Index of 5-L

Practical Information

First home assignment:

- paper and web version today, due next Friday (October 8),
- you must consult the "Instructions for home assignments" page, for rules and frequently asked questions,
- worth 10% of total course mark, and covers only material from Sessions 1−4.

Today's lecture:

- more about random variables:[1]
  - distribution of the sample mean (and sample proportion[2]),
  - some "great" (mathematical) results:
    law of large numbers, and central limit theorem,
- statistical inference,
  - continuing with estimation,
  - confidence intervals,[3]
  - tests (significance, $\boldsymbol{P}$-value),[4]

  but a broad critical discussion of statistical inference will wait until Session 12.

[1] PSLS 4e: Chapter 13; S: Chapter 6; IPS 7e: Sections 3.3+5.1-2.
[2] The approximation of a binomial distribution by a normal distribution (Appendix) is not part of the course syllabus.
[3] PSLS 4e: Chapter 14-15 (parts); S: Chapter 7; IPS 7e: Section 6.1.
[4] PSLS 4e: Chapter 14-15 (parts); S: Chapter 8; IPS 7e: Sections 6.2-3.

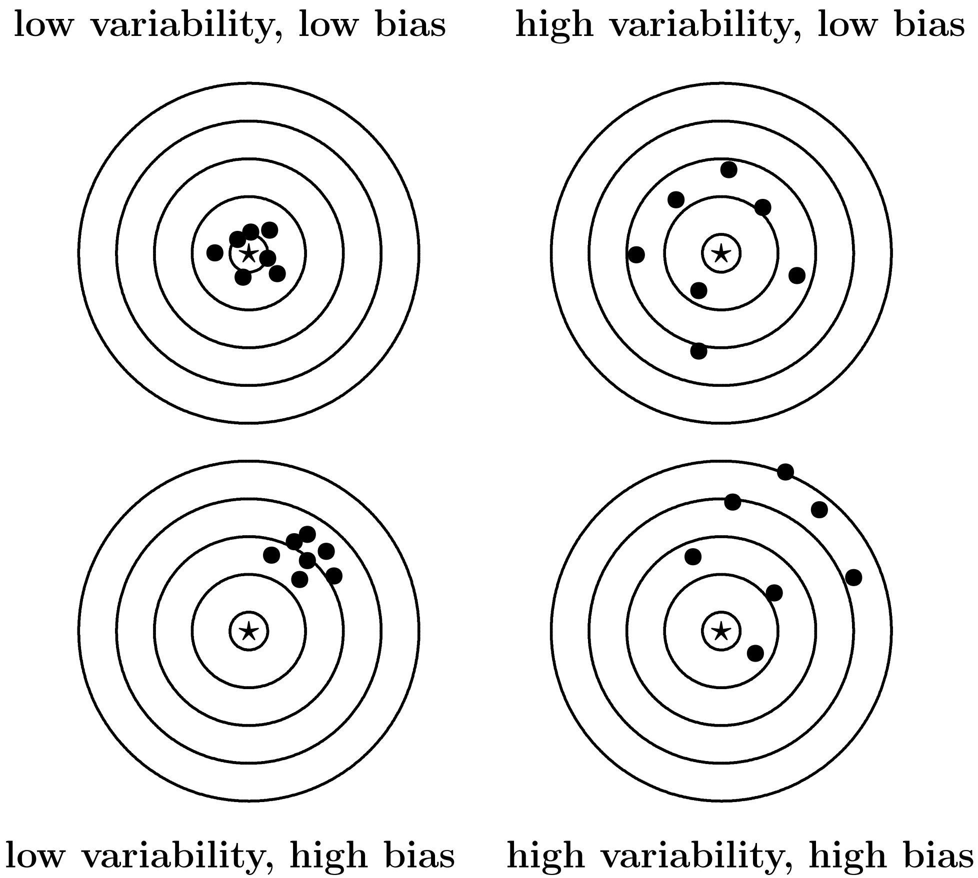
Bias and Variability

Model of our data $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ involves a parameter θ (in our examples, the mean μ or the proportion p).

Definition: an estimate $\hat{\theta}$ of a parameter θ is unbiased, if:

$$\mathrm{E}\,\hat{\theta} = \theta,$$

i.e., *on the average*, the estimate "hits right at θ".[5]



Targeting analog: ($\star \sim$ true value, $\bullet \sim$ observed values in replications of the experiment)

Challenge: how would the corresponding sampling distributions (of $\hat{\theta}$) look?

[5] Generally (in statistics), the bias of an estimate is: $\mathrm{bias}(\hat{\theta}) = \mathrm{E}\,\hat{\theta} - \theta$.

STATISTICAL PROPERTIES OF SAMPLE STATISTICS

Terminology (mine!): i.i.d. variables $X_1, \ldots, X_n \sim$ independent and with same distribution.

Result: For i.i.d. variables $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ with mean μ and standard deviation σ, we have

$$\mathrm{E}\bar{X} = \mu, \quad \mathrm{Var}\bar{X} = \sigma^2/n, \quad \text{and} \quad \mathrm{SE} = \mathrm{sd}\bar{X} = \sigma/\sqrt{n}.$$

One important implication hereof is that the estimate

$$\hat{\mu} = \bar{X} \qquad \text{is unbiased for } \mu.$$

Summary of estimation from a single sample:

- for estimation of a mean we use

$$\hat{\mu} = \bar{X} \text{ — unbiased with } \mathrm{sd}(\hat{\mu}) = \sigma/\sqrt{n}.$$

- for estimation of a proportion (observing X out of n) [6]

$$\hat{p} = X/n = \bar{S} \text{ — unbiased with } \mathrm{sd}(\hat{p}) = \sqrt{\tfrac{p(1-p)}{n}}.$$

Furthermore, if the variables $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ are independent and normally distributed $\mathrm{N}(\mu, \sigma)$, then

$$\bar{X} \sim \mathrm{N}(\mu, \sigma/\sqrt{n}).$$

Note: the new result here is that $\bar{X}$ is normally distributed, actually any linear combination of independent normal variables [7] is again normally distributed.

[6] We have $X = S_1 + \ldots + S_n$, where the S_i are 1 ($\sim$ event) or 0 ($\sim$ non-event); the S_i are called indicators of the events, or binary or Bernoulli variables.

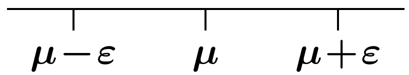
[7] For example, $Y = a_1X_1 + a_2X_2 + a_3X_3$, where a_1, a_2 and a_3 are numbers.

Law of Large Numbers (LLN)

= mathematical result (probability theory):
If $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ are i.i.d. variables with mean μ, then:

$$P(\mu - \varepsilon \leq \bar{X} \leq \mu + \varepsilon) \to 1$$

as $n \to \infty$, for any $\varepsilon > 0$.



Less formally, for "large" n:

- $(X_1 + \ldots + X_n)/n = \bar{X} \approx \mu$,
- eventually (when n is large enough): $\mu - \varepsilon \leq \bar{X} \leq \mu + \varepsilon$ with very high probability, for any $\varepsilon > 0$. [8]

Illustrations of LLN:

- PSLS applet "Law of Large Numbers",
- PSLS applet "Probability" (for binary outcome) you have tried already. [9]

Implications of LLN:

- "stabilizing behavior" of a series of averages (or proportions) that we have seen previously (simulation).
- strong (good!) property of the sample mean as an estimate of the population mean.

[8] Intuitively, the required n depends on both $\varepsilon > 0$ and the targeted probability.
[9] As mentioned on the previous slide, the sample proportion is indeed a sample mean (for the indicators S_i).

Central Limit Theorem (CLT)

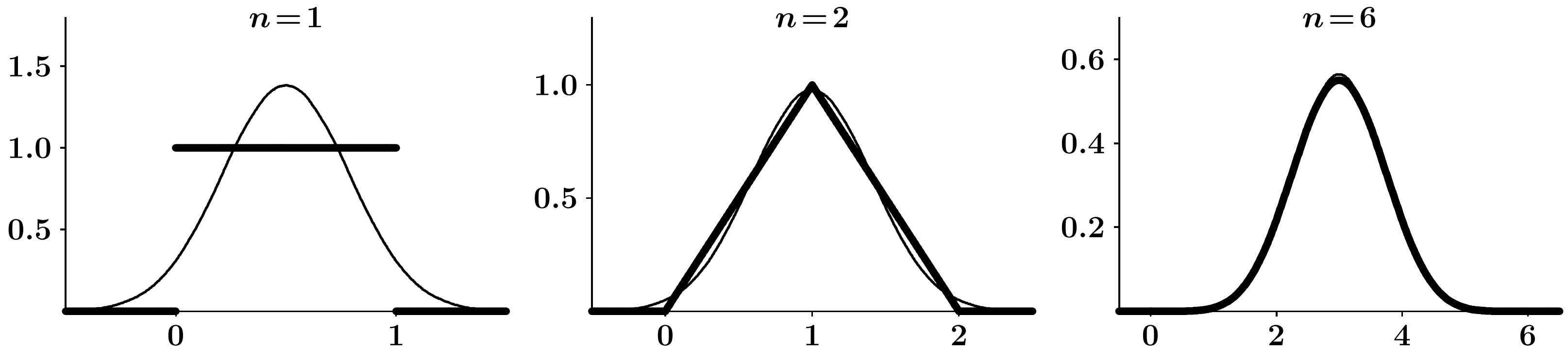
= mathematical result (probability theory):
If $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ are i.i.d. variables with mean μ and stand. dev. σ, then the cumulative probababilities ("to the left") for the standardized sum satisfy:

$$\mathrm{P}\left(\frac{X_1 + \ldots + X_n - n\mu}{\sqrt{n}\sigma} \leq x\right) \to \mathrm{P}(Z \leq x) \quad \text{as } n \to \infty,$$

for any real number x, and where (as usual) $Z \sim \mathrm{N}(0, 1)$.
Less formally, for "large" n:

$$\begin{aligned} X_1 + \ldots + X_n &\approx \mathrm{N}(n\mu, \sqrt{n}\sigma), \\ (X_1 + \ldots + X_n)/n = \bar{X} &\approx \mathrm{N}(\mu, \sigma/\sqrt{n}). \end{aligned}$$

Illustration — approximation of a sum of uniform distributions: (bold=exact density, thin=normal approximation): [10]



[10] See also the PSLS Central Limit Theorem applet.

Implications of the CLT

Remarks on CLT (central limit theorem):

- CLT deals with i.i.d. variables, both assumptions involved are crucial,
- we know already that a sum/average of normal random variables is (exactly) normal, but the CLT says that any sum/average of i.i.d. variables is approx. normal,
- intuitively surprising: any skewnesses or irregularities in distribution smoothed out (by sum/average),
- implies a special role of the normal distribution,
- partial justification for general use of the normal distribution (some outcomes may be thought of as an addition of many small effects, e.g. growth, yield),
- stronger result than LLN (the law of large numbers, telling us that the distribution of $\bar{X}$ narrows in around μ), because distribution is known as well.

Applications:

- to sum of binary/Bernoulli variables (= binomial variable) $\Rightarrow$ approximation of binomial distribution by normal distribution (Appendix),
- generally to average of i.i.d. variables $\Rightarrow$ approximate statistical inference for sample average $\bar{X}$ without assuming any particular distribution for Xs.

Introduction to Confidence Intervals

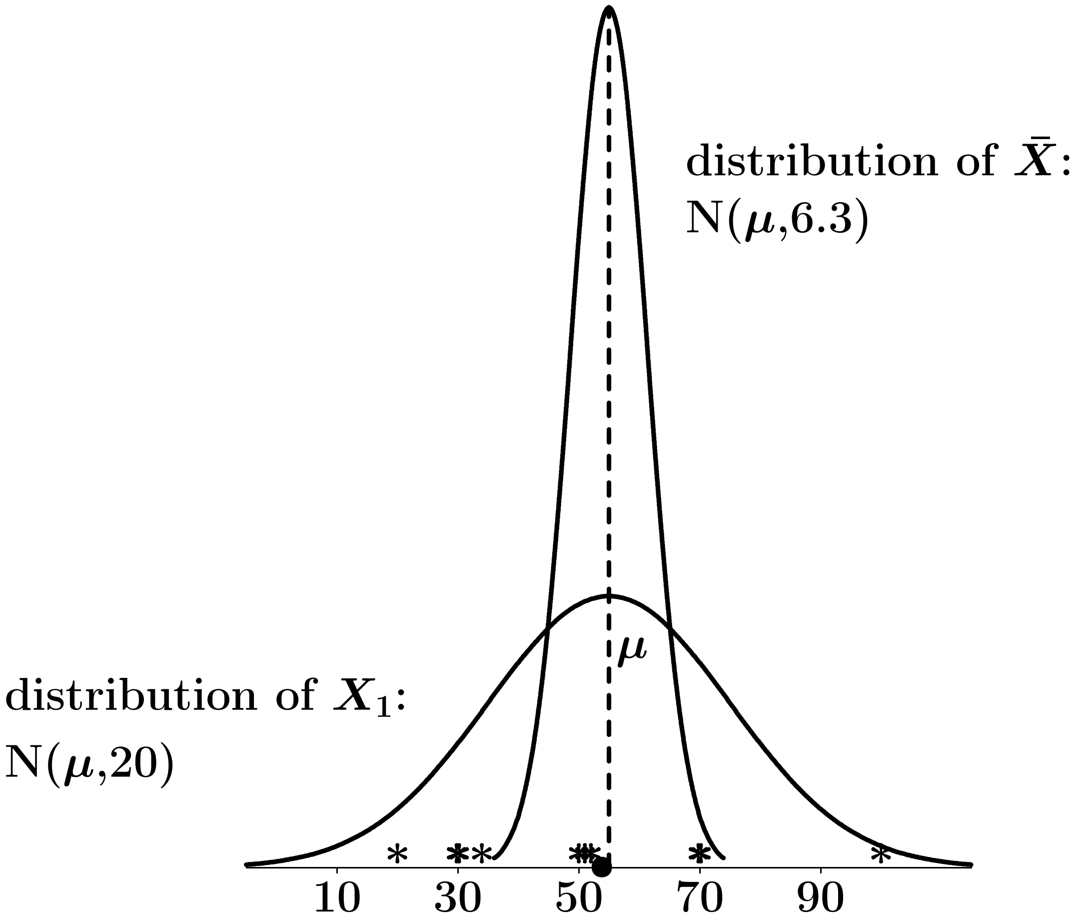
Data example: 10 calves on infected pasture, parasite egg counts $X_1, \ldots, X_{10}$.

- Model: $X_1, \ldots, X_{10}$ i.i.d. variables with mean μ.
- Estimate: $\hat{\mu} = \bar{X} = 51.2$.

What does this tell us about μ?

* almost nothing, [11]
* $\mu = 51.2$,
* μ is close to 51.2 (say, within ± 1),
* μ is somewhere around 51.2 (say, within ± 15).

Same question,
if we know that $\sigma_{\bar{X}} \approx 6.3$?
($\sigma = 20$, and $\sigma_{\bar{X}} = \sigma/\sqrt{10}$)



[11] Estimates without any indication of precision are not worth much.

A Real-life Confidence Interval

From the news (September 2004):

> A poll by the Centre for Research and Information on Canada shows that 61% of Canadians believe that religious practice is an important factor in the moral and ethical lives of Canadians. [. . .]
> The poll of 1500 adult Canadians was conducted June 16-21, 2004, and is considered accurate within plus or minus 2.5 per cent 19 times out of 20. [. . .]
> (Province breakdown: Atlantic 76%, Quebec 44%, etc.; corresponding number in 1980: 79%)

In statistical terms:

- estimates: proportions of respondents indicating religious practice to be important factor (61%, 79%),
- confidence intervals: limits of $\pm 2.5\%$ with a confidence of 19 times out of 20 (95%):
  - loosely stated, this means that there is 95% probability that the true proportions are within $\pm 2.5\%$ of the estimates,
  - we'll make the precise meaning clear shortly.

Confidence limits aid in (are crucial for) the interpretation of the estimates; here they show the difference between 2004 and 1980 is huge, as are the differences between provinces (although with larger intervals, why?).

Confidence Interval (CI) Basics

Idea(s) and Concepts:

- combine estimate $\hat{\mu}$ and its standard error SE (or, $\mathrm{sd}(\hat{\mu})$) [12] to a statement about μ
  $\Rightarrow$ interval estimate = confidence interval,
- rarely able to say something for certain about μ
  $\Rightarrow$ need to set a level of certainty for our statement = confidence level,
- confidence levels are denoted by C, and are typically of the form $1-\alpha$, where α is the error level,
- mostly used values are
  - $C = 0.90$ (90%), $\alpha = 0.10$ (10%),
  - $C = 0.95$ (95%; "19 times out of 20"), $\alpha = 0.05$ (5%),
  - $C = 0.99$ (99%), $\alpha = 0.01$ (1%),

  with high (low) values of C corresponding to high (low) certainty (confidence),
- most confidence intervals are symmetric about the parameter estimate, that is, of the form
  $$\mu : \ \hat{\mu} \pm \text{margin of error},$$
  and the margin of error is very often calculated as
  $$\text{“percentile} \times \text{SE”}.$$

[12] Recall that the standard error of an estimate is the standard deviation in its distribution.

Confidence Interval for Population Mean

Formula: Let $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ be a SRS (i.i.d.) from a population with mean μ (unknown) and standard deviation σ (known). Then an (approximate) 95% confidence interval for μ is

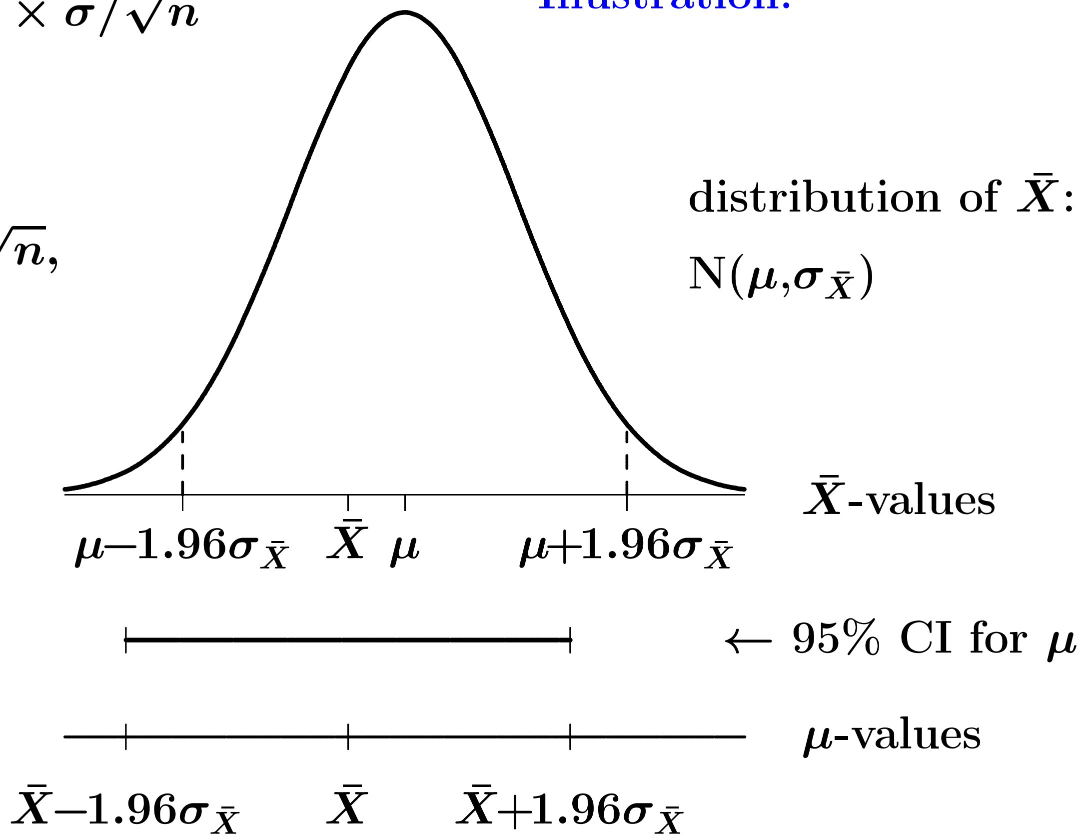
$$95\% \text{ CI for } \mu: \quad \bar{X} \pm 1.96 \times \sigma/\sqrt{n}$$

Generally, an (approximate) $(1-\alpha)$ confidence interval is

$$(1-\alpha) \text{ CI for } \mu: \quad \bar{X} \pm z^* \times \sigma/\sqrt{n},$$

where z^* is a suitable percentile[13] in N(0,1).

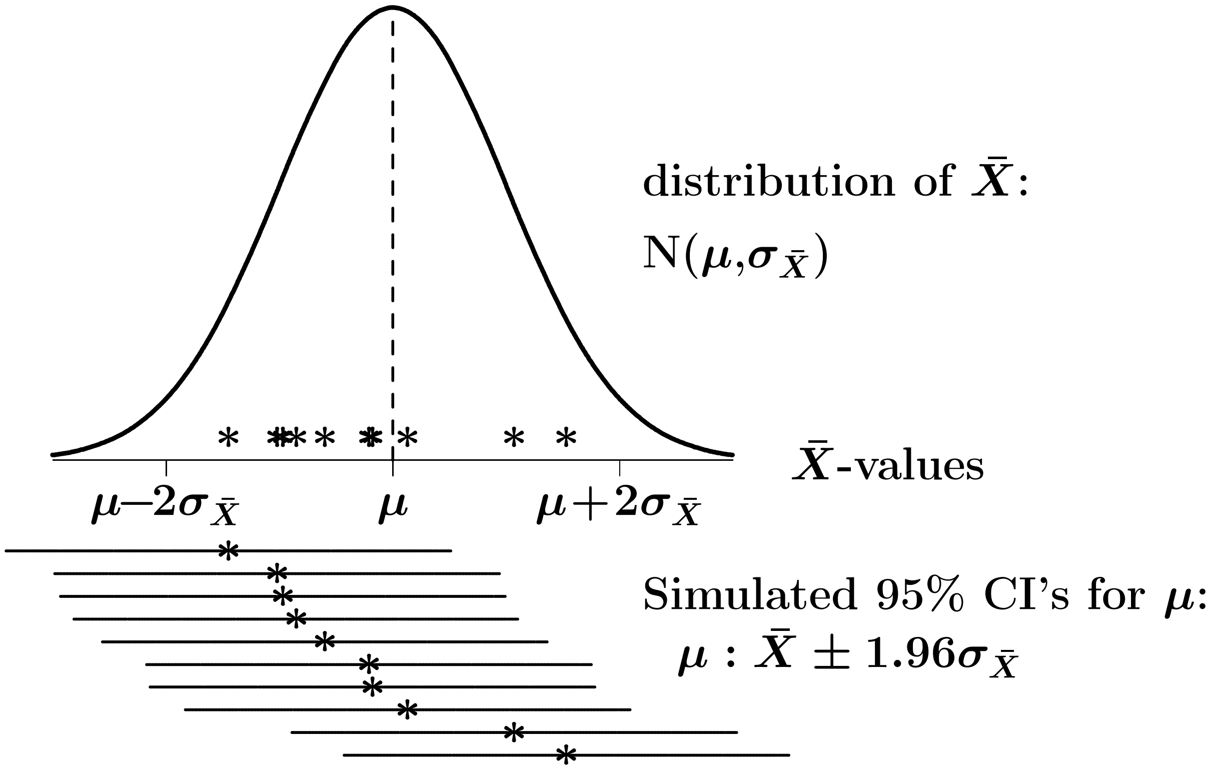
Illustration:



[13] Formally, $z^* = z_{1-\alpha/2}$ is the $(1-\frac{\alpha}{2})$ percentile in N(0,1); z^*-values are found in PSLS: Table C, IPS: Table D, or as "critical values" in S: Table 3.

Interpretation of Confidence Intervals

Simulation of 10 sample means from $N(\mu, \sigma_{\bar{X}})$:



Frequency interpretation of confidence intervals:

- *on the average*, 95% of CI's will contain μ,
- the randomness is *in the method*, not in μ (fixed value),
- for each specific interval, either μ is in interval or μ is outside interval (but we don't know which is true)...

Assumptions of confidence interval for population mean:

- i.i.d. sample (independent, identically distributed),[14]
- (approximate) normal distribution of $\bar{X}$,
- σ known (in practice, rarely a reasonable assumption).

[14] PSLS stresses the assumption of a simple random sample from the population.

Exercises 6.20, 6.47 and 6.55

Exercise 6.20: Confidence intervals in opinion polls:

(a) No; we can only become certain about the population value by sampling the entire population (not feasible). Every confidence interval has a confidence level $< 100\%$,

(b) The interval (27% to 33%) was based on a method that includes the true population percentage 95% of the time (with repeated sampling),

(c) For a 95% CI, $z^* = 1.96 \;\Rightarrow\; \sigma_{\text{estimate}} = 0.03/1.96 = 0.0153$,

(d) No; it only accounts for random fluctuations.

Exercise 6.47: Null and alternative hypotheses for testing problems:

(a) H_0: $\mu = 18$ and H_a: $\mu < 18$,

(b) H_0: $\mu = 50$ and H_a: $\mu > 50$,

(c) H_0: $\mu = 24$ and H_a: $\mu \neq 24$.

Exercise 6.55: P-values against one/two-sided alternatives (from observed $z = 1.8$):

(a) $P = \mathrm{P}(Z > 1.8) = 1 - 0.9641 = 0.0359 \sim$ significant at the 5% significance level,

(b) $P = \mathrm{P}(Z < 1.8) = 0.9641 \sim$ non-significant (at any meaningful significance level),

(c) $P = 2 \times \mathrm{P}(Z > 1.8) = 0.072 \sim$ non-significant at the 5% significance level.

Two Examples of Test Problems

Example I: Testing of taste (example not in textbooks):

- aim: compare two brands of wine (beer, milk, cheese. . .),
- "duo-trio test" with one subject (person):
  - two anonymized samples, one of each brand,
  - third sample of known type,
  - subject may taste all 3 samples, as (s)he likes,
  - task: determine brands of two unknown samples,
- repeating the experiment, subject scores x out of n (e.g., 6 out of 8) correctly – how to determine if result has not occurred by chance ("luck")?
- statistical problem, because of randomness associated with "guessing" (even if qualified guessing).

Example II: Laboratory analysis of active ingredient in specimens:
(Exercise 14.5 of PSLS 4e)

- data from 3 analyses of one specimen: 0.8403, 0.8363, 0.8447 (in g/l),
- aim: evaluate producer's specified content of 0.86 g/l,
- statistical problem, because of random measurement errors in laboratory.

Introduction to Statistical Testing

Consider the "duo-trio" testing problem, and let X denote the number of "successes" for one subject in 8 trials.

- binomial setting $\Rightarrow$ $X \sim$ binomial distribution $B(8, p)$,
- if guessing, the probability p in each trial must be $p = 0.5$ — state this as our null hypothesis H_0: $p = 0.5$,
- under H_0: $X \sim B(8, 0.5)$:

x	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
$P(X = x)$	0.004	0.03	0.11	0.22	0.27	0.22	0.11	0.03	0.004

- alternatively to H_0 we must have $p > 0.5$ (unless subject messes up the experiment) — state this as our alternative hypothesis H_a: $p > 0.5$,

If subject gets all trials right ($X = 8$):

* probability of event happened by chance: $P = 0.004$,
* by low P-value, we have little confidence in H_0 (because observed event unlikely to happen if H_0 was true) $\Rightarrow$ reject H_0 and prefer H_a, (but H_0 could be true...),

If subject gets 6 out 8 trials right ($X = 6$):

* probability of actual event or *more extreme* events:
  $P = P(X \geq 6) = P(X = 6) + P(X = 7) + P(X = 8) = 0.14$,
* by not too low P-value, observed $X = 6$ does not seem unreasonable under H_0 (might have happened by chance) $\Rightarrow$ cannot reject H_0, (but H_0 could be false...).

Components of a Statistical Test

Statistical Model — main examples so far: $X \sim B(n, p)$, and $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ i.i.d. (SRS) of population (μ, σ).

Statistical Hypothesis:

- statement/assertion about the model (parameter(s) of the model) which is either true or false,
- null hypothesis H_0 — the one investigated,
- alternative hypothesis H_a — the one to hold, if H_0 is not true.

Statistical Test statistic (or test variable):

- computed from the data (in some cases, the entire data),
- "measures" how well the data correspond to H_0 compared to H_a.

***P*-value** (or significance probability):

- the probability, computed under H_0 (assuming H_0 is true), that the test statistic takes a value as extreme as or more extreme than (in the direction of H_a) the observed value from the data,[15]

[15] The P-value expresses how surprising the observed outcome would be if H_0 was true.

- low P-values provide evidence against H_0
  $\Rightarrow$ rejection of H_0 (and acceptance of H_a, strong conclusion),[16]
- high P-values provide no (convincing) evidence against H_0
  $\Rightarrow$ H_0 cannot be rejected (weak conclusion).

Significance level α:

- artificial borderline/cut-off set for convenience between significant (i.e., $P \leq \alpha$) and non-significant (i.e., $P > \alpha$) results,[17]
- by convention set at 0.05, or less commonly at 0.10, 0.01, etc.

Analogs between reasoning in law and statistics:

Concept	Law	Statistics
initial position	innocence	null hypothesis
claim	guilt	alternative hypothesis
information	evidence	data
decision rule to rule out chance	guilt beyond reasonable doubt	$P <$ significance level
conclusive result	guilt	alternative hypothesis
inconclusive result	innocence could not be ruled out	null hypothesis could not be rejected

[16] "If the P-value is low, the null hypothesis must go." (Keith Bower; media links)
[17] No uniform rule exists for whether ($P = \alpha$) is considered significant or not.

Test for Population Mean

Setting for test of population mean:

- Model: $X_1, \ldots, X_n$ i.i.d. from distribution (μ, σ),
  - * assume (approximate) normal distribution of $\bar{X}$,
  - * assume σ known (in practice, rarely a reasonable assumption).
- Null Hypothesis H_0: $\mu = \mu_0$, where μ_0 is a known, fixed value (very often, $\mu_0=0$),
- Alternative Hypothesis H_a: $\mu \neq \mu_0$,
- z-test statistic computed as:

$$z = \frac{\bar{X} - \mu_0}{\sigma/\sqrt{n}} \quad \sim \quad \mathrm{N}(0,1) \text{ under } H_0,$$

- P-value computed as:

$$P = 2 \times \mathrm{P}(Z \geq |z|) = 2 \times \mathrm{P}(Z \leq -|z|).$$

Example II: Laboratory analysis,

- Data: X_1, X_2, X_3; $n=3$, $\bar{X}=0.8404$, $\sigma=0.0068$ known,
- Hypotheses: H_0: $\mu = 0.86$, H_a: $\mu \neq 0.86$,
- Test statistic: $z = (0.8404 - 0.86)/(0.0068/\sqrt{3}) = -4.98$,
- P-value: $P = 2\times\mathrm{P}(Z\leq -4.98) < 2 \times 0.0002 = 0.0004$,
- Conclusion: reject H_0 and accept H_a; strong indication that the specimen content is not as specified (i.e., lower, because the data point in that direction).

One- or Two-sided?

Null hypothesis H_0 usually of the form: parameter=value (e.g. $\mu = 0.86$).

Alternative hypothesis H_a usually one of 3 types:

- one-sided upwards: parameter>value (e.g., $\mu > 0.86$),
- one-sided downwards: parameter<value (e.g., $\mu < 0.86$),
- two-sided: parameter different from value (e.g., $\mu \neq 0.86$).

Choice of alternative hypothesis:

- one-sided: when focus is on particular alternative (because other direction is difficult to interpret, or in beforehand of no interest),
- two-sided: most common, when no particular alternative is in focus or no knowledge is present in beforehand.
- affects the calculation of P-values:
  - in general, P-value is the probability of extreme events for H_0 relative to (i.e., in the direction of) H_a,
  - example: testing for population mean, H_0: $\mu = \mu_0$:

$$\begin{aligned} H_a : \mu > \mu_0 &: \quad P = P(Z \geq z), \\ H_a : \mu < \mu_0 &: \quad P = P(Z \leq z), \\ H_a : \mu \neq \mu_0 &: \quad P = P(Z \geq |z|) + P(Z \leq -|z|). \end{aligned}$$

  - P-values and tests may also be termed one/two-sided.[18]

[18] My recommendation is to only talk about one/two-sided alternative hypotheses.

Testing by Confidence Interval

Fact: A confidence interval (CI) for a parameter with confidence level $C = 1 - \alpha$ can be used for a significance test at level α for

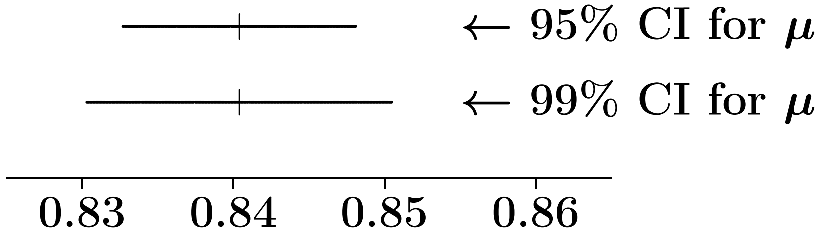
$$\text{null hypothesis } H_0\text{: parameter} = \text{value}, \quad \text{versus}$$
$$\text{alternative hypothesis } H_a\text{: parameter} \neq \text{value},$$

by the following “recipe”:

- reject H_0, if value is outside interval.
- cannot reject H_0, if value is inside interval,

Example II: Laboratory analysis,

- 95% CI for μ: $\bar{X} \pm 1.96\, \sigma/\sqrt{3}$
  $= 0.8404 \pm 0.0077 \;\Rightarrow H_0\text{: } \mu = 0.86$,
  rejected at 5% level (also $H_0\text{: } \mu = 0.85$),
- 99% CI for μ: $\bar{X} \pm 2.576\, \sigma/\sqrt{3}$
  $= 0.8404 \pm 0.0101 \;\Rightarrow H_0\text{: } \mu = 0.86$,
  rejected at 1% level (not $H_0\text{: } \mu = 0.85$).



Advantages and disadvantages of testing by use of CI:

+ easy (when CI done), enhances CI interpretation,

− no P-value.

Summary Notes

Key words and concepts:

- parameter, estimate, population,
- distribution of estimate/statistic, variability, standard error, bias,
- sample mean and proportion as unbiased estimates,
- law of large numbers (LLN), central limit theorem (CLT),
- confidence interval:
  - concepts: confidence level, margin of error, frequency interpretation,
  - z-formula for sample mean in normal distribution model (with known standard deviation σ).
- statistical test:
  - concepts: null hypothesis H_0, alternative hypothesis H_a (one or two-sided), test statistic and its (reference) distribution, P-value, significance level,
  - possible conclusions: reject H_0 (and favour H_a), or no (insufficient) evidence against H_0,
  - z-test formula for mean in normal distribution model (with known σ),
- relation between test and confidence interval (for a single parameter).

Summary Notes: Four-Step Processes

Four-step process for confidence intervals (PSLS 4e):

State: What is the practical question that requires estimating a parameter?

Plan: Identify a parameter and choose a level of confidence.

Solve: Carry out the work in two phases:

* Check the conditions for the interval you plan to use.
* Calculate the confidence interval (possibly using software).

Conclude: Return to the practical question to describe your results in this setting.

Four-step process for tests (PSLS 4e):

State: What is the practical question that requires a statistical test?

Plan: Identify a parameter, state the null and alternative hypotheses, and choose the type of test that fits your situation.

Solve: Carry out the test in three phases:

* Check the conditions for the test you plan to use.
* Calculate the test statistic.
* Find the P-value using a table of Normal probabilities or technology.

Conclude: Return to the practical question to describe your results in this setting.

Appendix: Normal Approximation of Binomial Distribution

For a binomial distribution (n, p) $(X \sim \mathrm{B}(n, p))$ we have the approximations: [19]

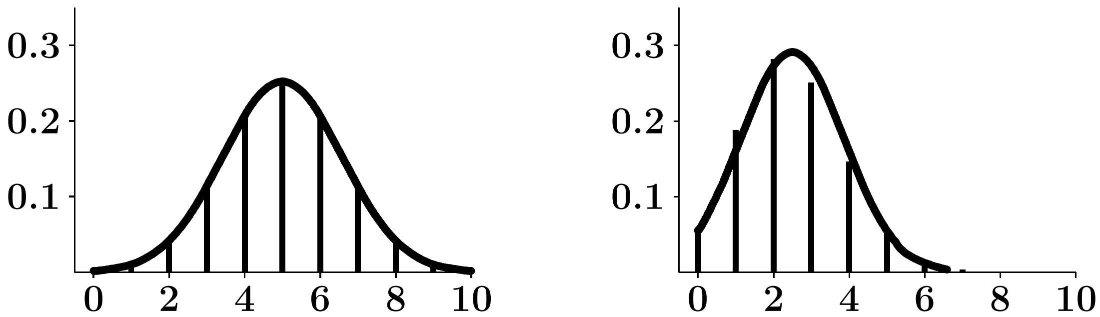
- $\mathrm{B}(n, p) \approx \mathrm{N}(np, \sqrt{np(1-p)})$,
- approximation "good" when $np(1-p) > 10$,[20]
- formulas with continuity correction (± 0.5), for numbers $0 \leq x \leq n$ and $Z \sim \mathrm{N}(0,1)$:

$$\mathrm{P}(X \leq x) \approx \mathrm{P}\left(Z \leq \frac{x + 0.5 - np}{\sqrt{np(1-p)}}\right),$$

$$\mathrm{P}(X < x) \approx \mathrm{P}\left(Z \leq \frac{x - 0.5 - np}{\sqrt{np(1-p)}}\right),$$

$$\mathrm{P}(a \leq X \leq b) \approx \mathrm{P}\left(Z \leq \frac{b+0.5-np}{\sqrt{np(1-p)}}\right) - \mathrm{P}\left(Z \leq \frac{a-0.5-np}{\sqrt{np(1-p)}}\right),$$

Illustration for binomial distribution $\mathrm{B}(10, p)$, with $p = 0.5$ (left) and $p = 0.25$ (right):



[19] Illustrated by PSLS applet: Normal Approximation to Binomial Distributions.

[20] IPS 7e gives the slightly less strict rule: $np > 10$ and $n(1-p) > 10$. The PSLS/S texts have no specific rules, nor include the formula with continuity correction.