

From faces of Weyl polytopes, to weights and characters of highest weight modules

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Introduction

- \mathfrak{g} = complex semisimple/Kac–Moody Lie algebra (just work with \mathfrak{sl}_n),
 $U(\mathfrak{g})$ = universal enveloping algebra.

Triangular decomposition: $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{n}^- \oplus \mathfrak{h} \oplus \mathfrak{n}^+$, simple roots π ,
Weyl group W .

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Weyl group W .
- Fix a (highest) weight $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$.
 - $M(\lambda)$ = Verma module;
 - $L(\lambda)$ = simple quotient;
 - V = highest weight module: $M(\lambda) \twoheadrightarrow V \twoheadrightarrow L(\lambda)$.
- We are interested in the structure of highest weight modules,
e.g. simple *non-integrable* modules.
(Integrable modules, Verma modules well-studied.)

The start of the journey

In 2009, Chari–Greenstein used certain **combinatorial subsets** of root system Δ to:

- Study modules over classical and quantum loop algebras,
- Construct Koszul algebras of all finite global dimensions from graded \mathfrak{g} -modules (via endomorphism algebras as in blocks of \mathcal{O}),

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- Construct Koszul algebras of all finite global dimensions from graded \mathfrak{g} -modules (via endomorphism algebras as in blocks of \mathcal{O}),
- Obtain a graded character formula (at $q = 1$) of a Kirillov–Reshetikhin module over $U_q(\widehat{\mathfrak{g}})$,
- Connect parabolic subalgebras of \mathfrak{g} to ad-nilpotent ideals.

These **combinatorial subsets** $Y \subseteq \Delta$ are given by:

$$y_1 + y_2 = \alpha_1 + \alpha_2 \quad (y_1, y_2 \in Y, \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \in \Delta) \quad \implies \quad \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \in Y.$$

The start of the journey (cont.)

Then in 2009, Chari–Dolbin–Ridenour classified all such subsets. Related to roots on the faces of root polytopes $\text{conv } \Delta$.

- Chari–K.–Ridenour (2012) extended to faces of *Weyl polytopes* $\text{conv}(\text{wt } L(\lambda))$, $\lambda \in P^+$, and constructed larger families of Koszul (endomorphism) algebras.
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This has now led to:

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- The study of weights of all simple modules $L(\lambda)$ (even for $\lambda \notin P^+$) and of **all** highest weight modules – over semisimple and also Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g} ;
- A hitherto unstudied (even over \mathfrak{sl}_4) class of “universal” highest weight modules \mathbb{M} ;
- BGG resolutions and Weyl–Kac character formulas for \mathbb{M} .

1a. First-order theory:
weights of simple modules

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Classical picture of finite-dimensional simple module $L(\lambda)$:

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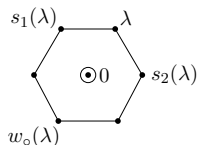
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- *Qualitatively:* $\text{conv wt } L(\lambda) = \text{conv } W(\lambda)$.

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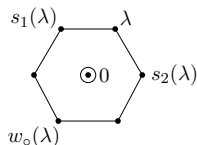
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If instead $L(\lambda)$ is infinite-dimensional:

- *Quantitatively:* character known through Kazhdan–Lusztig theory, e.g.:

$$\text{ch } L(xw_o \bullet 0) = \sum_{x \leq w} (-1)^{\ell(w) - \ell(x)} P_{x,w}(1) \text{ch } M(xw_o \bullet 0).$$

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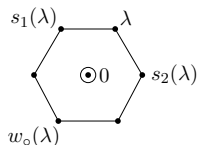
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- *Qualitatively:* which weights occur in $L(\lambda)$? What is their convex hull?
(Was not written down until recently.)

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What if \mathfrak{g} is of infinite type?

- If \mathfrak{g} is affine, or symmetrizable, $\text{ch } L(\lambda)$ is not known for *all* critical λ .
 - If \mathfrak{g} is non-symmetrizable, formulas for $\text{ch } L(\lambda)$ are not known even for integrable simple modules.
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- These formulas involve the weights of a “first-order” (= parabolic) Verma module $M(\lambda, J)$.
- We then extend this (uniform) formula to *all* highest weight \mathfrak{g} -modules – now involves the weights of “higher order Verma modules” $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$.

Notation for Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g}

For every Kac–Moody Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} (e.g. \mathfrak{sl}_n):

- Generalized Cartan matrix A , indexed by Dynkin diagram nodes I ;
- Realization $(\mathfrak{h}, \pi, \pi^\vee)$ of simple (co)roots satisfying: $\langle \alpha_j, \alpha_i^\vee \rangle = a_{ij}$.

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Parabolic analogues: For a subset $J \subseteq I$, we have analogues:

- Parabolic Weyl group W_J generated by $\{s_j : j \in J\}$.
- Define $\pi_J := \{\alpha_j : j \in J\}$.
- Roots $\Delta_J = \Delta_J^+ \sqcup \Delta_J^-$.
- The Levi subalgebra \mathfrak{l}_J is generated by $\{e_j, f_j : j \in J\}$ and \mathfrak{h} .

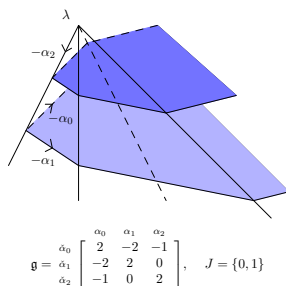
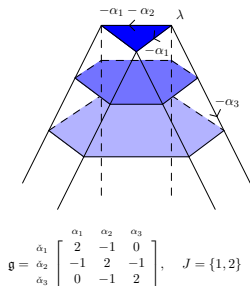
Integrable Slice Decomposition of the weights

Theorem (K. (2016), Dhillon–K. (2022))

Given $J \subseteq I$ and $\nu \in \mathfrak{h}^*(P_J^+)$, let $L_J(\nu)$ denote the simple (integrable) \mathfrak{l}_J -module with highest weight ν . Then

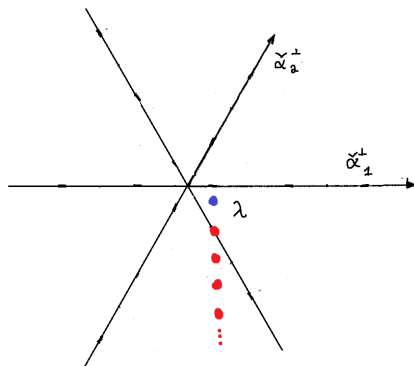
$$\text{wt } L(\lambda) = \bigsqcup_{\mu \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}(\pi \setminus \pi_{J_\lambda})} \text{wt } L_{J_\lambda}(\lambda - \mu),$$

where $J_\lambda = J_{L(\lambda)}$ is the integrability $\{i \in I : \langle \lambda, \alpha_i^\vee \rangle \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}\}$.



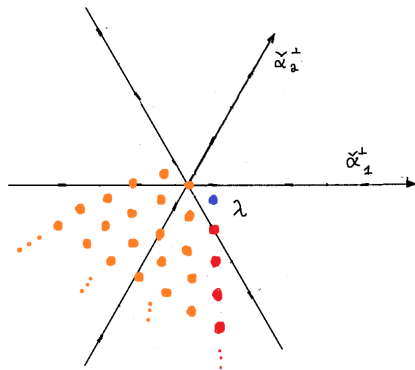
Example of Integrable Slice Decomposition in rank 2

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A question of Bump on the weights

Recall, Verma modules and finite-dimensional simple modules have “no holes”:

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These formulas follow from weight-formulas for a class of universal “first-order” highest weight modules $M(\lambda, J)$:

Parabolic Verma modules

Key tool in proving the above weight-formulas: *parabolic Verma modules*.

Say $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$ and $J \subseteq J_\lambda$ (so $\langle \lambda, \alpha_j^\vee \rangle \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}$). Define

$$M(\lambda, J) := \frac{U\mathfrak{g}}{U\mathfrak{g} \cdot (\ker \lambda, \mathfrak{n}^+, \{f_j^{\langle \lambda, \alpha_j^\vee \rangle + 1}\})} = \frac{M(\lambda)}{\sum_{j \in J} U\mathfrak{g} \cdot f_j^{\langle \lambda, \alpha_j^\vee \rangle + 1} M(\lambda)_\lambda}.$$

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"Extremal" special cases:

- Zeroth order: $J = \emptyset$ (for any $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$), $M(\lambda, \emptyset) = M(\lambda)$, Verma module.
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- In first order, if e.g. $J = I$ (so $\lambda \in P^+$): $M(\lambda, I) = L^{\max}(\lambda)$, maximal integrable module (simple if \mathfrak{g} is symmetrizable).
Character: Weyl–Kac character formula

$$\text{ch } L^{\max}(\lambda) = \sum_{w \in W} \frac{(-1)^{\ell(w)} e^{w \bullet \lambda}}{\prod_{\alpha \in \Delta^+} (1 - e^{-\alpha})^{\dim \mathfrak{g}_\alpha}}, \quad \forall \lambda \in P^+.$$

Weight-formula 3 for $L(\lambda)$: Minkowski difference

The above weight-formulas – (1) Slice decomposition, (2) “No holes in hull” –

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and (b) Recalling $J_\lambda := \{i \in I : \langle \lambda, \alpha_i^\vee \rangle \in \mathbb{Z}_{\geq 0}\}$, we have:

Theorem (K. (2016), Dhillon–K. (2022))

$\text{wt } L(\lambda) = \text{wt } M(\lambda, J_\lambda)$, for all $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$ (and all Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g}).

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Now set $J = J_\lambda \rightsquigarrow$ gives third weight-formula for $\text{wt } L(\lambda)$.

Theorem (G.V.K. Teja, 2020): “Minimal description” of all $\text{wt } M(\lambda, J)$ (and hence for all simple $L(\lambda)$), using *parabolic* partial sum property.

1b. First-order invariant & convex hull, of all modules

A first-order invariant of a highest weight module

The “discrete” Minkowski difference formula for $\text{wt } L(\lambda)$, $\text{wt } M(\lambda, J)$

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Moreover, for special classes of highest weight modules, including simple modules $L(\lambda)$, these data determine the weights.

Convex hull of weights

Recall – integrability of V is: $I_V := \{i \in I : f_i \text{ acts locally nilpotently on } V_\lambda\}$.

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For all highest weight modules V over Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g} , $\text{conv}(\text{wt } V)$ is the Minkowski sum of

- *the hull $\text{conv } W_{I_V}(\lambda)$, and*
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Corollary: $\text{conv}(\text{wt } V)$ is always a W_{I_V} -invariant polyhedron.
(Novel even in finite type.)

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Let \mathfrak{g} be a Kac–Moody Lie algebra, $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$, and V a highest weight \mathfrak{g} -module.

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Also: complete determination of the face lattice (for all \mathfrak{g}, λ, V).

From (exposed) faces to weak faces to 212-closed subsets

Recall the 2009 property studied by Chari with coauthors:

$$y_1 + y_2 = \alpha_1 + \alpha_2 \quad (y_1, y_2 \in Y, \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \in \Delta) \quad \implies \quad \alpha_1, \alpha_2 \in Y.$$

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Given a subset $Y \subseteq \mathbf{X} := \text{conv}(\text{wt } V)$, each statement implies the next:

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Chari et al: 212-closed subsets of $\mathbf{X} = \Delta$; weak faces of $\mathbf{X} = \text{wt } L(\lambda), \lambda \in P^+$.

Preceding slide: (1) \iff (2) for $\mathbf{X} = \text{conv}(\text{wt } V)$.

From exposed to weak faces to 212-closed subsets (cont.)

How restrictive are (3), (4)? (In general – no “nice” answer.)
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What about for “special” subsets \mathbf{X} in representation theory?

For these subsets – these are **equivalent** to (the weights on) exposed faces!

Theorem (G.V.K. Teja (*Transform. Groups*, in press))

*These notions (1)–(4) are equivalent for $\mathbf{X} = \text{wt } V$ and $\mathbf{X} = \text{conv}(\text{wt } V)$, for **all** highest weight modules over Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g} .*

2a. Higher-order theory:
holes, higher-order Vermas

Holes in the set of weights

Recall, Verma modules and integrable simple modules have “no holes”:

- For all $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$, $\text{wt } M(\lambda) = (\lambda - \mathbb{Z}\pi) \cap \text{conv}(\text{wt } M(\lambda))$.
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- This in fact extends to all parabolic Verma modules:
 $\text{wt } M(\lambda, J) = (\lambda - \mathbb{Z}\pi) \cap \text{conv}(\text{wt } M(\lambda, J))$,
hence from above, holds for all simples $L(\lambda)$.

Does this hold for *all* highest weight modules V ?

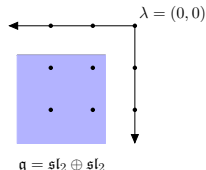
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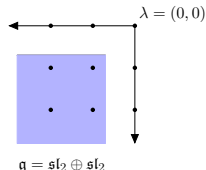
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Deleted (blue) portion: example of a *second order hole*.

Question (Lepowsky): Is this the only way holes arise?

Answer (Dhillon–K., 2022): Yes.



Holes in the set of weights (cont.) + Weight formula 1

In general:

Definition

The *holes* \mathcal{H}_V in a module $M(\lambda) \twoheadrightarrow V$ are all $H \subseteq J_\lambda \subseteq I$ such that

- (a) the Dynkin subdiagram on H has no edges, and
- (b) $\prod_{h \in H} f_h^{\langle \lambda, \alpha_h^\vee \rangle + 1} \cdot V_\lambda = 0$. (Note: $H \subseteq J_\lambda$.)

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Example: $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_4(\mathbb{C})$ and

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Theorem (K.–Teja, 2022)

Given a Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g} , a weight $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$, and a nonzero module $M(\lambda) \twoheadrightarrow V$,

$$\text{wt } V = \bigcup_{J \subseteq J_\lambda : J \cap H \neq \emptyset \ \forall H \in \mathcal{H}_V} \text{wt } M(\lambda, J).$$

Higher-order Verma modules

Definition: Given any weight $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$, and any subset $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \text{Indep}(J_\lambda)$, define the (universal) **higher-order Verma module**

$$\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H}) := \frac{M(\lambda)}{\sum_{H \in \mathcal{H}} (U\mathfrak{g} \cdot \prod_{h \in H} f_h^{\langle \lambda, \alpha_h^\vee \rangle + 1}) \cdot M(\lambda)_\lambda}.$$

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Example: $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_4$, $\lambda = 0$. Then there are *even* (higher-order) Verma modules:

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$$\mathbb{M}(0, \{\{i\}\}) = M(0)/U(\mathfrak{g}) \cdot f_i \cdot M(0)_0 = M(0, \{i\}), \quad \forall i \in I;$$

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- There are two *second-order* Verma modules:

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$$V' = \mathbb{M}(0, \{\{1, 3\}, \{2\}\}).$$

All highest weight modules: Weight formula 2

Recall, simples and first-order Vermas have the same weights:

Theorem (K. (2016), Dhillon–K. (2022))

$\text{wt } L(\lambda) = \text{wt } M(\lambda, J_\lambda)$, for all $\lambda \in \mathfrak{h}^*$ (and all Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g}).

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Such an equality of weights holds in full generality:

Theorem (K.–Teja, 2022)

Fix any Kac–Moody \mathfrak{g} , weight λ , and nonzero module $M(\lambda) \rightarrow V$. Then

$$\text{wt } V = \text{wt } \mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H}_V).$$

Thus, need to better understand higher-order Vermas.

2b. Higher-order Vermas:
characters, BGG resolutions

From weights to characters, to resolutions

The higher order Verma modules are crucial in understanding $\text{wt } V$ for all modules $M(\lambda) \twoheadrightarrow V$.

We understand their weights (hence, weights of all V).

Can we understand their *characters*?

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Can we understand their *characters*?

- (0th order – usual Vermas) Character = Kostant partition function.
- (1st order – parabolic Vermas) Weyl–Kac character formula
= Euler characteristic of a BGG-type resolution.

Question: What happens in higher order, i.e. for $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$?

We can answer this for two classes of modules (we explain one below).

BGG resolution: 1. Pairwise orthogonal minimal holes

Example: $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_n$ and

$$V'' := \frac{M(0)}{U_{\mathfrak{g}}(f_1 f_3, f_5) \cdot M(0)_0} = \frac{U_{\mathfrak{n}^-}}{U_{\mathfrak{n}^-}(f_1 f_3, f_5)}.$$

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(Thus $V'' = \mathbb{M}(0, \{\{1, 3\}, \{5\}\})$.) Now check:

$$0 \rightarrow M(s_1 s_3 s_5 \bullet 0) \xrightarrow{d_2} M(s_1 s_3 \bullet 0) \oplus M(s_5 \bullet 0) \xrightarrow{d_1} M(0) \xrightarrow{d_0} V'' \rightarrow 0,$$

where d_0 is the natural projection, and

- $d_1(X_1 m_{s_1 s_3 \bullet 0} + X_2 m_{s_5 \bullet 0}) := X_1 \cdot f_1 f_3 m_0 + X_2 \cdot f_5 m_0.$
- $d_2(X m_{s_1 s_3 s_5 \bullet 0}) := (-X f_5 \cdot m_{s_1 s_3 \bullet 0}, X f_1 f_3 \cdot m_{s_5 \bullet 0}).$

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This is easily verified, but also – special case of the *Koszul resolution* over $R := \mathbb{C}[f_1 f_3, f_5]$,
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- It is also the **BGG resolution over**

$$W_{\mathcal{H}} = \langle s_{H_1} := s_1 s_3, s_{H_2} := s_5 \rangle \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^2,$$

with length $\ell_{\mathcal{H}}(s_{H_1}) = \ell_{\mathcal{H}}(s_{H_2}) := 1.$

BGG resolution: 1. Pairwise orthogonal minimal holes

The above example – and proof – is completely general:

Theorem (K.–Teja, 2022)

Fix Kac-Moody \mathfrak{g} and a weight λ . Suppose $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \text{Indep}(J_\lambda)$ is such that \mathcal{H}^{\min} consists of pairwise orthogonal subsets $H_1, \dots, H_k \subseteq J_\lambda$. Define $s_H := \prod_{h \in H} s_h$. Then $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$ has a BGG resolution:

$$0 \longrightarrow M_k \xrightarrow{d_k} M_{k-1} \xrightarrow{d_{k-1}} \cdots \xrightarrow{d_2} M_1 \xrightarrow{d_1} M_0 \xrightarrow{d_0} \mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H}) \rightarrow 0,$$

with M_p the direct sum of Vermas $M(s_{H_{i_1}} \cdots s_{H_{i_p}} \bullet \lambda)$ over all p -tuples of indices $1 \leq i_1 < \cdots < i_p \leq k$.

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Theorem (K.–Teja, 2022)

Fix Kac-Moody \mathfrak{g} and a weight λ . Suppose $\mathcal{H} \subseteq \text{Indep}(J_\lambda)$ is such that \mathcal{H}^{\min} consists of pairwise orthogonal subsets $H_1, \dots, H_k \subseteq J_\lambda$. Define $s_H := \prod_{h \in H} s_h$. Then $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$ has a BGG resolution:

$$0 \longrightarrow M_k \xrightarrow{d_k} M_{k-1} \xrightarrow{d_{k-1}} \dots \xrightarrow{d_2} M_1 \xrightarrow{d_1} M_0 \xrightarrow{d_0} \mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H}) \rightarrow 0,$$

with M_p the direct sum of Vermas $M(s_{H_{i_1}} \cdots s_{H_{i_p}} \bullet \lambda)$ over all p -tuples of indices $1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_p \leq k$. In particular, with $W_{\mathcal{H}} \simeq (\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z})^k$,

$$\text{ch } \mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H}) = \sum_{w \in W_{\mathcal{H}}} \frac{(-1)^{\ell_{\mathcal{H}}(w)} e^{w \bullet \lambda}}{\prod_{\alpha \in \Delta^+} (1 - e^{-\alpha})^{\dim \mathfrak{g}_\alpha}}.$$

Resembles the Weyl–Kac character formula:

$$\text{ch } M(\lambda, J) = \sum_{w \in W_J} \frac{(-1)^{\ell(w)} e^{w \bullet \lambda}}{\prod_{\alpha \in \Delta^+} (1 - e^{-\alpha})^{\dim \mathfrak{g}_\alpha}}.$$

Disjoint but non-orthogonal holes?

Speculation: Suppose $\mathcal{H}^{\min} = \{H_1, H_2\}$, with the H_i disjoint independent sets but not pairwise orthogonal. Then s_{H_1}, s_{H_2} generate a dihedral subgroup $W_{\mathcal{H}}$ of W . Does this provide a BGG resolution?

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"Simplest case": Consider $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_4(\mathbb{C})$, $\lambda = 0$, and the module mentioned above:

$$V' := \frac{M(0)}{U_{\mathfrak{g}}(f_1 f_3, f_2) \cdot M(0)_0} = \frac{U_{\mathfrak{n}^-}}{U_{\mathfrak{n}^-}(f_1 f_3, f_2)} = \mathbb{M}(0, \{\{1, 3\}, \{2\}\}).$$

Then $s_{H_1} := s_1 s_3$ and $s_{H_2} := s_2$ generate a dihedral subgroup $W_{\mathcal{H}} \leq W$ of size 8, say with longest element w_o .

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Question 1: Does V' have the following resolution? (*Only unknown case!*)

$$\begin{aligned} 0 \rightarrow M(w_o \bullet 0) &\rightarrow M(w_o s_{H_1} \bullet 0) \oplus M(w_o s_{H_2} \bullet 0) \\ &\rightarrow M(s_{H_1} s_{H_2} \bullet 0) \oplus M(s_{H_2} s_{H_1} \bullet 0) \\ &\rightarrow M(s_{H_1} \bullet 0) \oplus M(s_{H_2} \bullet 0) \rightarrow M(0) \rightarrow V' \rightarrow 0 \end{aligned}$$

(Writing down the explicit maps is tedious, but not hard.) More generally, *find a resolution for $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$ using Vermas, when \mathcal{H}^{\min} consists of disjoint subsets.*

Future directions

- 1 **BGG resolutions** – or simpler, characters – for higher-order Verma modules $\mathbb{M}(\lambda, \mathcal{H})$?

(The other setting in which we can provide a resolution involves summing over a Weyl *semigroup* orbit, not Weyl group – see paper for details.)

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- 2 Define the *higher order BGG category* $\mathcal{O}^{\mathcal{H}}$ – full subcategory of \mathcal{O} with objects on which the lowering operators $\mathbf{f}_H := \prod_{h \in H} f_h$ ($H \in \mathcal{H}$) act locally nilpotently.
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Theorem [K.–Teja, 2022] $\mathcal{O}^{\mathcal{H}}$ is an abelian subcategory of \mathcal{O} , with enough projectives and injectives.

Question: Does every projective have a “standard filtration” via higher-order Vermas? And does a variant of **BGG reciprocity** hold in $\mathcal{O}^{\mathcal{H}}$? (K.–Teja, 2022: Yes for $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_2^{\oplus n}$.)

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Happy birthday, Vyjayanthi!

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