

Algebraic geometry of commuting matrices

arXiv:2106.13137

Joachim Jelisiejew, partly joint with K. Šivic, J.M. Landsberg &
A. Pal, ...

IMPANGA, 19 Nov 2021

To get slides with links just send me an email. See also our article.




For simplicity, everything over \mathbb{C} . \mathbb{M}_d denotes $d \times d$ matrices.

Definition

The variety* $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ of n -tuples of commuting $d \times d$ is defined as

$$C_n(\mathbb{M}_d) = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in (\mathbb{M}_d)^n \mid \forall i, j : x_i x_j = x_j x_i\}.$$

$(\mathbb{P}\mathbb{M}_d)^n$
 $G_V(n, \mathbb{M}_d)$ quadratic equations.

Motzkin, Taussky'55: $n = 2$ $C_2(\mathbb{M}_d) \ni (x_1, x_2)$ irreducible (singular)
 ... & Stark 2021 $d = 2$ $C_n(\mathbb{M}_2)$ irreducible toric.  trace matrices.

The good open (not necessarily dense!) locus

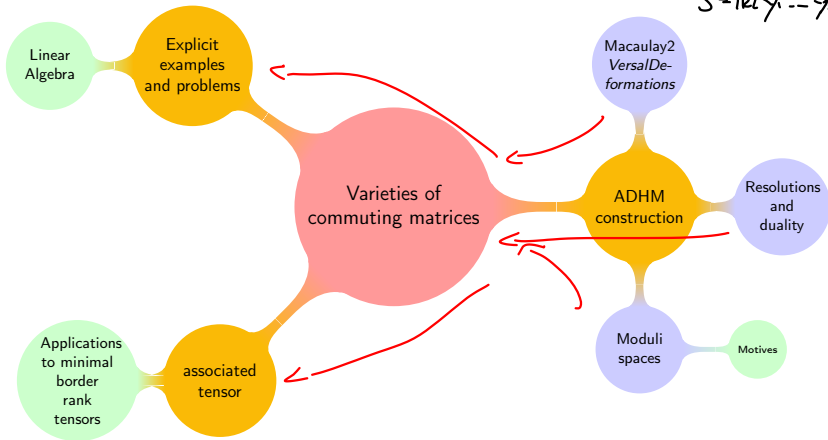
$$\{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{M}_d^n \mid \text{simultaneously diagonalizable}\}$$

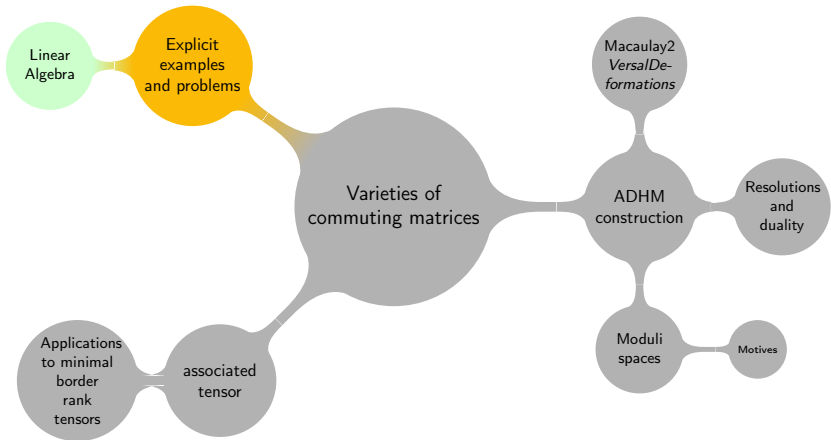
"nice"

Its closure is an irreducible component, the principal component.

Subjective big picture

$$\text{ADHM } (x_1, \dots, x_n) \in M_d \rightsquigarrow M \in S\text{-mod}$$
$$S = k[y_1, \dots, y_n]$$





Key open questions, small number of matrices

Classify points of $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ up to $GL_n \times GL_d$ -action for small n, d .

$GL_d \curvearrowright \mathbb{M}_d$ by conj. Answer known: $d \leq 4$
 $GL_n \curvearrowright (\mathbb{M}_d)^n$ by linear comb.

Find equations for the principal component inside $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$.

~~$(x_1 \dots x_n)$ x_i diagonalizable?~~

Is the scheme $C_2(\mathbb{M}_d)$ reduced? Is it Cohen-Macaulay?
(Charbonnel arXiv:2006.12942)

↑
charin yes. ~ 97 pages

Key open questions II, small number of matrices

What is the smallest d such that $C_3(\mathbb{M}_d)$ is reducible?

Known: $12 \leq d \leq 29$, lower bound Šivic, upper bound Holbrook, Omladič+Šivic.

Obtained: $\dim C_3(\mathbb{M}_d) > \dim \text{principal}$ $C_2(\mathbb{M}_d)$ irreducible $\forall d \geq 29$.

For any d describe (a general point of) any component of $C_3(\mathbb{M}_d)$ other than the principal one. Describe any explicit triple (x_1, x_2, x_3) outside the principal component.

For $(x_1, x_2, x_3) \in C_3(\mathbb{M}_d)$ is it true that $\dim_{\mathbb{C}}(\mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, x_3] \subset \mathbb{M}_d) \leq d$? (Gerstenhaber's question)

True for the principal component.

Larger number of matrices: nothing (was) known

Classical swindle (e.g. Guralnick):

$$x_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, x_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, x_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}, x_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

The algebra $\mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4]$ is

$$\lambda \cdot Id_4 + \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\checkmark $x_i x_j = 0 = x_j x_i$
 $(x_1, \dots, x_4) \notin \text{principal}$

$\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$.

\leftarrow 5-dimensional

Violates Gerstenhaber's bound. $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ is reducible for $n, d \geq 4$.

What are the components of $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ in general?

Results in matrix flavour I

Theorem (J-Šivic)

The number of irreducible components of $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ for $d \leq 7$ is as shown in Table 1; we also have explicit descriptions of general points of each component (and general points are smooth).

	$d \leq 2$	$d = 3$	$d = 4$	$d = 5$	$d = 6$	$d = 7$	$d \gg 0$
$n \leq 2$	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
$n = 3$	1	1	1	1	1	1	$\gg 0$
$n = 4$	1	1	2	2	2	2	$\gg 0$
$n = 5$	1	1	2	4	4	8	$\gg 0$
$n = 6$	1	1	2	4	7	11	$\gg 0$
$n \geq 7$	1	1	2	4	7	13	$\gg 0$

Table: Number of components of $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$

Results in matrix flavour I

Typically (not always), the elementary components have the form, up to GL_d action and adding scalar matrices,

$$x_1, \dots, x_n \in \begin{bmatrix} 0 & * \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

where $*$ is $m \times (d - m)$ matrix for some fixed m and for n large enough.

Theorem (J-Šivic)

The variety $C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ has generically nonreduced components for all $n \geq 4$ and $d \geq 8$. For example, the locus of quadruples of the form (up to GL_8 action and adding scalar matrices):

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

is a generically nonreduced component.

Results in matrix flavour II

Locus \mathcal{L} of quadruples

$C_4(M_8)$

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & & & \\ & \ddots & & \\ & & & \\ & & & 0 \end{pmatrix} = x$$

$$y: xy = yx \Rightarrow y \in \mathbb{C}[x]$$

rank $\sim \frac{d}{2}$

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & * & * & * & * \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L} &\subseteq M_{4 \times 4} \\ &\subseteq \mathbb{S}_3 \subset \mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4 \\ &\subseteq \mathcal{D} \text{ divisor} \end{aligned}$$

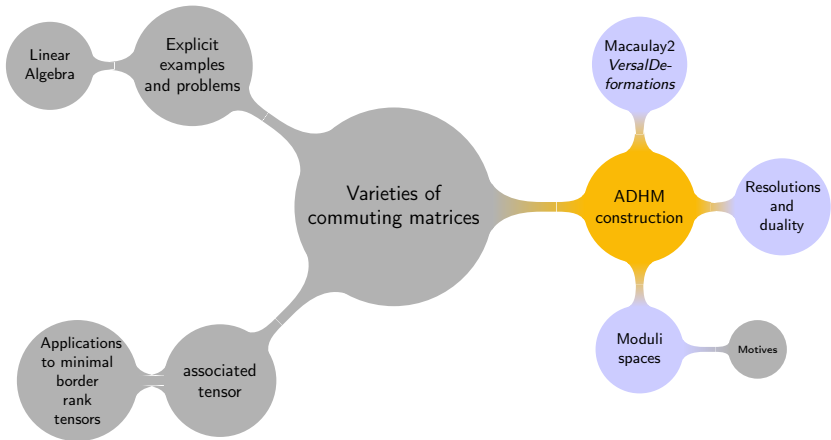
$$\begin{aligned} \hat{S}_2 &\in \mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4 \\ \sigma_{\theta} \hat{S}_2 &\notin \mathcal{D} \end{aligned}$$

Computer: $\mathcal{L} \cap (\text{principal component}) \subset \mathcal{L}$ is a divisor. Get a divisor in $\mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4 \otimes \mathbb{C}^4$ invariant under S_3 and $GL_4 \times GL_4 \times GL_4$.

Which divisor is it?

$$\begin{aligned} (x_1 \dots x_n) &\in \mathbb{C}[x_1 \dots x_n] \\ (y_1 \dots y_n) &\in \mathbb{C}[y_1 \dots y_n] \end{aligned} \text{ in } M_d$$

$$\begin{aligned} (x_2, x_3) &\in \{y: yx_1 = x_1 y\} = C_2(\text{const } x_1) \\ C_3(M_d) &\cong (x_1, x_2, x_3) \end{aligned}$$



$$x_i \in \mathbb{C}^d$$

Definition

Let $S = \mathbb{C}[y_1, \dots, y_n]$. For $(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$ we define an S -module structure on \mathbb{C}^d by

$$y_i \cdot v := x_i(v) \quad \text{for all } v \in \mathbb{C}^d.$$

We will denote the resulting *module associated to* (x_1, \dots, x_n) by M .

The module has tons of invariants: number of generators, Hilbert function, resolution etc. which we employ to get a better grasp on the matrices themselves.

ADHM construction – example

$$x_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \cdot \begin{bmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad x_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$
$$x_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \quad x_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In the associated module $M = \langle e_1, e_2, e_3, e_4 \rangle$ we have $x_1(e_3) = e_1$ and so on. The module M is graded, generated by e_3, e_4 , with Hilbert series $2 + 2T$ and resolution:

$$\begin{bmatrix} 2 & 6 & 4 & - & - \\ - & - & 4 & 6 & 2 \end{bmatrix}$$

ADHM construction – abstractly

space	objects
$\text{Mod}^d(\mathbb{A}^n)$	modules
$\text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^n)$	modules with fixed r generators
$C_n(\mathbb{M}_d)$	modules with fixed basis
\mathcal{U}^{st}	modules with fixed basis and fixed r generators

variety of stable data

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \mathcal{U}^{\text{st}} & \xrightarrow{\text{smooth fib.dim. } rd} & C_n(\mathbb{M}_d) \\
 \downarrow / \text{GL}_d & \lrcorner \text{ surjective} & \downarrow / \text{GL}_d \\
 & \text{if } n \geq d & \\
 \text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^n) & \longrightarrow & \text{Mod}^d(\mathbb{A}^n)
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{c}
 (x_1, \dots, x_n) \\
 \downarrow \\
 \mathbb{A}^n
 \end{array}$$

Table: Moduli spaces

Theorem (J-Šivic)

	$d \leq 2$	$d = 3$	$d = 4$	$d = 5$	$d = 6$	$d = 7$	$d \gg 0$
$n \leq 2$	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...
$n = 3$	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	1, ...	$\gg 0$
$n = 4$	1, ...	1, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 2, ...	$\gg 0$
$n = 5$	1, ...	1, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 3, 4, ...	1, 3, 4, ...	1, 4, 7, 8, ...	$\gg 0$
$n = 6$	1, ...	1, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 3, 4, ...	1, 4, 6, 7, ...	1, 5, 9, 11, ...	$\gg 0$
$n \geq 7$	1, ...	1, ...	1, 2, ...	1, 3, 4, ...	1, 4, 6, 7, ...	1, 6, 10, 12, 13, ...	$\gg 0$

Table: Number of components of $\text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^n)$. In each entry, consecutive numbers correspond to the number of components for $r = 1, 2, \dots$ and "... " means that the numbers stabilize at the value of the last entry. In particular, we see that for $r \geq 5$ we already have all the components (for $d \leq 7$).

Key open questions, in Quot flavour

Is the scheme $\text{Quot}_{\gg 0}^d(\mathbb{A}^2)$ reduced? Is it Cohen-Macaulay? One can take d instead of $\gg 0$.

principal component of $C_n(M^d) \longleftrightarrow$ ^{known to be singular} modules ^{limits of semisimple} $(\oplus S_{i/m})$

What is the smallest d such that there exists a zero-dimensional $\mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, x_3]$ -module M with $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} M = d$ which is not a limit of semisimple modules? What is **any** explicit example (for any d , not necessarily small) of such a module?

For a zero-dimensional module M over $S = \mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, x_3]$ is it true that $\dim_{\mathbb{C}} \text{im}(S \rightarrow \text{End}(M)) \leq \dim_{\mathbb{C}} M$?

Key open questions, in Quot flavour

J. Heyman:

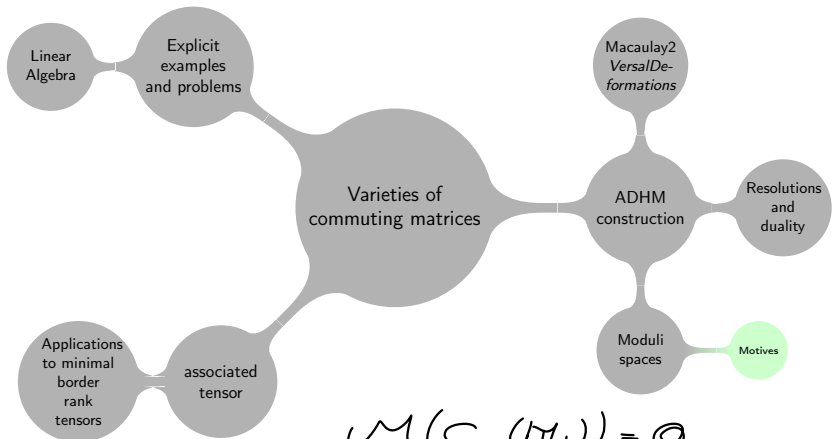
What can be said about deformations of zero-dimensional modules over $\mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, x_3]$?



What about self-dual modules, not necessarily in three variables?

Proposition (Wojtala)

Structural results on Hilbert functions (e.g. Iarrobino's symmetric decomposition) extend from algebras to modules.



$$\mathcal{M}(C_n(M_d)) = \mathcal{O}$$

\uparrow
one over $(0 \dots 0)$

Results on motives of Quot

$S^{\oplus r} \rightarrow \mathbb{A}^1 \xrightarrow{\quad} \mathbb{A}^1 \in \text{Vect}_d, \mathbb{C}^{\oplus r} \rightarrow (S^{\oplus r}) \rightarrow \mathbb{A}^1$
 $f \neq 0$

Let $\text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^\infty) = \text{colim}_n \text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^n)$ and let

$$\text{Vect}_r^d = \{f: \mathbb{C}^{\oplus r} \rightarrow V \mid \dim_{\mathbb{C}} V = d, f \text{ is non-zero}\}$$

this is formally an open subset of the tautological bundle over the stack Vect^d . We have a forgetful map

$d=2$ answer = ?
 $\mathbb{C}^* \times \mathbb{P}^1$
 \mathbb{C}^* motives

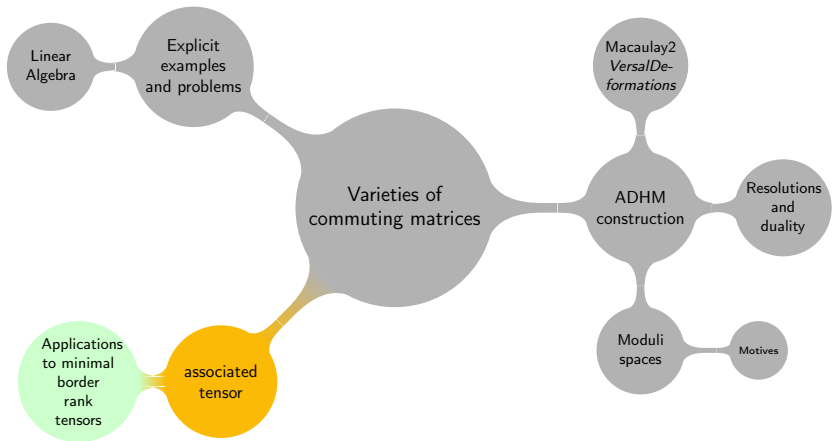
$i: \text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^\infty) \rightarrow \text{Vect}_r^d$

$\mathbb{C}_n(\text{Mat}) \ni (x_1, \dots, x_n)$
 $(\lambda \text{Id}, \dots, \lambda \text{Id}) \longleftarrow (x_1 + \lambda \text{Id}, \dots, x_n + \lambda \text{Id})$

$\text{rg on } H^*$

Theorem (J-Nardin-Yakerson)

The map i is an \mathbb{A}^1 -equivalence on affines. For example, the ring $H^*(\text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^\infty)(\mathbb{C}), \mathbb{Z})$ is isomorphic to $\mathbb{Z}[c_1, \dots, c_d]/c_d^r$.



Connection to tensors

Let A, B, C have dimension d , let $T \in A \otimes B \otimes C$. A tensor has rank at most d if it has the form $T = \sum_{i=1}^d a_i \otimes b_i \otimes c_i$. It has *border rank* at most d if it is a limit of such. A tensor is *concise* if it does not live in any $A' \otimes B' \otimes C'$ where $(-)'$ are subspaces, at least one of them proper. Concise tensors have border rank at least d .

Handwritten notes: s, \mathbb{C}^d (near A, B, C); $\text{6 rank tensors} = \overbrace{(\text{GL}(d) \times \text{GL}(d) \times \text{GL}(d))} T$ (above the text)

Problem (Nightmare)

Classify concise tensors of border rank d .

Problem (Open problem, reasonable)

Do the same for small d . ($d \leq 4$ done although not written down, but already $d = 5$ seems very open)

Find equations of minimal border rank tensors among concise tensors. (\Leftrightarrow describe $\sigma_d(\text{Segre}) \cap \{\text{concise}\} \subset \mathbb{P}(A \otimes B \otimes C)$.)

Proposition (known)

T of minimal border rank $\implies T$ satisfies Strassen's equations.

For $(x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}) \in C_{d-1}(\mathbb{M}_d)$ form a naive tensor

$\sum_{i=1}^d a_i \otimes x_i \in A \otimes B \otimes C$, where $x_d = \text{Id}_d$.

$T \in A \otimes B \otimes C$ is 1_A -generic if for some $\alpha \in A^*$ the element $T(\alpha) \in B \otimes C$ is a matrix of full rank.

concise $T \in A \otimes B \otimes C$
satisfying Strassen's equations

is isomorphic to

general

??

1_A -generic

naive tensor from (x_1, \dots, x_{d-1})
(\Leftrightarrow structure tensor of module)

1_A - and 1_B -generic

structure tensor of algebra

1_A - and 1_B - and 1_C -generic

structure tensor of
Gorenstein algebra

Proposition (Landsberg-Michałek, *Abelian tensors*)

The naive tensor is of minimal border rank iff (x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}) is in the principal component.

Corollary

1_A -generic, 1_B -generic tensors satisfying Strassen's equations are of minimal border rank for all $d \leq 7$.

Hilb₆₇(A³) irreducible

What about 1_A -generic?

1.1: Quot & components.

Theorem (J)

For $d \leq 6$, a tuple $(x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}) \in C_{d-1}(\mathbb{M}_d)$ is in the principal component iff $\dim(\mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}]) \leq d$.

End-closed condition: The condition $\dim(\mathbb{C}[x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}]) \leq d$ is conveniently rewritten as: the space $V = \langle x_1, \dots, x_{d-1}, \text{Id}_d \rangle$ satisfies $V \cdot V \subset V$.

Corollary

1_A -generic, ~~1_B -generic~~ tensors satisfying Strassen's equations and End-closed condition are of minimal border rank. $d \leq 6$

Nasty example

There is (up to degeneration and taking into account J-Šivic) one nontrivial example.

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & e_1 & 0 & e_2 & e_3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & e_1 & e_4 & e_5 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & e_1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & e_1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

\rightarrow \triangle
 \downarrow
def thru of π

The deformation of this tuple, parameterized by $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$ is given by

$$\begin{bmatrix} 0 & \lambda^2 e_4 & e_1 & -\lambda e_5 & e_2 & e_3 \\ -\lambda e_1 & 0 & -\lambda e_4 & e_1 & e_5 & e_4 \\ -\lambda^3 e_4 & \lambda^2 e_1 & 0 & \lambda^2 e_4 & e_1 & -\lambda e_5 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -\lambda^2 e_5 & \lambda e_2 - \lambda e_4 & \lambda e_3 + e_1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -\lambda^2 e_5 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & -\lambda^2 e_5 \end{bmatrix}$$

Theorem (J-Landsberg-Pal)

For $d = 5$, concise minimal border rank tensors are cut out of concise tensors by

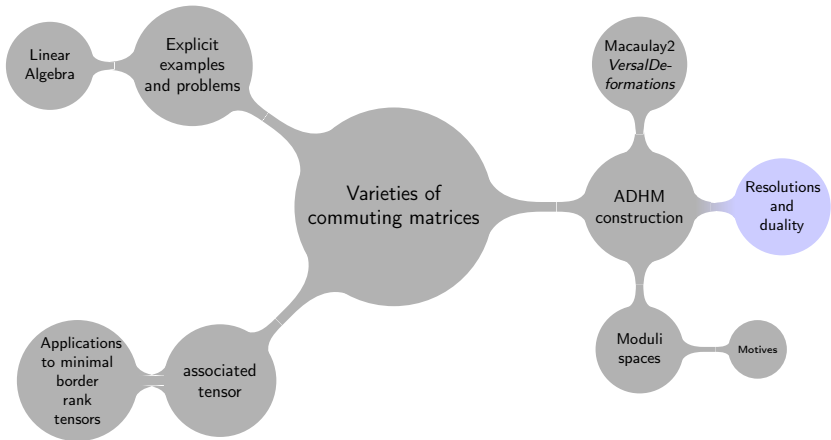
- ① *Strassen's equations (actually $p = 1$ Koszul flattenings),*
- ② *End-closed condition,*
- ③ *(1, 1, 1)-equations (coming from border apolarity by Buczyńska-Buczyński).*

& $d=6$, 1_A -generic ①-② suffices.

Thanks!

Thanks for attention!

A word about methods



Methods I: Macaulay's inverse systems

Macaulay's inverse systems / apolarity for modules.

$$S = \mathbb{C}[y_1, \dots, y_n] \quad T = \mathbb{C}[z_1, \dots, z_n]$$

$$F = Se_1 \oplus Se_2 \oplus \dots \oplus Se_r$$

$$F^* := Te_1^* \oplus \dots \oplus Te_r^*$$

Is an S -module via $y_i y_j \circ (z_i^2 z_j) e_k^* = z_i e_k^*$. Admits a pairing $F \times F^* \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ defined usually on dual bases.

Theorem (J-Šivic)

For every $M = F/K$ annihilated by $S_{\gg 0}$ there exist $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_r \in F^*$ such that $K = (S\sigma_1 + \dots + S\sigma_r)^\perp$. Say: M apolar to $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_r$.

Example

The module coming from x_1, \dots, x_4 is the apolar module of $z_1 e_3^* + z_2 e_4^*, z_3 e_3^* + z_4 e_4^*$.

Example

The module coming from x_1, \dots, x_4 is the apolar module of $z_1 e_3^* + z_2 e_4^*, z_3 e_3^* + z_4 e_4^*$.

$$x_1 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$x_2 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$x_3 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$x_4 = \begin{bmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

In the associated module $M = \langle e_1, e_2, e_3, e_4 \rangle$ we have $x_1(e_3) = e_1$ and so on. So $M = (Se_3 \oplus Se_4)/K$ with $K = (y_1 e_4, y_2 e_3, y_2 e_4 - y_1 e_3, y_3 e_4, y_4 e_3, y_4 e_4 - y_3 e_3)S$.

Methods II: Białyński-Birula decomposition

$$\mathbb{G}_m \curvearrowright \text{Quot}_r^d(\mathbb{A}^n).$$

geometry

algebra

$[F/K]$ is \mathbb{G}_m -fixed

$K \subset F$ homogeneous

$\text{Hom}(K, F/K)_i$

$\varphi: K \rightarrow F/K$ shifting degree by i

Proposition

If $\text{Hom}(K, F/K)_{>0} = 0$ or $\text{Hom}(K, F/K)_{<0} = 0$ locally there exists a retraction onto fixed points.

Methods II: Białyński-Birula decomposition – scribbling