

Introduction to combinatorial species

Lectures 3 and 4

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Algebraic, analytic and geometric structures emerging from quantum field theory

4-16 March 2024, Chengdu, China

1. Hopf algebras
2. Species
3. Algebraic structures on Sp
4. The Tits monoid of set compositions
5. Back to species

Hopf algebras

Classical Hopf algebras: Borel, Cartier, Hopf (1940-1950).

Motivation: algebraic topology, homological algebra, study of loop spaces, algebras of operations (Steenrod), homology of Eilenberg–MacLane spaces.

Joni-Rota: *“A great many problems in combinatorics are concerned in assembling, or disassembling, large objects out of pieces of prescribed shape, as in the familiar board puzzles.”*

(Joni, S. A., & Rota, G. C. (1979). *Coalgebras and bialgebras in combinatorics*. Studies in Applied Mathematics, 61(2), 93-139.)

A *Hopf algebra* $(H, m, \iota, \Delta, \varepsilon, S)$ consists of

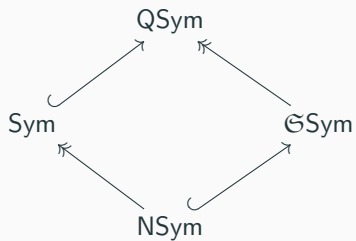
- an associative algebra (H, m, ι) ;
- a coassociative coalgebra (H, Δ, ε) ;
- compatibility between the product and the coproduct;
- the identity map $\text{id} : H \rightarrow H$ is invertible in the **convolution algebra** $(\text{End}(H), *)$, where

$$f * g := m \circ (f \otimes g) \circ \Delta.$$

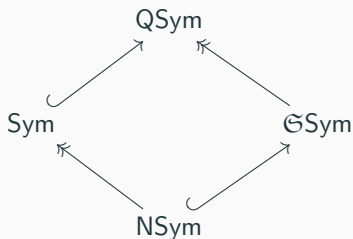
The inverse of id , denoted by S , is called *the antipode of H* .

Finding an optimal formula for the antipode **is not easy**. It provides a rich information about hidden combinatorial structures on H .

A (graded, connected) Hopf-algebraic square

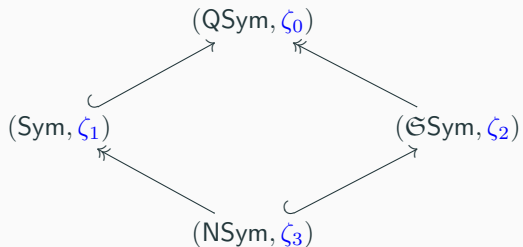


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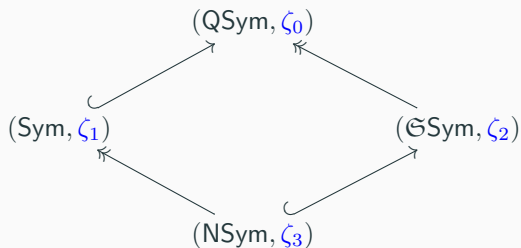


- QSym: quasisymmetric functions (compositions)
- Sym: symmetric functions (partitions)
- GSym: free quasisymmetric functions (permutations)
- NSym: non-commutative symmetric functions (compositions)

A (combinatorial) Hopf-algebraic square

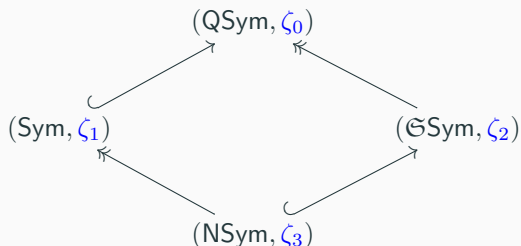


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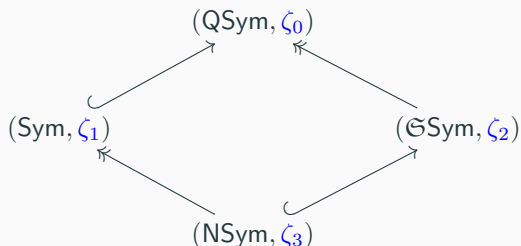
- $\text{Sym} \hookrightarrow \text{QSym} \hookrightarrow \mathbb{K}[x_1, x_2, \dots]$ and
 $\text{NSym} \hookrightarrow \text{GSym} \hookrightarrow \mathbb{K}\langle x_1, x_2, \dots \rangle$

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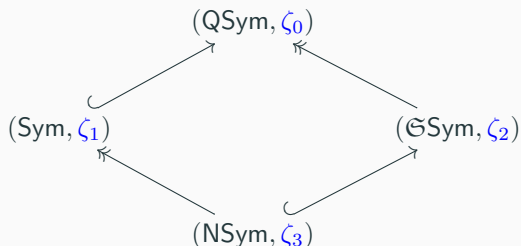
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- **Theorem** (Aguiar, Bergeron, Sottile): (QSym, ζ_0) is terminal.

A (combinatorial) Hopf algebras square

The map $\Psi : (H, \zeta) \rightarrow (\text{QSym}, \zeta_0)$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H & \xrightarrow{\Psi} & \text{QSym} \\ & \searrow \zeta & \swarrow \zeta_0 \\ & \mathbb{K} & \end{array}$$

is defined, for every $h \in H_n$ and $n \geq 0$, as

$$\Psi(h) = \sum_{c \text{ composition of } n} \zeta_c(h) M_c,$$

where, for $c = (c_1, c_2, \dots, c_k)$, ζ_c is the composite

$$H \xrightarrow{\Delta^{(k-1)}} H^{\otimes k} \longrightarrow H_{c_1} \otimes \dots \otimes H_{c_k} \xrightarrow{\zeta^{\otimes k}} \mathbb{K}.$$

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The map Ψ explains the “ubiquity” of quasisymmetric functions as generating functions in combinatorics.

A combinatorial example

Let G be a simple graph, with vertices $V(G)$ and edges $E(G)$.

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The *chromatic symmetric function* of G is

$$X(G) = X(G; x_1, x_2, \dots) := \sum_{\text{col}} \prod_{v \in V(G)} x_{\text{col}(v)},$$

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- If $n = |V(G)|$, then $X(G)$ is homogeneous of degree n .
- $X(G)$ is symmetric ($X(G) \in \text{Sym}$).
- Under $x_i \leftarrow 1$, for $1 \leq i \leq t$, and $x_i \leftarrow 0$, for $i > t$, written $x = 1^t$, then $X(G; 1^t)$ is the (classical) chromatic polynomial on t .

Using the universal property

Let $\mathcal{G} = \mathbb{K}\{ \text{isomorphism classes of finite (unoriented) graphs} \}$.

If $G, H \in \mathcal{G}$, let $G \cdot H := G \sqcup H$ the disjoint union. Also, let

$$\Delta(G) := \sum_{S \subseteq V(G)} G|_S \otimes G|_{V(G) \setminus S}.$$

Then, $(\mathcal{G}, \cdot, \Delta)$ is a graded Hopf algebra (Schmitt).

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Theorem: $\Psi(G)$ is the chromatic symmetric function.

$(\mathcal{G}, \cdot, \Delta)$ is called the *chromatic Hopf algebra of graphs*.

Species

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This action extends to a (covariant) functor

$$\Sigma : \text{FinSet} \rightarrow \text{Vect},$$

where

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- $(I \xrightarrow{\sigma} J) \mapsto (\Sigma[I] \xrightarrow{\Sigma[\sigma]} \Sigma[J])$.

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The construction Σ is an example of a *vector species*.

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By functoriality,

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For every $n \in \mathbb{N}$, \mathfrak{S}_n acts on $p[n]$ via $\sigma \cdot x := p[\sigma](x)$. Therefore,

species $p \longleftrightarrow V = (V_n)_{n \geq 0}$, V_n is a \mathfrak{S}_n -module.

Examples of species

- Species E of **sets**:

$$E[I] := \mathbb{K}\{*_I\}.$$

- Species E_n of n -**sets**:

$$E_n[I] := \begin{cases} \mathbb{K}\{*_I\}, & \text{if } |I| = n; \\ (0), & \text{if } |I| \neq n. \end{cases}$$

- Species $X := E_1$ of sets of one element.
- Species $1 := E_0$.
- Species G of **graphs**:

$$G[I] := \mathbb{K}\{ \text{finite graphs with vertices in } I \}.$$

Examples of species

- Species Π of **partitions**.
- Species L of **linear orders**.
- Species Σ of **set compositions**.
- Species B of **binary trees**.
- Species \mathfrak{S} of **permutations**.
- Species **Braid** of **braid hyperplane arrangements**.

⋮

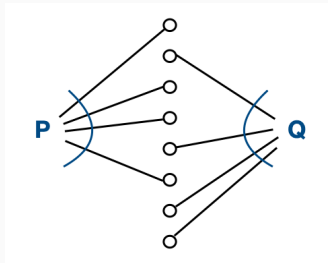
Operations on species

- **Sum of species**

$$(p + q)[I] := p[I] \oplus q[I].$$

- **Product of species** (Cauchy product)

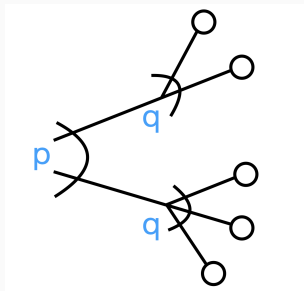
$$(p \cdot q)[I] := \bigoplus_{I=S \sqcup T} p[S] \otimes q[T].$$



Operations on species

- **Composition of species**

$$(p \circ q)[I] := \bigoplus_{\pi \in \Pi[I]} p[\pi] \otimes \bigotimes_{B \in \pi} q[B].$$



Generating function of a species

To every species \mathbf{p} it is associated its **exponential generating function**:

$$\mathbf{p}(x) := \sum_{n \geq 0} \dim_{\mathbb{K}} \mathbf{p}[n] \frac{x^n}{n!}.$$

We have:

$$(\mathbf{p} + \mathbf{q})(x) = \mathbf{p}(x) + \mathbf{q}(x),$$

$$(\mathbf{p} \cdot \mathbf{q})(x) = \mathbf{p}(x) \cdot \mathbf{q}(x),$$

$$(\mathbf{p} \circ \mathbf{q})(x) = \mathbf{p}(x) \circ \mathbf{q}(x).$$

For the last identity, $\mathbf{q}[\emptyset] := (0)$.

The category Sp of vector species

A **morphism of species** $p \xrightarrow{f} q$ is a collection $f = (f_I)$ of linear maps such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} p[I] & \xrightarrow{f_I} & q[I] \\ p[\sigma] \downarrow & & \downarrow q[\sigma] \\ p[J] & \xrightarrow{f_J} & q[J] \end{array}$$

for every $I \xrightarrow{\sigma} J$. This defines the category Sp of species.

Recall that the **Cauchy product** of two species p and q is given by

$$(p \cdot q)[I] = \bigoplus_{I=S \sqcup T} p[S] \otimes q[T].$$

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Endowed with this operation, Sp is symmetric monoidal: we can speak of monoids ($\mu : p \cdot p \rightarrow p$), comonoids ($\Delta : p \rightarrow p \cdot p$), ..., in species.

$$p[S] \otimes p[T] \xrightarrow{\mu_{S,T}} p[I] \qquad p[I] \xrightarrow{\Delta_{S,T}} p[S] \otimes p[T].$$

Algebraic structures on Sp

A *monoid* in Sp is given by (\mathbf{a}, μ, ι) , where \mathbf{a} is a species and

$$\mu : \mathbf{a} \cdot \mathbf{a} \rightarrow \mathbf{a} \quad , \quad \iota : \mathbf{1} \rightarrow \mathbf{a}.$$

Explicitly, if $I = S \sqcup T$ then

$$\mu_{S,T} : \mathbf{a}[S] \otimes \mathbf{a}[T] \rightarrow \mathbf{a}[I].$$

The map ι is uniquely determined by its component $\iota_{\emptyset} : \mathbb{K} \rightarrow \mathbf{a}[\emptyset]$.

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$$\mu : a \cdot a \rightarrow a \quad , \quad \iota : 1 \rightarrow a.$$

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The maps μ and ι must satisfy *associativity*, *unitality* and *naturality* axioms.

Algebraic structures in Sp

A *comonoid* in Sp is given by (c, Δ, ε) , where c is a species and

$$\Delta : c \rightarrow c \cdot c \quad , \quad \varepsilon : c \rightarrow 1.$$

Explicitly, if $I = S \sqcup T$ then

$$\Delta_{S,T} : c[I] \rightarrow c[S] \otimes c[T].$$

The map ε is uniquely determined by its component $\varepsilon_{\emptyset} : c[\emptyset] \rightarrow \mathbb{K}$.

The maps Δ and ε must satisfy *coassociativity*, *counitality* and *naturality* axioms.

Algebraic structures in \mathbf{Sp}

A *comonoid* in \mathbf{Sp} is given by (c, Δ, ε) , where c is a species and

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The map ε is uniquely determined by its component $\varepsilon_{\emptyset} : c[\emptyset] \rightarrow \mathbb{K}$.

The maps Δ and ε must satisfy *coassociativity*, *counitality* and *naturality* axioms.

Notions of **bimonoids** and **Hopf monoids** exist, analogues to bialgebras and Hopf algebras.

Proposition: any *graded, locally finite and connected* bialgebra H is a Hopf algebra.

A species h is *connected* (resp. *positive*) if $\dim_{\mathbb{K}} h[\emptyset] = 1$ (resp. $\dim_{\mathbb{K}} h[\emptyset] = 0$).

Proposition: any connected bimonoid h is a Hopf monoid.

The antipode is a map $s : h \rightarrow h$. When a bimonoid h possess an antipode, it is unique.

- $(\mathbf{E}, \mu, \Delta)$

$$\mathbf{E}[I] := \mathbb{K}\{\mathbf{H}_I\}.$$

$$\mu_{S,T}(\mathbf{H}_S \otimes \mathbf{H}_T) := \mathbf{H}_{S \sqcup T} \quad , \quad \Delta_{S,T}(\mathbf{H}_I) := \mathbf{H}_S \otimes \mathbf{H}_T.$$

$$s_I(\mathbf{H}_I) = (-1)^{|I|} \mathbf{H}_I.$$

Algebraic structures in Sp: examples

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- $(\mathbf{L}, \mu, \Delta)$

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Algebraic structures in \mathbf{Sp} : examples

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The product of \mathbf{L} is **concatenation**, while the coproduct is **deshuffle**.
There is also a Hopf monoid (Σ, μ, Δ) with analogous operations.

A *Lie monoid* in \mathbf{Sp} is given by $(\mathfrak{g}, [,])$, where \mathfrak{g} is a species and

$$[,] : \mathfrak{g} \cdot \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow \mathfrak{g}$$

satisfies

- Anticommutativity

$$[x, y]_{S,T} = -[y, x]_{T,S};$$

- Jacobi identity:

$$[[x, y]_{S,T}, z]_{S \sqcup T, R} + [[z, x]_{R,S}, y]_{R \sqcup S, T} + [[z, x]_{T,R}, x]_{T \sqcup R, S} = 0.$$

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If h is connected, then $\text{Prim}(h)$ is positive and

$$\text{Prim}(h)[I] = \bigcap_{\substack{S \sqcup T = I \\ S, T \neq \emptyset}} \ker(\Delta_{S,T} : h[I] \rightarrow h[S] \otimes h[T]),$$

for every $I \neq \emptyset$.

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The maps μ and ι must satisfy *associativity*, *unitality* and *naturality* axioms.

Monoids in species, revisited

Naturality: the product map behaves well with respect with the transport of structures (relabeling).

More precisely, if $I = S \sqcup T$ and $\sigma : I \rightarrow J$ is a bijection. the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a[S] \otimes a[T] & \xrightarrow{\mu_{S,T}} & a[I] \\ \downarrow a[\sigma|_S] \otimes a[\sigma|_T] & & \downarrow a[\sigma] \\ a[\sigma(S)] \otimes a[\sigma(T)] & \xrightarrow{\mu_{\sigma(S),\sigma(T)}} & \sigma[J] \end{array}$$

commutes.

Monoids in species, revisited

Unitality:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a & \xleftarrow{\mu} & a \cdot a \\ & \searrow = & \uparrow \iota \cdot \text{id} \\ & & 1 \cdot a \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{ccc} a \cdot a & \xrightarrow{\mu} & a \\ \text{id} \cdot \iota \uparrow & & \nearrow = \\ a \cdot 1 & & \end{array}$$

The unit axiom states that for each finite set I , the diagrams

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a[I] & \xleftarrow{\mu_{\emptyset, I}} & a[\emptyset] \otimes a[I] \\ & \searrow \cong & \uparrow \iota_{\emptyset} \otimes \text{id}_I \\ & & \mathbb{K} \otimes a[I] \end{array} \qquad \begin{array}{ccc} a[I] \otimes a[\emptyset] & \xrightarrow{\mu_{I, \emptyset}} & a[I] \\ \text{id}_I \otimes \iota_{\emptyset} \uparrow & & \nearrow \cong \\ a[I] \otimes \mathbb{K} & & \end{array}$$

commute.

Monoids in species, revisited

Associativity : given a decomposition $I = R \sqcup S \sqcup T$,

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a \cdot a \cdot a & \xrightarrow{\text{id} \cdot \mu} & a \cdot a \\ \mu \cdot \text{id} \downarrow & & \downarrow \mu \\ a \cdot a & \xrightarrow{\mu} & a \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a[R] \otimes a[S] \otimes a[T] & \xrightarrow{\text{id} \otimes \mu_{S,T}} & a[R] \otimes a[S \sqcup T] \\ \mu_{R,S} \otimes \text{id} \downarrow & & \downarrow \mu_{R,S \sqcup T} \\ a[R \sqcup S] \otimes a[T] & \xrightarrow{\mu_{R \sqcup S, T}} & a[I] \end{array}$$

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From the associativity of the collection $(\mu_{S,T})_{S,T}$, there is a unique map called the *higher product map* of a

$$a[S_1] \otimes \cdots \otimes a[S_k] \xrightarrow{\mu^{S_1, \dots, S_k}} a[I] \quad \text{for every } I = S_1 \sqcup \cdots \sqcup S_k, k \geq 0,$$

obtained by iterating the product maps $\mu_{S,T}$.

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obtained by iterating the product maps $\mu_{S,T}$.

If $F = S_1 | \cdots | S_k \vDash I$, we define $\mu_F := \mu_{S_1, \dots, S_k}$ and $a(F) := a[S_1] \otimes \cdots \otimes a[S_k]$, so

$$\mu_F : a(F) \rightarrow a[I].$$

Monoids in species from higher product maps

Theorem(Aguiar-Mahajan): Let \mathbf{a} be a connected species equipped with a collection of maps

$$\mu_F : \mathbf{a}(F) \rightarrow \mathbf{a}[I], \quad \text{for every } F \vDash I, I \text{ finite set .}$$

Then \mathbf{a} is a connected monoid with higher products maps μ_F if and only if the naturality axiom holds and the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathbf{a}(G) & \xrightarrow{\mu_G} & \mathbf{a}[I] \\ \mu_{G/F} \downarrow & \nearrow \mu_F & \\ \mathbf{a}(F) & & \end{array}$$

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Here, \leq refers to the *refinement partial order* on set compositions. Also, G/F is a set composition of I constructed from G and F .

The combinatorics of set compositions encode algebraic properties of connected monoids in species.

The Tits monoid of set compositions

Let I be a finite set.

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For example,

$$2|569|3|1478 \in \Sigma[10].$$

Operations on set compositions

- **Concatenation**

Let $I = \{a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h\}$ and let $I = S \sqcup T$, with

$$S = \{a, b, c, d, e\} \quad \text{and} \quad T = \{f, g, h\}.$$

Consider

$$F = de|abc \quad \text{and} \quad G = fg|h.$$

The **concatenation** of F and G is

$$F \odot G := de|abc|fg|h \vDash I.$$

If \mathfrak{p} is species and $F, G \vDash I$, there is a canonical isomorphism

$$\mathfrak{p}(F) \otimes \mathfrak{p}(G) \cong \mathfrak{p}(F \odot G).$$

Operations on set compositions

- **Tits product** (Jacques Tits - 1974; Coxeter groups, Buildings)

Let $I = \{a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h\}$ and consider

$$F = cdfg|ah|be \vDash I \quad \text{and} \quad G = adefh|bcg \vDash I.$$

The **Tits product** of F and G is

$$F \cdot G := df|cg|ah| |e|b \equiv df|cg|ah|e|b \vDash I.$$

$(\Sigma[I], \cdot)$ is a monoid (with unit (I)), called the **Tits monoid on I** .

The Tits product is *strongly* non-commutative:

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The Tits product is intimately related to the *refinement order* on set compositions.

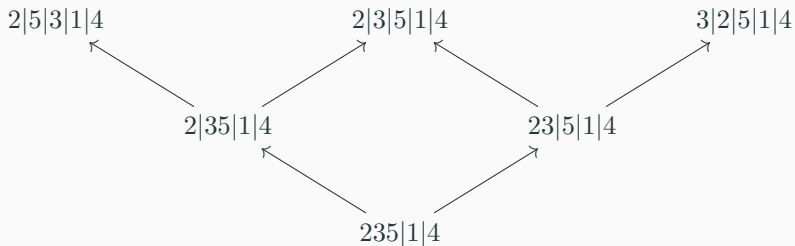
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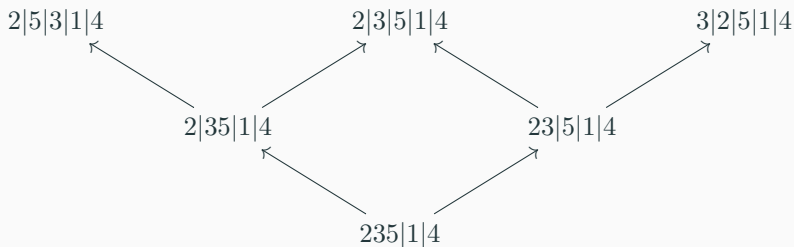
$F \leq G$ if each block of F is a reunion of **adjacent** blocks of G .



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Minimal element: $\widehat{0}_I := (I)$

Maximal elements: permutations in \mathfrak{S}_I .

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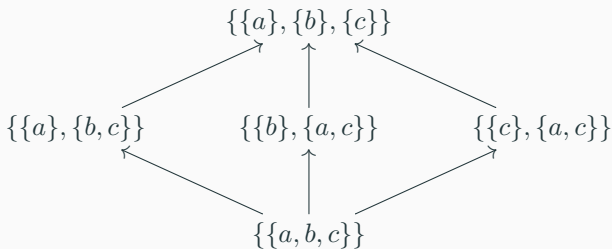
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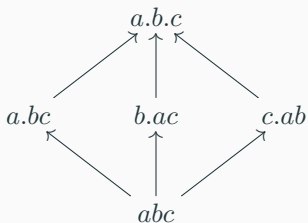
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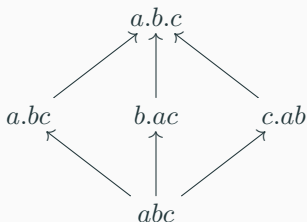
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Minimal element: $\widehat{0}_I := \{I\}$

Maximal element: $\widehat{1}_I := \{\{i\} : i \in I\}$.

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Let $F, G \vDash I$. We have:

1. $F \leq F \cdot G$.
2. $F \leq G \iff F \cdot G = G$.
3. $F^2 = F$.
4. $F \cdot G \cdot F = F \cdot G$ (The monoid $(\Sigma[I], \cdot)$ is a *left regular band*)
5. $\text{supp}(F \cdot G) = \text{supp}_I(F) \vee \text{supp}(G)$.
6. $G \cdot F = G \iff \text{supp}(F) \leq \text{supp}(G)$.

Back to species

Splitting operation

Let $F, G \vDash I$.

$F \leq G \iff \exists!$ “splitting” $G/F := G_1 | \dots | G_k$ of G with $\begin{cases} G_j \vDash I_j \\ F = I_1 | \dots | I_j \end{cases}$

Let (a, μ, ι) be a monoid. Define $\mu_{G/F} : a(G) \rightarrow a(F)$ by means of the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} a(G) & \xrightarrow{\mu_{G/F}} & a(F) \\ \cong \downarrow & & \parallel \\ a(G_1) \otimes \dots \otimes a(G_k) & \xrightarrow{\mu_{G_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mu_{G_k}} & a(I_1) \otimes \dots \otimes a(I_k) \end{array}$$

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The combinatorics of set compositions encode algebraic properties of connected monoids in species.

Comonoids in species, revisited

A *comonoid* in Sp is given by (c, Δ, ε) , where c is a species and

$$\Delta : c \rightarrow c \cdot c \quad , \quad \varepsilon : c \rightarrow 1.$$

Explicitly, if $I = S \sqcup T$ then

$$\Delta_{S,T} : c[I] \rightarrow c[S] \otimes c[T].$$

The map ε is uniquely determined by its component $\varepsilon_{\emptyset} : c[\emptyset] \rightarrow \mathbb{K}$.

The maps Δ and ε must satisfy *coassociativity*, *counitality* and *naturality* axioms.

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The maps Δ and ε must satisfy *coassociativity*, *counitality* and *naturality* axioms.

Exercise: write explicitly the naturality axiom, counitality axiom and coassociative axiom for the coproduct in a comonoid.

Comonoids in species, revisited

Given a decomposition $I = S_1 \sqcup \cdots \sqcup S_k$, there is a unique map

$$c[I] \xrightarrow{\Delta_{S_1, \dots, S_k}} a[S_1] \otimes \cdots \otimes a[S_k].$$

For $k = 1$, this map is defined to be the identity of $c[I]$, and for $k = 0$ to be the counit map ε_\emptyset .

The map Δ_{S_1, \dots, S_k} is called the *higher coproduct map* of a .

As before, if $F = S_1 | \cdots | S_k \vDash I$, we define write $\Delta_F := \Delta_{S_1, \dots, S_k}$.

Hence,

$$\Delta_F : a[I] \rightarrow a(F).$$

Bimonoids in species

Definition/Theorem(Aguiar-Mahajan): Let h be a connected species equipped with two collections of maps

$$\mu_F : h(F) \rightarrow h[I] \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta_F : h[I] \rightarrow h(F),$$

one map for each composition F of a nonempty finite set I . Then h is a bimonoid with higher product maps μ_F and higher coproduct maps Δ_F if and only if the following conditions hold:

- naturality,
- higher associativity,
- higher coassociativity,
- higher compatibility: the diagram commutes for any pair of compositions $F, G \vDash I$.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} h(FG) & \xrightarrow{\beta} & h(GF) & & \\ \Delta_{FG/F} \uparrow & & \downarrow \mu_{GF/F} & & \\ h(F) & \xrightarrow{\mu_F} & h[I] & \xrightarrow{\Delta_G} & h(G) \end{array}$$

Questions?

Bimonoids in species

A bimonoid h is at the same time a monoid (h, μ, ι) and a comonoid (h, Δ, ε) , which are *related* in the following way: the maps

$$\mu : h \cdot h \rightarrow a \quad , \quad \iota : 1 \rightarrow h$$

are *morphism of comonoids*. This is equivalent to ask that the maps

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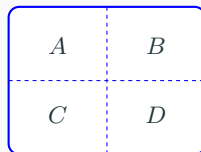
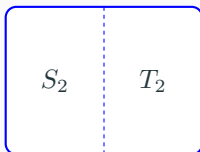
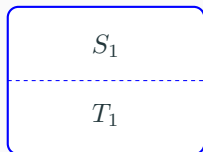
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In order to describe the compatibility rule, fix decompositions $S \sqcup T = I = S' \sqcup T'$, and consider the resulting pairwise intersections:

$$A = S_1 \cap S_2, \quad B = S_1 \cap T_2, \quad C = T_1 \cap S_2, \quad D = T_1 \cap T_2.$$



$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 h[A] \otimes h[B] \otimes h[C] \otimes h[D] & \xrightarrow{\text{id} \otimes \beta \otimes \text{id}} & h[A] \otimes h[C] \otimes h[B] \otimes h[D] \\
 \uparrow \Delta_{A,B} \otimes \Delta_{C,D} & & \downarrow \mu_{A,C} \otimes \mu_{B,D} \\
 h[S_1] \otimes h[S_2] & \xrightarrow{\mu_{S_1, S_2}} & h[I] \xrightarrow{\Delta_{T_1, T_2}} h[T_1] \otimes h[T_2]
 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 h[\emptyset] \otimes h[\emptyset] & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_\emptyset \otimes \varepsilon_\emptyset} & \mathbb{K} \otimes \mathbb{K} & \mathbb{K} & \xrightarrow{\iota_\emptyset} & h[\emptyset] \\
 \downarrow \mu_{\emptyset, \emptyset} & & \downarrow \cong & \downarrow \cong & & \downarrow \Delta_{\emptyset, \emptyset} \\
 h[\emptyset] & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_\emptyset} & \mathbb{K} & \mathbb{K} \otimes \mathbb{K} & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_\emptyset \otimes \varepsilon_\emptyset} & h[\emptyset] \otimes h[\emptyset]
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$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 & h[\emptyset] & \\
 \iota_\emptyset \nearrow & & \searrow \varepsilon_\emptyset \\
 \mathbb{K} & \xrightarrow{\cong} & \mathbb{K}
 \end{array}$$