output on some row $r$, then we simply increment $C_{i}^{r}$. If it is not present, then a new row $r$ is added to $T_{i}$ with $I_{i}^{r}$ given by that input, $O_{i}^{r}=s_{i}^{t}$, and $C_{i}^{r}=1$.

Having completed all $p$ tables, we proceed to filling gaps. We do so by stepping $t$ upward from 2 through $T$ and for each value of $t$ examining each cell $i$ such that $s_{i}^{t}$ is a gap. If the input to the cell can be obtained from $s_{1}^{t-1}, \ldots, s_{p}^{t-1}$ without involving any gaps, then we let $r$ be the row of $T_{i}$ for which $I_{i}^{r}$ is closest, by Hamming distance, to this input. If more than one row exists, then we pick the row $r$ among them for which $C_{i}^{r}$ is greatest. Having selected the appropriate $r$, we fill the gap by letting $s_{i}^{t}=O_{i}^{r}$. We then revise all $p$ tables to reflect this new value and move on to the next value of $t$.

Notice that some gaps may remain unfilled, including at least those for $t=1$. In Section 5 we consider a few alternatives to try and tackle this.

### 3.2 Value prediction

For value prediction we start with the $p$ values $s_{1}^{1}, \ldots, s_{p}^{1}$ that correspond to $t=1$ and build the tables $T_{1}, \ldots, T_{p}$ incrementally as $t$ is stepped upward from 2 through $T$. We assume that none of $s_{1}^{1}, \ldots, s_{p}^{1}$ are gaps, even though this cannot in general be guaranteed (cf. Section 5 for further alternatives). As in Section 3.1 we regard these $p$ initial values as coming from measurement data on some underlying process. We also assume that $p$ new values (possibly including gaps) become available at each new value of $t$. Our task is to try to predict them before they become available.

For each new value of $t$, first the $p$ tables are updated in exactly the same fashion as in Section 3.1 For this update, each of $s_{1}^{t-1}, \ldots, s_{p}^{t-1}$ corresponds to an actual measurement value, unless $t>2$ and that value is in fact a gap, in which case the value predicted for instant $t-1$ is used instead. Then we let $i=1, \ldots, p$ and predict that the upcoming $s_{i}^{t}$ will have value $O_{i}^{r}$, where $r$ is the row of $T_{i}$ selected also as in Section 3.1 Clearly, the assumed absence of gaps
for $t=1$ ensures that a prediction can be made at all subsequent instants for all cells.

## 4 Determining a cell's neighborhood and its partition

As we noted earlier, the determination of cell $i$ 's neighborhood $N_{i}$ and of the partition $\left\{N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}\right\}$ is approached as learning from examples in a training set. The example corpus we use as training set comprises, for each cell $i$, the sequence $\left\langle s_{i}^{1}, \ldots, s_{i}^{T}\right\rangle$, which may contain gaps. For each $i$, we start with a set $M_{i} \subseteq P$ of size $m_{i}$ such that $i \in M_{i}$, and a fixed value for $n_{i}$ such that $n_{i} \leq m_{i}$. We then proceed to selecting $N_{i}$ from the size- $n_{i}$ subsets of $M_{i}$ that include $i$ as a member. Starting at such a superset $M_{i}$ is a means of ensuring that the eventual $N_{i}$ will comply with certain requirements pertaining to the nature of the time series at hand, as for example those related to a physical region's geography. We also set an upper bound on the eventual value of $q_{i}$; this upper bound is denoted by $u_{i}$ and is intended to set limits on the exponential behavior that is inherent to Bell-number growth.

For fixed $N_{i}, q_{i}$, and $\left\{N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}\right\}$, a score related to such neighborhood and partition can be computed from the assumed set of examples as follows. First we build the table $T_{i}$; this is done as in Section 3.1 so examples for which $N_{i}$ contains gaps are skipped. If $T_{i}$ ends up having $L$ distinct inputs among its rows, then the score is the number in the interval $[0,1]$ given by

$$
\begin{equation*}
\varphi\left(\mathcal{N}_{i}\right)=\frac{1}{Z} \sum_{l=1}^{L} w_{l} C_{i}^{l} \tag{1}
\end{equation*}
$$

where $\mathcal{N}_{i}$ refers to the triple $\left\langle N_{i}, q_{i},\left\{N_{i}^{(1)}, \ldots, N_{i}^{\left(q_{i}\right)}\right\}\right\rangle$. In (1), $C_{i}^{l}$ is the greatest of the $C_{i}^{r}$ 's in $T_{i}$ that correspond to the $l$ th distinct input, while $w_{l}$ is an application-related weight, as will be exemplified in Section 5 The $Z$ dividing the summation is needed to keep the score within $[0,1]$ and is given by the sum of $w_{l} C_{i}^{r}$ for $r$ ranging over the entire $T_{i}$ and $l$ indicating which of the $L$ distinct inputs row $r$ corresponds to.

The score $\varphi\left(\mathcal{N}_{i}\right)$ grows with the internal consistency of $\mathcal{N}_{i}$ vis-à-vis the set of examples. In other words, cell $i$ 's neighborhood and its partition lead to a higher score in proportion to how consistently occurrences of the same input to $i$ within the examples imply the same output. We may then view the problem of determining the cell's neighborhood and its partition as the problem of optimizing $\varphi\left(\mathcal{N}_{i}\right)$ over all the possibilities for $\mathcal{N}_{i}$.

Such an optimization problem is of course highly unstructured and also nondifferentiable, so in this paper our approach to solving it is to employ a genetic algorithm that operates on individuals representing the various possibilities for $\mathcal{N}_{i}$ and seeks the one that is fittest according to the measure of fitness given by $\varphi\left(\mathcal{N}_{i}\right)$. We take each individual to be a sequence of $m_{i}-1$ integers, each
corresponding to each of the members of $M_{i} \backslash\{i\}$ (the potential neighbors of cell $i$, itself excluded). Of these integers, $m_{i}-n_{i}$ are 0 and indicate the cells that are not in the set $N_{i} \backslash\{i\}$ according to this individual. The other $n_{i}-1$ integers come from the set $\left\{1, \ldots, u_{i}\right\}$, each indicating the partition set to which the corresponding cell belongs; the number of distinct integers occurring amid these $n_{i}-1$ integers is the value of $q_{i}$ according to this individual.

The genetic algorithm we use in our experiments of Section 5 is one of the common variants of the generational genetic algorithm [5]. It goes through a fixed number of generations, each comprising a fixed number of individuals, and at the end outputs the fittest individual ever encountered. Each new generation is obtained from the previous one by first performing an elitist step whereby a fraction of that generation's fittest individuals is copied directly to the new one. Then the new generation is filled by individuals selected from the previous generation after they undergo either crossover (as a pair) or mutation (individually).

We perform selection randomly in proportion to the individuals' linearly normalized fitness scores. That is, if $K$ is the fixed size for each generation, then the $k$ th fittest individual, with $1 \leq k \leq K$, is selected with probability proportional to

$$
\begin{equation*}
\Phi-\left(\frac{\Phi-1}{K-1}\right)(k-1) \tag{2}
\end{equation*}
$$

where $\Phi$ is a parameter indicating how likely the fittest of the $K$ individuals is to be selected when compared to the least fit one.

The crossover of two individuals employs a random binary mask and yields two offspring: the first inherits the integers marked 0 on the first parent by the mask and those marked 1 on the second parent; the second offspring inherits the complementary integers from each parent. Obviously it is possible for an offspring to have more than $n_{i}-1$ nonzero integers, in which case it is corrected by setting randomly chosen nonzero integers to 0 . As for the mutation of an individual, it is performed on a randomly chosen integer by mutating it into any member of $\left\{0, \ldots, u_{i}\right\}$ (i.e., the corresponding cell may be removed from cell $i$ 's neighborhood, if it is there to begin with, or be assigned to any of the possible partition sets).

## 5 Computational experiments

The problem domain we have selected for illustrating our approach is that of rainfall time series. The results we report in this section refer to the eastern Atlantic basin in Brazil [3], shown in the maps of Figure 1 This region contains 551 measurement sites, of which 207 have a gap fraction of no more than 0.1. All series refer to daily measurements on the twenty-year period of 1981-2000, so $T=7305$. All data are available as fixed-point numbers and we have chosen $S=\{0, \ldots, 9\}$ in such a way that 0 corresponds to the absence of rainfall and the remaining 9 values correspond to equally wide intervals of increasingly large rainfall figures within the appropriate range (recall from Section 2 that


Figure 1: Brazil's eastern Atlantic basin. Rainfall measurement sites are shown as filled circles: the 10 sites in part (a) constitute the set $P$, while the 207 sites in part (b) are those out of which neighborhoods may be determined during the genetic algorithm. Thick lines delimit sub-basins, thin lines represent watercourses.
this range may refer to individual rainfall figures or to combined figures for outer-totality).

The training set we use with the genetic algorithm of Section 4 is selected from the 207 time series by first choosing 10 of them to constitute the set $P$ (cf. Figure (1) and then randomly choosing $5 \%$ of the non-gap entries from each of these 10 series and turning them into gaps. The entries replaced by these artificially added gaps constitute the test set we use for evaluating the performance of the overall approach. We note that, even though $P$ contains only 10 cells, each cell's potential neighborhood may include, in principle, any of the 207 cells. This is in slight disaccord with our description in preceding sections, but we proceed in this way in order to avoid an excessively large experiment.

Not all rainfall intervals are represented equally in the training set. In fact, there is an almost overwhelming predominance of the low-end interval 0 , which represents the absence of rain precipitation. Such imbalance is known to be problematic as far as the learning performed by the genetic algorithm is concerned, so we use the weights appearing in (1) to compensate. Specifically, if we recall that $L$ is the number of distinct inputs occurring in $T_{i}$, and furthermore that $C_{i}^{l}$ is the greatest count occurring in $T_{i}$ for the $l$ th input, then we let $w_{l}$ be obtained from the following linear normalization of those counts. Let us first say, for simplicity's sake, that $C_{i}^{1}$ is the least of the $L$ counts, and so on through


Figure 2: Evolution of the fitness of (11) for one of the cells in $P$.
$C_{i}^{L}$ being the greatest of them. Then we let

$$
\begin{equation*}
w_{l}=W-\left(\frac{W-1}{L-1}\right)(l-1) \tag{3}
\end{equation*}
$$

where $W$ is a parameter indicating the ratio of the largest weight to the smallest. Clearly, weights set in this manner are such that the rarest rainfall interval receives the largest weight $(W)$, and so on through the most common interval receiving weight 1.

Each of our runs of the genetic algorithm on cell $i \in P$ produces 100 generations, each containing 1000 individuals. We also let $M_{i}$ comprise nearest neighbors by Euclidean distance in such a way that $m_{i}=30$. In addition, each run uses $n_{i}=20, u_{i}=15$, an elite rate of 0.02 , and a probability of 0.5 for deciding between crossover and mutation. We also let $\Phi=40$ and $W=5$ in (2) and (3), respectively. A typical evolution of the fitness given by (1) is shown in Figure 2

Our results for filling or predicting the artificially inserted gaps that constitute the test set are shown in Tables 114 Each table shows an overall hit ratio (the fraction of gaps that are correctly filled or predicted) and also a hit ratio for each of the possible intervals in $S$ (the fraction of gaps within each of the intervals that are correctly filled or predicted). These latter hit ratios are only shown for intervals $0-4$, since none of the other intervals is represented in the test set. Tables 1 and 2 refer to gap filling, respectively by cellular automata and by Kalman smoothing [9. Tables 3 and 4 refer to value prediction, respectively by cellular automata and Kalman filtering [9]. Results of the two Kalman procedures come from the code implemented in [6] with the number of iterations parameter set to 10 . Note that Kalman filtering and smoothing, unlike our cellular automata, operate in a manner that is confined to each time
series individually. They also operate directly on the original fixed-point input values; for the sake of comparing their results to those obtained by the cellular automata, their outputs are first cast into the same intervals represented by the set $S$.

As we remarked in Section 3] the two basic procedures described in that section for gap filling and value prediction may be unsuccessful due to the fact that cellular-automaton update rules are represented in the succinct, approximate format of the tables $T_{i}$. When this is the case, the results given in Tables 1 and 3 already reflect the following attempts at improvement. First, the 5 fittest individuals output by the genetic algorithm are used in succession, as opposed to using the one fittest individual only, until no gap is left unfilled or unpredicted. If still not enough, then all 5 individuals are once again considered, now with cell neighborhoods diminished by the removal of exactly one cell (the one to have the least impact on the unweighted version of (11). This process of neighborhood diminishing proceeds while feasible.

In all four tables we use the recourse of highlighting strictly best figures with a bold typeface. These refer to comparing Tables 1 and 2 and also Tables 3 and 4 Comparing all results in this manner reveals that our cellular automata tend to perform better in overall terms than the corresponding Kalman procedures. As we examine the rainfall intervals individually, the cellular automata are seen to be still ahead, but now the Kalman procedures are best performers in several occasions as well. Notice, interestingly, that the entries in which Kalman smoothing or filtering has a ratio superior to the corresponding cellular automaton refer invariably to intervals 0 or 1 , which are by far the most common rainfall intervals. The cellular automata, by contrast, are on occasion successful in interval 2 , too.

## 6 Concluding remarks

We have introduced two-dimensional cellular automata as an abstraction for handling multiple correlated time series. The method that results from this abstraction is based on learning succinct, approximate versions of the cellular automata's update rules from examples. This seems to be the first attempt at handling correlated time series concomitantly so that problems such as gap filling and value prediction can take into account the series' interrelatedness. The resulting cellular automaton, if successful, can then be regarded as an approximate model of the physical reality underlying the observed data in the time series.

We have provided computational results on the problems of gap filling and value prediction in the domain of rainfall time series. These results compare favorably to the preeminent procedures of Kalman smoothing and filtering, the former applied on gap filling, the latter on value prediction.

Table 1: Results for gap filling by cellular automata.

|  |  | Hit ratio per interval |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cell | Overall hit ratio | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 1 7}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 7 3 6}$ | 0.705 | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 2 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 4 8}$ | 0.688 | $\mathbf{0 . 8 0 5}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 3 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 1 8}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 2 4}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 5 3 7}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 4 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 1}$ | 0.840 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 3 1}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 1 6 7}$ |  |  |
| 5 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 7 7}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 6 5}$ | 0.453 | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 6 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 5}$ | 0.803 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 0 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 1 6 7}$ |  |  |
| 7 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 5 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 7 0}$ | 0.246 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 8 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 9}$ | 0.822 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 7 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 1 8 2}$ |  |  |
| 9 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 9 1}$ | 0.792 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 3 6}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| 10 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 2 3}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 6 8 2}$ | 0.523 | 0.000 |  |  |

Table 2: Results for gap filling by Kalman smoothing.

|  |  | Hit ratio per interval |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cell | Overall hit ratio | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 0.344 | 0.000 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 2 | 0.397 | $\mathbf{0 . 9 1 7}$ | 0.005 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 3 | 0.485 | 0.550 | 0.374 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 4 | 0.633 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 5 | 0.216 | 0.015 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 6 | 0.654 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 7 | 0.191 | 0.016 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 8 | 0.658 | $\mathbf{0 . 9 7 2}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 9 | 0.654 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| 10 | 0.477 | 0.415 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 3 3}$ | 0.000 |  |  |

Table 3: Results for value prediction by cellular automata.

|  |  | Hit ratio per interval |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cell | Overall hit ratio | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 0 8}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 9}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 6 8 5}$ | 0.250 | 0.000 |  |
| 2 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 3}$ | 0.643 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 9 5}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 3 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 9 9}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 7 8 2}$ | 0.553 | $\mathbf{0 . 2 5 0}$ |  |  |
| 4 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 1 2}$ | 0.797 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 9 4}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 5 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 6 8}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 4 4}$ | 0.488 | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 6 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 1 5}$ | 0.567 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 7 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 3 2}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 8 4 4}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 2 6 1}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 8 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 2 3}$ | 0.814 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 7 0}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 1 8 2}$ |  |  |
| 9 | $\mathbf{0 . 7 1 1}$ | 0.802 | $\mathbf{0 . 5 7 1}$ | $\mathbf{0 . 1 2 5}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| 10 | 0.617 | 0.708 | $\mathbf{0 . 4 5 0}$ | 0.000 |  |  |

Table 4: Results for value prediction by Kalman filtering.

|  |  | Hit ratio per interval |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Cell | Overall hit ratio | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 1 | 0.507 | 0.484 | 0.562 | 0.250 | 0.000 |  |
| 2 | 0.430 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 3 | 0.337 | 0.000 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 |  |  |
| 4 | 0.633 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 5 | 0.223 | 0.030 | $\mathbf{0 . 9 7 7}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |
| 6 | 0.497 | 0.475 | 0.567 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 7 | 0.446 | 0.533 | 0.072 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 8 | 0.677 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |
| 9 | 0.654 | $\mathbf{1 . 0 0 0}$ | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| 10 | $\mathbf{0 . 6 7 4}$ | 1.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |  |  |

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