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## Exponential generating functions (Andola § 2.3)

$A$  = structure one can place on labelled objects like  $[n]$

$a_n = \#$  of such structures one can place on  $[n]$

$\leadsto A(x) := \sum_{n \geq 0} a_n \frac{x^n}{n!} =:$  the exponential gen. fun. for  $A$ .

Prop. • If  $\mathcal{C}$  structures are a choice of  $A$ - or  $B$ -structures then  $C(x) = A(x) + B(x)$ , ("  $\mathcal{C} = A + B$  ")

• If  $\mathcal{C}$  structures on  $[n]$  are a choice of partition  $[n] = S_1 \cup S_2$ , with an  $A$ -structure on  $S_1$ ,  $B$ -structure on  $S_2$ , ("  $\mathcal{C} = A * B$  ")

so that  $c_n = \sum_{i=0}^n \binom{n}{i} a_i b_{n-i}$ , then  $C(x) = A(x) \cdot B(x)$ .

technical pt.:  
need  $a_0 = 0$   
here  $\hookrightarrow$

• If  $\mathcal{C}$ -structures are a choice of (unordered) set partition  $\pi$  of  $[n]$ , and then an  $A$ -structure on each block of  $\pi$ ,

then  $C(x) = e^{A(x)}$ . ("  $\mathcal{C} = \text{Set}(A)$  ")

"The exponential formula"

Pf. •  $\mathcal{C} = A + B$  is obvious.

• For  $\mathcal{C} = A * B$ , note  $c_n = \sum_{i=0}^n \binom{n}{i} a_i b_{n-i} \Leftrightarrow \frac{c_n}{n!} = \sum_{i+j=n} \frac{a_i}{i!} \frac{b_j}{j!}$

$\Leftrightarrow C(x) = A(x)B(x)$ .  $\checkmark$

• For  $\mathcal{C} = \text{Set}(A)$ , note  $\mathcal{C} = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} A^{(k)}$ , where  $A^{(k)} = \{ \text{pick a set partition of } [n] \text{ into exactly } k \text{ blocks, put } A\text{-structure on each block } k \text{ times} \}$

So  $C(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} A^{(k)}(x)$ .

But  $k! A^{(k)}(x) = A(x)^k =$  e.g. f for  $A * A * \dots * A$

$= \{ \text{pick a set partition } [n] = B_1 \cup \dots \cup B_k$ , into  $k$  ordered blocks, and put  $A$ -structure on each block  $\}$

Hence,  $A^{(k)}(x) = \frac{A(x)^k}{k!}$ ,

and so  $C(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \frac{A(x)^k}{k!} = e^{A(x)}$ .  $\checkmark$

note:  $a_0 = 0 \Rightarrow$  all  $B_i \neq \emptyset$



Examples of e.g.f.'s:

① Recall  $d_n = \# \{ \text{derangements in } S_n \}$ ,  $D(x) := \sum_{n \geq 0} \frac{d_n}{n!} x^n$   
 ↙ best-check problem

$\{ \text{all permutations} \} = \{ \text{fixed point only perms, i.e., identity perms} \} \times \{ \text{derangements, (fixed-pt-free perms)} \}$

So  $\sum_{n \geq 0} n! \frac{x^n}{n!} = \left( \sum_{n \geq 0} 1 \cdot \frac{x^n}{n!} \right) \cdot D(x)$   
 $\frac{1}{1-x} = e^x \cdot D(x)$ , i.e.,  $D(x) = \frac{e^{-x}}{1-x}$ , as we saw. ✓

②  $\{ \text{involutions } \sigma^2 = 1 \} = \text{Set} \left( \{ \text{involutions w/ exactly one cycle} \} \right)$

Hence  $\sum_{n \geq 0} \# \{ \sigma \in S_n : \sigma^2 = 1 \} \frac{x^n}{n!} = e^{\sum_{n \geq 0} \# \{ \sigma \in S_n : \sigma^2 = 1, \# \text{cycles}(\sigma) = 1 \} \frac{x^n}{n!}}$   
 $= e^{0 \cdot \frac{x^0}{0!} + 1 \cdot \frac{x^1}{1!} + 1 \cdot \frac{x^2}{2!} + 0 \cdot \frac{x^3}{3!} + 0 \cdot \frac{x^4}{4!} + \dots}$   
 $= e^{x + \frac{x^2}{2}}$ , as we saw before. ✓

③ More generally, Touchard's Thm follows from exp. formula:

$\{ \text{permutations} \} = \text{Set} \left( \{ \text{permutations w/ exactly one cycle} \} \right)$

and if we weight  $\sigma$  by  $t_1^{c_1(\sigma)} t_2^{c_2(\sigma)} \dots$ , wt is multiplicative with respect to this decomposition.

So  $\sum_{n \geq 0} \frac{x^n}{n!} \left( \sum_{\sigma \in S_n} t_1^{c_1(\sigma)} t_2^{c_2(\sigma)} \dots \right) = e^{\sum_{n \geq 0} \frac{x^n}{n!} \left( \sum_{\sigma \in S_n: \text{only one cycle}} t_1^{c_1(\sigma)} t_2^{c_2(\sigma)} \dots \right)}$   
 $= e^{\sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{x^n}{n!} \cdot t_n \cdot (n-1)!}$  there are  $(n-1)!$   $n$ -cycles in  $S_n$   
 $= e^{\sum_{n \geq 1} t_n \frac{x^n}{n}}$   $(t_1, t_2, \dots, t_{n-1})$  arbitrary seq.  
 $= e^{t_1 x + t_2 \frac{x^2}{2} + t_3 \frac{x^3}{3} + \dots}$ , as we saw. ✓

In addition to permutations, e.g.f.'s are also useful for set partitions and graphs / trees ...

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④ Bell numbers  $B_n := \# \{ \text{set partitions of } [n] \}$   
 + Bell polynomials  $B_n(y) := \sum_{\substack{\text{set partition} \\ \# \text{ of } [n]}} y^{\# \text{ blocks}} = \sum_{k=0}^n S(n, k) y^k$

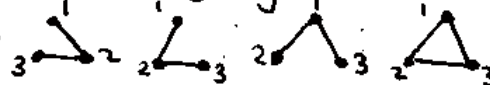
Since  $\{ \text{set partitions} \} = \text{Set}(\{ \text{single (non-empty) block partitions} \})$

$$\sum_{n \geq 0} B_n \frac{x^n}{n!} = e^{1 \cdot \frac{x}{1!} + 1 \cdot \frac{x^2}{2!} + 1 \cdot \frac{x^3}{3!} + \dots} = e^{(e^x - 1)}$$

and  $\sum_{n \geq 0} B_n(y) \frac{x^n}{n!} = e^{y \cdot \frac{x}{1!} + y \cdot \frac{x^2}{2!} + y \cdot \frac{x^3}{3!} + \dots} = e^{y(e^x - 1)}$

Cor (extract coeff. of  $[y^k]$ )  $\Rightarrow \sum_{n \geq 0} S(n, k) \frac{x^n}{n!} = \frac{(e^x - 1)^k}{k!}$

⑤ Let's count connected, simple graphs  $G = (V, E) \subseteq \binom{[n]}{2}$   
 weighted by  $y^{\#E}$  (number of edges)

e.g.  $n=3$    $\Rightarrow 3y^2 + y^3$

Can we understand  $\text{Conn}(x, y) := \sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{x^n}{n!} \sum_{\substack{\text{connected} \\ \text{graphs } G \text{ on } [n]}} y^{\#E}$  ?

Note:  $\{ \text{all simple graphs} \} = \text{Set}(\{ \text{connected simple graphs} \})$

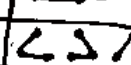
So  $\text{All}(x, y) = e^{\text{Conn}(x, y)}$

$\Rightarrow \text{Conn}(x, y) = \log(\text{All}(x, y)) = \log\left(\sum_{n \geq 0} \frac{x^n}{n!} \sum_{\substack{\text{simple} \\ \text{graphs on } [n]}} y^{\#E}\right)$

computer  $= \log\left(1 + \sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{x^n (1+y)^{\binom{n}{2}}}{n!}\right)$  include, or not, each edge!

$= x + \frac{x^2}{2!} \cdot 1 \cdot y + \frac{x^3}{3!} (3y^2 + y^3) + \frac{x^4}{4!} (16y^3 + 15y^4 + 6y^5 + y^6) + \dots$

⑥ Let's try to understand  $t_n := \# \{ \text{trees on } [n] \}$

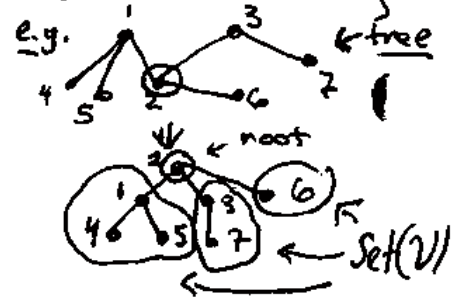
n	trees	$t_n$
1	•	1
2	•—•	1
3		3
4	...	16
5	...	125

(if we set  $v_n := \# \{ \text{vertex-rooted trees on } [n] \}$   
 then  $v_n = n \cdot t_n$

and  $V = \{ \text{root} \} \times \text{Set}(V)$

so that  $V(x) = x e^{V(x)}$

$\sum_{n \geq 0} v_n \frac{x^n}{n!}$



Is  $V(x) = x e^{V(x)}$  useful? Yes! Can rephrase as  $V(x) e^{-V(x)} = x$ , i.e.,  $V(x)$  is compositional inverse of  $x e^{-x}$ .

Prop. If  $A(x) = a_1 x + a_2 x^2 + \dots \in \mathbb{R}[[x]]$  has zero constant term ( $a_0 = 0$ ), so that  $B(A(x))$  is well-defined, then  $A$  has a compositional inverse  $B = A^{\langle -1 \rangle}$ , satisfying  $B(A(x)) = A(B(x)) = x \Leftrightarrow a_1 \in \mathbb{R}^\times$  is a unit.

But why does knowing  $V(x) = A^{\langle -1 \rangle}(x)$  for  $A(x) = x e^{-x}$  help?

Lagrange inversion thm:

If  $B(x) = A^{\langle -1 \rangle}(x)$ , that is  $B(A(x)) = x$  for some  $A(x), B(x) \in \mathbb{C}[[x]]$ , then  $[x^n] B(x) = \frac{1}{n} [x^{-1}] \left( \frac{x}{A(x)} \right)^n = \frac{1}{n} [x^{n-1}] \left( \frac{x}{A(x)} \right)^n$ .

Let's see how Lagrange inversion solves tree-counting problem:

$V(x) = \sum_{n \geq 0} v_n \frac{x^n}{n!}$  where  $v_n = \#$  vertex-rooted trees on  $[n]$   
 $= n \cdot t_n = n \cdot \#$  trees on  $[n]$

has  $V(x) = A^{\langle -1 \rangle}(x)$  for  $A(x) = x e^{-x}$

So Lagrange  $\Rightarrow \frac{v_n}{n!} = [x^n] V(x) = \frac{1}{n} [x^{n-1}] \left( \frac{x}{x e^{-x}} \right)^n = \frac{1}{n} [x^{n-1}] e^{nx} = \frac{1}{n} \frac{n^{n-1}}{(n-1)!} = \frac{n^{n-1}}{n!}$

$\Rightarrow v_n = n^{n-1}$ , and hence  $\boxed{t_n = \frac{v_n}{n} = n^{n-2}}$  ← Cayley's formula

We'll see another, very different pf. of Cayley's formula later...

For a proof of Lagrange inversion, see

Thm 2.2.1.5 of Ardila

It can be proved w/ standard analysis (calculus), but I am skipping proof for time considerations.

(Maybe we'll look at Lagrange inversion more next semester...)

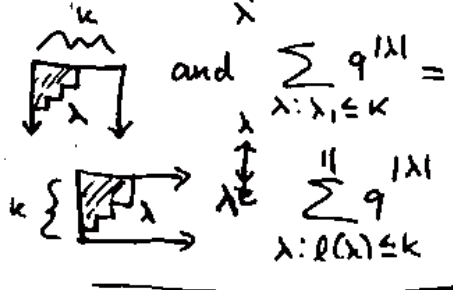
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(Stanley §1.7)

New topic: q-analogs + q-binomial coefficients

Recall  $\sum_{\text{all partitions } \lambda} q^{|\lambda|} = \sum_{n \geq 0} p(n) q^n = \frac{1}{(1-q)(1-q^2)(1-q^3)\dots}$

and  $\sum_{\lambda: \lambda_1 \leq k} q^{|\lambda|} = \sum_{n \geq 0} P_{\leq k}(n) q^n = \frac{1}{(1-q)(1-q^2)\dots(1-q^k)}$

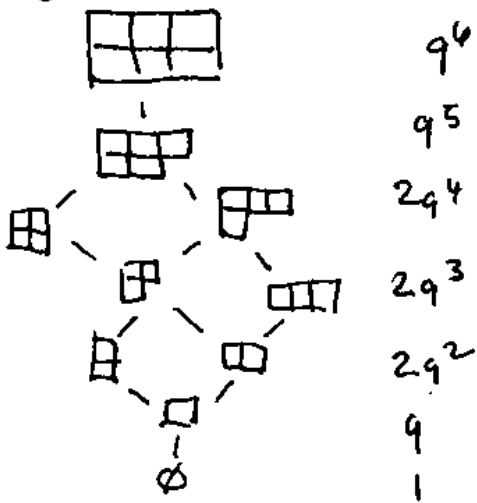


Q: what about

$\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q := \sum_{\substack{\lambda: \lambda_1 \leq j \\ \ell(\lambda) \leq k}} q^{|\lambda|}$

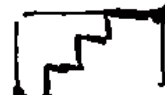


e.g.  $j=3, k=2$



$\Rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q = 1 + q + 2q^2 + 2q^3 + 2q^4 + q^5 + q^6 = (1+q+q^2+q^3+q^4)(1+q^2)$

We call  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$  the q-binomial coefficient because when  $q=1$  it is = binomial coeff.  $\binom{j+k}{k}$ .

(Recall that  $\binom{j+k}{k}$  counts N, E lattice paths  $(0,0) \rightarrow (j,k)$ :   $\leftrightarrow$  partitions  $\lambda \subseteq j \times k$  rectangles)

Now let's record properties of  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$ :

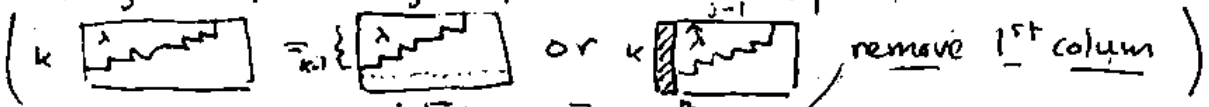
Prop. (a)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q \stackrel{q=1}{=} \binom{j+k}{k}$  (as we just explained...)

(b)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ j \end{bmatrix}_q$  (since  $k \leftrightarrow j$  in Young diagrams)

(c)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \sum_{n=0}^{j+k} p(j, k, n) q^n$  has symmetric coefficients:  
 $p(j, k, n) = p(j, k, j+k-n)$

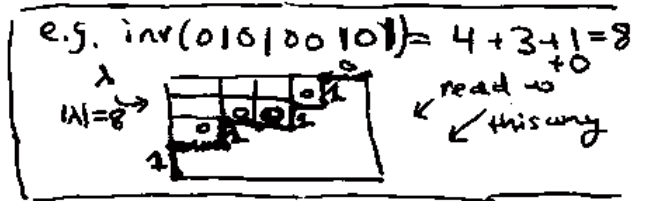
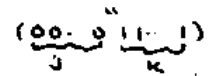
(Since  $k \begin{matrix} \lambda \\ \mu \\ \lambda' \end{matrix}$  have  $|\lambda| + |\lambda'| = j+k$ ) e.g., coeffs of  $\begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q$  are  $(1, 1, 2, 2, 1, 1) \leftarrow$  palindrome

(d)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \begin{bmatrix} j+k-1 \\ k-1 \end{bmatrix}_q + q^k \begin{bmatrix} j+k-1 \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$  (q-Pascal identity)



$= q^j \begin{bmatrix} j+k-1 \\ k-1 \end{bmatrix}_q + \begin{bmatrix} j+k-1 \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$  (by symmetry)

(e)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \sum_{\text{rearrangements } (w_1, \dots, w_{j+k}) = w \text{ of } 0^j 1^k} q^{\text{inv}(w)}$  where  $\text{inv}(w) = \# \{ (a, b) : 1 \leq a < b \leq j+k, w_a > w_b \}$  is the # of inversions of word  $w$ .



can read boundary of  $\lambda$  backwards as  
 $0 = \text{west}$   
 $1 = \text{south}$   
 to get word  $w$   
 and then  $|\lambda| = \text{inv}(w)$

(f)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \# \{ \text{k-dimensional subspaces of } (\mathbb{F}_q)^{j+k} \}$  if  $q = p^d$  is a prime power, so  $q = |\mathbb{F}_q|$

(g)  $\begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q = \frac{[j+k]_q!}{[j]_q! [k]_q!}$  where  $[n]_q! := [1]_q [2]_q \dots [n]_q$   
 and  $[n]_q := 1 + q + q^2 + \dots + q^{n-1} = \frac{1-q^n}{1-q}$

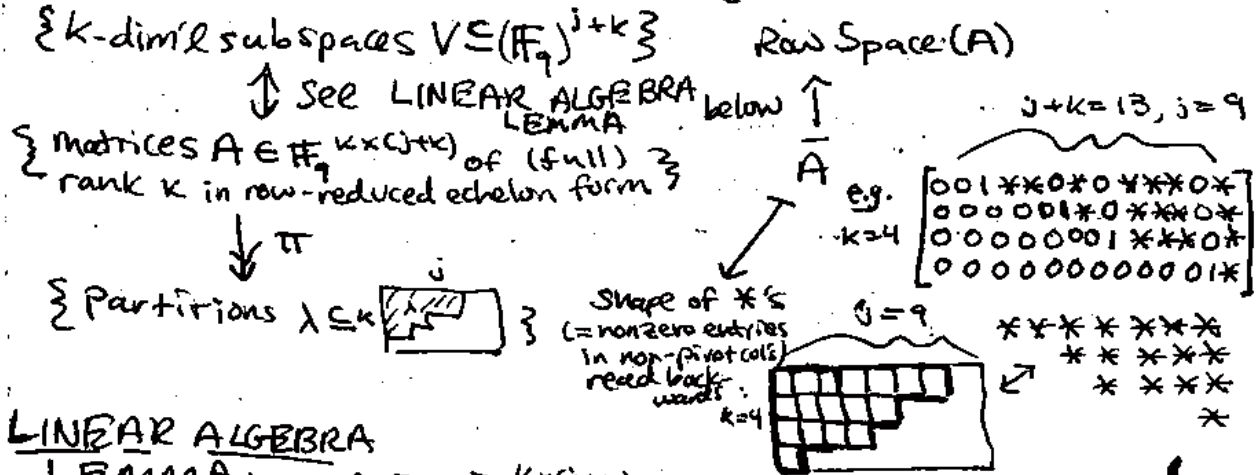
e.g.  $\begin{bmatrix} 5 \\ 2 \end{bmatrix}_q = \frac{[5]_q!}{[3]_q! [2]_q!} = \frac{[5]_q [4]_q [3]_q [2]_q [1]_q}{[3]_q [2]_q [1]_q [2]_q [1]_q} = \frac{(1+q+q^2+q^3+q^4)}{(1+q+q^2+q^3)} \cdot \frac{1}{(1+q)}$   
 $= (1+q+q^2+q^3+q^4) \cdot (1+q^2)$

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Ps: (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) explained in comments above.

We could prove (f) + (g) by induction + q-Pascal, but instead...

For (f) we claim that there is a bijection:



LINEAR ALGEBRA

LEMMA: If  $A, B \in \mathbb{F}_q^{k \times (j+k)}$  are both in RREF, and have the same row space, then  $A = B$ .

Note:  $|\pi^{-1}(\lambda)| = q^{|\lambda|}$ , since can choose \*'s from  $\mathbb{F}_q$  arbitrarily.

$$\Rightarrow \# \{k\text{-dim'l subspaces } V \subseteq \mathbb{F}_q^{j+k}\} = \sum_{\lambda \subseteq k} \# \pi^{-1}(\lambda) = \sum_{\lambda \subseteq k} q^{|\lambda|} = \begin{bmatrix} j+k \\ k \end{bmatrix}_q$$

For (g), suffices to check  $\# \{k\text{-dim'l subspaces } V \subseteq \mathbb{F}_q^{j+k}\} \stackrel{?}{=} \frac{[j+k]_q!}{[k]_q! [j]_q!}$

$\# \{ \text{ordered bases } (v_1, v_2, \dots, v_k) \text{ for all } k\text{-dim'l subspaces in } \mathbb{F}_q^{j+k} \}$

$\# \{ \text{ordered bases } (v_1, v_2, \dots, v_k) \text{ for one particular } k\text{-subspace} \}$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= (q^{j+k} - 1) (q^{j+k} - q) (q^{j+k} - q^2) \dots (q^{j+k} - q^{k-1}) = \frac{[j+k]_q!}{[k]_q! [j]_q!} \\
 &\quad (q^k - 1) (q^k - q) (q^k - q^2) \dots (q^k - q^{k-1}) \\
 &\quad \text{pick } v_1 \neq 0, \text{ pick } v_2 \neq \text{Span}\{v_1\} \\
 &= \frac{(q^{j+k} - 1) (q^{j+k-1} - 1) \dots (q^{j+1} - 1)}{(q^k - 1) (q^{k-1} - 1) \dots (q - 1)} = \frac{[j+k]_q [j+k-1]_q \dots [j+1]_q}{[k]_q [k-1]_q \dots [1]_q}
 \end{aligned}$$

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More generally, one can define the q-multinomial coefficient

$$\binom{n}{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_\ell}_q := \frac{[n]_q!}{[k_1]_q! [k_2]_q! \dots [k_\ell]_q!} \quad \text{for } \sum_{i=1}^{\ell} k_i = n$$

$(k_1, k_2, \dots, k_\ell)$  is usual multinomial

Prop. (a)  $\binom{n}{k_1, k_2, \dots, k_\ell}_q = \sum_{\substack{\text{inversions} \\ w = (w_1, \dots, w_n) \\ \text{of } k_1 \text{ 1's,} \\ k_2 \text{ 2's, } \dots \\ k_\ell \ell\text{'s}}} q^{\text{inv}(w)}$  (In particular,  $\binom{n}{1, 1, \dots, 1}_q = [n]_q! = \sum_{w \in S_n} q^{\text{inv}(w)}$ )

(b)  $\binom{n}{k_1, \dots, k_\ell}_q = \# \{ \text{partial flags of subspaces } \{0\} \subset V_{k_1} \subset V_{k_1+k_2} \subset \dots \subset V_{k_1+k_2+\dots+k_{\ell-1}} \subset \mathbb{F}_q^n \}$   
 where  $\dim_{\mathbb{F}_q} V_i = i$

(In particular,  $[n]_q! = \# \{ \text{complete flags } \{0\} \subset V_1 \subset V_2 \subset \dots \subset V_{n-1} \subset \mathbb{F}_q^n \}$ )

Pf! for both, use  $\binom{n}{k_1, \dots, k_\ell}_q = \binom{n}{k_1}_q \cdot \binom{n-k_1}{k_2, k_3, \dots, k_\ell}_q$

q-binomial      smaller q-multinomial

(Base cases  $\ell=1 \Rightarrow$  trivial,  $\ell=2 \Rightarrow$  already done above --) and in the inductive step:

• for (a), note that  $\text{inv}(w) = \# \{ \text{inversions between 1's and all of 2's, 3's, } \dots, \ell\text{'s} \}$

e.g.  $w = 124 \ 213 \ 241$  + # {inversions between 2's, ...,  $\ell$ 's}

$\text{inv}(w) = \text{inv}(122212221) + \text{inv}(242 \ 324)$  ✓

• for (b), note that after fixing  $V_{k_1}$ , quotient space.

$\{ \text{flags } \{0\} \subset V_{k_1} \subset V_{k_1+k_2} \subset \dots \subset \mathbb{F}_q^n \} \leftrightarrow \{ \text{flags } \{0\} \subset V_{k_2} \subset V_{k_2+k_3} \subset \dots \subset \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k_1} \}$

$V_{k_1+k_2} / V_{k_1} \cong V_{k_2}$        $V_{k_2+k_3} / V_{k_2} \cong V_{k_3}$        $\mathbb{F}_q^n / V_{k_1} \cong \mathbb{F}_q^{n-k_1}$