

Combinatorial expressions for the nabla operator

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*based on joint work with Erik Carlsson

Motivating example

Fix a skew shape $\lambda \setminus \mu$. Ex.:

$$\lambda \setminus \mu = (3, 2) \setminus (1, 0) = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline & & \\ \hline & & \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Fix content $c = 1^{\nu_1} 2^{\nu_2} \dots$, i.e. a multiset of integers. Ex.:

$$c = (1, 1, 2, 2)$$

Count semistandard Young tableaux of shape $\lambda \setminus \mu$ and content c :

$$\begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline & 1 & 1 \\ \hline 2 & 2 & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{|c|c|c|} \hline & 1 & 2 \\ \hline 1 & 2 & \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Motivating example

shape \rightsquigarrow Schur function $s_{\lambda \setminus \mu}$

content $\rightsquigarrow h_\nu := \prod_i h_{\nu_i}$

The answer is:

$$(s_{\lambda \setminus \mu}, h_\nu)$$

$$s_{(3,2) \setminus (1,0)} = s_{(2,2)} + s_{(3,1)}$$

$$h_{(2,2)} = s_{(4)} + s_{(3,1)} + s_{(2,2)}$$

$$(s_{(3,2) \setminus (1,0)}, h_{(2,2)}) = 2$$

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Remark

The dimension of the space of symmetric functions is the number of partitions, which is smaller than both the number of possible shapes and the number of possible contents. So there must be relations!

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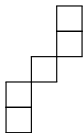
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Approach: count SSYT of some easy shape, recover f and use it for all shapes.

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In the first situation we consider shapes of the form



. The answer is given by the binomial coefficients, so we obtain

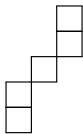
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and recover f :

$$f = \sum_\lambda \prod_i \binom{m}{\lambda_i} \omega(m_\lambda)$$

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$$f = \sum_{\lambda} \prod_i \binom{m}{\lambda_i} \omega(m_\lambda)$$

also

$$f = \sum_{\lambda} \prod_i \binom{m + \lambda_i - 1}{\lambda_i} m_\lambda$$

Definition

A unit interval order is a linearly ordered set $(P, >)$ together with a second order relation \succ called “much greater than” satisfying

$$a \succ b \Rightarrow a > b, \quad a \succ b \wedge b > c \vee a > b \wedge b \succ c \Rightarrow a \succ c.$$

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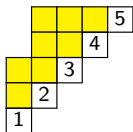
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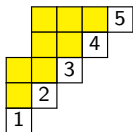
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Slang: if $a < b$, but $a \not\succeq b$, i.e. if b is “not too far”, we say that a attacks b . Above 1 attacks 2, 3 and 2 attacks 3, 4, 5.

Definition

A P-tableau of some shape $\lambda \setminus \mu$ with entries in some UIO P is a filling of $\lambda \setminus \mu$ by entries of P such that we have

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Some observations:

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Exercise: any two elements in neighboring diagonals know their relative position.

Definition

The q -weight of a P -tableau is

$q^{\text{number of pairs } a, b, \text{ such that } a \text{ attacks } b \text{ and } a \text{ is to the left of } b}$.

Counting P -tableaux

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Theorem (Shareshian-Wachs)

For a finite UIO P there exists a symmetric function χ_P such that for any skew shape $\lambda \setminus \mu$ the q -weighted number of P -tableaux of shape $\lambda \setminus \mu$ is given by

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This χ_P is called chromatic symmetric function, or LLT function.

Some examples

UIO: $\mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$ with $i \succ j$ if $i > j + 1$.

A sequence (a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n) is a P -tableau of shape (n) iff $a_2 \geq a_1 - 1$, $a_3 \geq a_2 - 1$, and so on. Equivalently,

$$a_{n-1} \leq a_n + 1, \quad a_{n-2} \leq a_{n-1} + 1, \dots$$

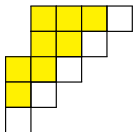
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If additionally $a_n = 0$, then this is the area sequence of a Dyck path!



$$\rightsquigarrow 0, 1, 2, 2, 3 \rightsquigarrow \boxed{3 \ 2 \ 2 \ 1 \ 0}.$$

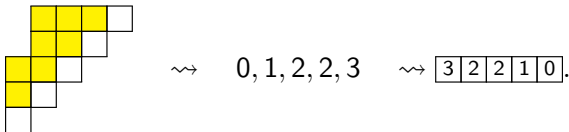
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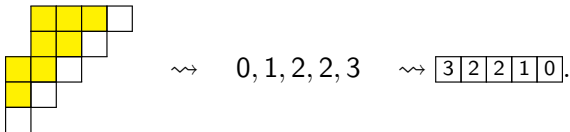
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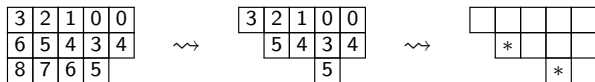


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We could use it to enumerate Dyck paths if only we could single out the tableaux satisfying $a_n = 0$.

A generalization

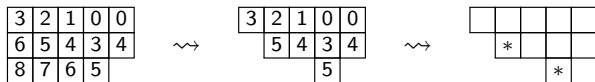
It is natural! In the context of Young tableaux, the set of cells containing $< k$ is again a skew shape. For P -tableaux it is not so. Take ≤ 5 in



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Definition

A generalized shape is a shape of the form $(\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_n)^t$, some of the cells of the shape are marked with stars, so that

- 1 A star can only be placed in the bottommost cell of a column.
- 2 We have $\lambda_i \leq \lambda_{i-1}$, but if the i -th column has a star, then $\lambda_i = \lambda_{i-1} + 1$ is also allowed.

Consider a UIO together with a number k so that the k greatest elements are maximal for \succ . These will be called *special*. Consider a generalized shape with k stars. Fix a bijection between the stars and the special elements. With these entries fixed, we q -count the P -tableaux.

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A Dyck path with a prescribed position of touch-points is the same thing as a tableau of shape



UIO: \mathbb{Z}_{\leq} , maximal elements: 0. Dyck path \rightsquigarrow tableau with entries $-a_0, -a_1, \dots$

The space V_k is the space of functions symmetric in all but k variables

$$V_k = \mathbb{C}[x_1, x_2, \dots]^{S_\infty}[y_1, \dots, y_k].$$

Endow V_k with a pairing: monomials in y times Schur functions in x form an orthonormal basis.

Theorem

For each UIO P with k special elements there exists an element $\chi_{P,k} \in V_k$, and for each generalized shape λ with k stars there exists an element $\chi_\lambda \in V_k$ so that the count above is given by

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$\chi_{P,k}$ is basically the “character of a partial Dyck path”. In this context it is defined by counting fillings of collections of vertical bars (= chains in the UIO).

From V_k back to (another) Sym

$$\text{Sym} \xrightarrow{\text{generalization}} V_k \xrightarrow{\text{projection}} \mathbb{C}[y_1, \dots, y_k] \xrightarrow{\text{symmetrization}} \rightarrow$$

Corresponds to

$$\text{shapes} \xrightarrow{\text{generalization}} \text{generalized shapes} \xrightarrow{\text{specialization}} \text{special shapes}$$

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We have two symmetric functions: Shareshian-Wachs's χ_P , and a new function $\chi'_{P,k}$.

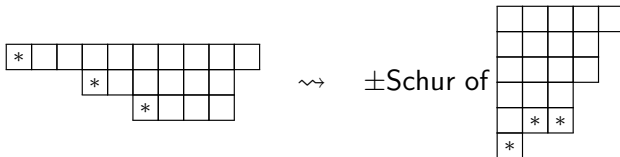
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certain modified Hall-Littlewood polynomial.

Special cases

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The row lengths turn into the hook lengths of the main diagonal.

Theorem

If some enumeration of Dyck paths/parking functions/UIOs is given by scalar products (f, C_α) for some $f \in \text{Sym}$, then the corresponding enumeration of nested Dyck paths/parking functions/P-tableaux is given by the scalar products $(f, \pm s_\lambda)$.

Shuffle conjecture

$$\nabla \tilde{H}_\lambda[X; q, t] = q^{\sum a_i} t^{\sum \ell_i} \tilde{H}_\lambda[X; q, t]$$

Expanding ∇f leads to sums of rational functions (like in Eugene's talk)

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compositional shuffle conjecture [HHLRU], shuffle theorem [CM]

$\nabla e_n =$ enumeration over parking functions

Parking function = Dyck path + labeling of vertical steps

$$e_n = \sum_{\alpha} C_{\alpha}, \quad \nabla C_{\alpha} = \text{paths have prescribed touch points}$$

Loehr-Warrington conjecture

Loehr-Warrington conjecture, theorem [BHMPS]

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Each $-a$ is weighted by $t^{\lfloor \frac{a}{n} \rfloor}$.

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In fact we have UIOs the submultisets of $\mathbb{Z}_{\leq 0}$, $a \succ b$ if $a \geq b + n$. Each $-a$ is weighted by $t^{\lfloor \frac{a}{n} \rfloor}$. Also works for ∇^k , and seems to work in the rational case.

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Open problems I

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Are there some algebraic structures on P -tableaux, similar to the affine Hecke algebra representations with basis the usual skew tableaux?

About χ'_P : It seems there is positivity involving canonical basis in the affine Hecke algebra. Polynomials in y_1, \dots, y_k correspond to

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Why strange signed Schur positivity?

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As S_n -rep we have H^i is the i -th hook.

Conjecture

Some spaces have the property: for a partition λ the corresponding S_n -rep appears only in $H^{\iota(\lambda)}$ where $\iota(\lambda)$ is the number of cells under the main diagonal.