Orthogonality relations for characters and blocks

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Oberseminar Algebra/Zahlentheorie, Jena

June 21, 2016

Ordinary orthogonality

- Let G be a finite group.
- Let $g_1, \ldots, g_k$ be a set of representatives for the conjugacy classes of G.
- Let $\mathrm{Irr}(G) = \{\chi_1, \ldots, \chi_k\}$ be the complex irreducible characters of G.
- Then
$$T = (\chi_i(g_j))_{i,j=1}^{k}$$
is the (ordinary) character table of G.

Ordinary orthogonality

Theorem (Orthogonality relations)

We have

$$T^{\mathrm{t}}\overline{T} = \begin{pmatrix} |\mathrm{C}_G(g_1)| & & 0 \\ & \ddots & \\ 0 & & |\mathrm{C}_G(g_k)| \end{pmatrix}.$$

In particular,

$$(\chi_i, \chi_j)_G := \frac{1}{|G|}\sum_{g \in G} \chi_i(g)\overline{\chi_j(g)} = \delta_{ij}.$$

The character table of A_6

Example

The character table of the alternating group $G = A_6$ of degree 6 is given by

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 & . & . \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 & . & . \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 9 & 1 & . & . & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

$$1 \cdot 1 - 1 \cdot 1 = 0$$

Modular representation theory

In the following we fix a prime p.

Definition

Let $G_{p'}$ be the set of p'-elements of G. We define a graph $\mathcal{G}$ with set of vertices $\mathrm{Irr}(G)$ such that $[\chi, \psi]$ is an edge iff

$$\sum_{g \in G_{p'}} \chi(g)\overline{\psi(g)} \neq 0.$$

The connected components of $\mathcal{G}$ are called the (p-)blocks of G.

If $p \nmid |G|$, then $G_{p'} = G$ and the orthogonality relations imply that every p-block is a singleton.

Block distribution for A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then the p-blocks are given as follows:

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 & . & . \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 & . & . \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 9 & 1 & . & . & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

$p = 2$

Block distribution for A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then the p-blocks are given as follows:

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 & . & . \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 & . & . \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 9 & 1 & . & . & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

$p = 3$

Block distribution for A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then the p-blocks are given as follows:

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 & . & . \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 & . & . \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 9 & 1 & . & . & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

$p = 5$

p-Factors and p-sections

For $g \in G$, the abelian group $\langle g \rangle$ is a direct product of a p-group and a p'-group. Therefore, g can be written uniquely as $g = g_p g_{p'}$ where $g_p \in \langle g \rangle$ is a p-element and $g_{p'} \in G_{p'}$. Elements $g, h \in G$ lie in the same (p-)section iff g_p and h_p are conjugate.

Theorem (Brauer)

If $\chi, \psi \in \mathrm{Irr}(G)$ lie in different blocks, then

$$\sum_{g \in S} \chi(g)\overline{\psi(g)} = 0$$

for every section S of G.

Modular orthogonality

Brauer's Theorem refines the orthogonality of the rows of T. The following dual result deals with the columns of T.

Theorem (Block orthogonality relations)

Let $g, h \in G$ lie in different sections, then

$$\sum_{\chi \in B} \chi(g)\overline{\chi(h)} = 0$$

for every block B of G.

Block orthogonality for A_6

Example

Let $G = A_6$ and $p = 2$.

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 & . & . \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 & . & . \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 9 & 1 & . & . & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

$$1 \cdot 1 - 1 \cdot 1 + 1 \cdot 2 - 2 \cdot 1 = 0$$

A converse result

Since $g \in G_{p'}$ iff $g_p = 1$, the theorem applies for $g \in G_{p'}$ and $h \in G \setminus G_{p'}$.

Theorem (Osima)

If $J \subseteq \mathrm{Irr}(G)$ such that

$$\sum_{\chi \in J} \chi(g)\chi(h) = 0 \qquad \forall g \in G_{p'},\ h \in G \setminus G_{p'},$$

then J is a union of blocks.

It seems that the following stronger result holds.

A converse result

Conjecture (Harada, 1981)

If $J \subseteq \mathrm{Irr}(G)$ such that

$$\sum_{\chi \in J} \chi(1)\chi(h) = 0 \qquad \forall h \in G \setminus G_{p'},$$

then J is a union of blocks.

This conjecture holds if G is (p-)solvable or $|J| = 1$, i. e. $\{\chi\}$ is a block iff $\chi(g) = 0$ for all $g \in G \setminus G_{p'}$.

A dual approach

Harada's Conjecture asserts that the block orthogonality relations cannot be refined further. The situation is different for Brauer's Theorem as we will see.

Definition (S.)

Let $\mathcal{G}$ be the graph with set of vertices G such that (g,h) is an edge iff there exists a block B with

$$\sum_{\chi\in\operatorname{Irr}(B)} \chi(g)\overline{\chi(h)} \neq 0.$$

The connected components of $\mathcal{G}$ are called the (p-)class blocks of G.

Examples

- Every class block is a union of conjugacy classes lying in a section of G.
- G has only one block if and only if the class blocks are the conjugacy classes.
- If G has a normal p-complement, then the class block are the sections.

Example

The classes $(3^2, 1^4)$, $(3^2, 2^2)$, $(6, 2, 1^2)$ and $(6, 4)$ of A_{10} form a 3-section. The first two and the last two form class blocks.

A generalization

The following generalizes Brauer's Theorem.

Proposition (S.)

If $\chi, \psi \in \mathrm{Irr}(G)$ lie in different blocks, then

$$\sum_{g \in C} \chi(g)\overline{\psi(g)} = 0$$

for every class block C of G.

Dual Osima

There is also a dual version of Osima's Theorem:

Proposition (S.)

Let J be a union of conjugacy classes of G such that

$$\sum_{g\in J}\chi(g)\overline{\psi(g)}=0 \qquad \forall\chi,\psi\in\mathrm{Irr}(G) \text{ in different blocks.}$$

Then J is a union of class blocks.

The result is false if we fix $\chi = 1_G$. Hence, there is no dual version of Harada's Conjecture.

Brauer characters

- Now let F be an algebraically closed field of characteristic p.
- Then every character χ of G over F determines a Brauer character $\varphi : G_{p'} \to \mathbb{C}$ by "lifting" $\chi(g)$ to $\mathbb{C}$.
- The (finite) set of irreducible Brauer characters of G is denoted by $\mathrm{IBr}(G)$.
- The values of these functions can be expressed with the Brauer character table $T_p = (\varphi_i(g_j))_{i,j}$. This is again a complex square matrix (the g_j represent the conjugacy classes inside $G_{p'}$).
- If $p \nmid |G|$, then $\mathrm{Irr}(G) = \mathrm{IBr}(G)$ and $T_p = T$.

Generalized decomposition numbers

In the following let G_p be the set of p-elements of G.

Proposition

Let $u \in G_p$ and let $\chi \in \mathrm{Irr}(G)$. Then there are uniquely determined algebraic integers $d^u_{\chi\varphi}$ in the cyclotomic field $\mathbb{Q}_{|\langle u \rangle|}$ such that

$$\chi(uv) = \sum_{\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(\mathrm{C}_G(u))} d^u_{\chi\varphi}\varphi(v) \qquad \forall v \in \mathrm{C}_G(u)_{p'}.$$

The numbers $d^u_{\chi\varphi}$ are called generalized decomposition numbers.

For $u = 1$ we obtain a connection between $\mathrm{Irr}(G)$ and $\mathrm{IBr}(G)$.

Brauer characters of blocks

Definition

Let B be a block of G. We define

$$\mathrm{IBr}(B) := \{\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(G) : d^1_{\chi\varphi} \neq 0 \text{ for some } \chi \in B\}.$$

- This yields a partition of $\mathrm{IBr}(G)$, i. e. every irreducible Brauer character belongs to exactly one block.
- In fact, the sets $\mathrm{IBr}(B)$ are precisely the connected components of the graph $\mathcal{G}$ on $\mathrm{IBr}(G)$ with edges $[\varphi, \mu]$ where

$$\sum_{g \in G_{p'}} \varphi(g)\overline{\mu(g)} \neq 0.$$

The Brauer character table of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$T_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 4 & 1 & -2 & -1 & -1 \\ 4 & -2 & 1 & -1 & -1 \\ 8 & -1 & -1 & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 8 & -1 & -1 & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \end{pmatrix}.$$

The Brauer character table of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$T_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 3 & -1 & 1 & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 3 & -1 & 1 & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} \\ 4 & . & -2 & -1 & -1 \\ 9 & 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The Brauer character table of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$T_5 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 5 & 1 & 2 & -1 & -1 \\ 5 & 1 & -1 & 2 & -1 \\ 8 & . & -1 & -1 & . \\ 10 & -2 & 1 & 1 & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

Brauer correspondence

For a character χ of G and a subgroup $H \leq G$, the restriction $\chi_H : H \to \mathbb{C}$ is a character of H.

Definition

Let $u \in G_p$, let b be a block of $H := \mathrm{C}_G(u)$ and let $\psi \in b$. Then the Brauer correspondent of b is the unique block $B =: b^G$ of G such that the p-parts of $\sum_{\chi\in B} \chi(1)(\chi_H, \psi)_H$ and $|G : H|\psi(1)$ coincide.

Theorem (Brauer's Second Main Theorem)

In the situation above we have $d^u_{\chi\varphi} = 0$ *unless* $\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(b)$ *and* $\chi \in \mathrm{Irr}(b^G)$.

Generalized decomposition matrices

Proposition

Let $u_1, \ldots, u_r \in G_p$ be representatives for the conjugacy classes in G_p. We define a matrix

$$Q_p := \left(d^{u_i}_{\chi\varphi} : \chi \in \mathrm{Irr}(G),\ i = 1, \ldots, r,\ \varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(\mathrm{C}_G(u_i)) \right)$$

whose rows are indexed by $\mathrm{Irr}(G)$ and the columns are indexed by pairs (i, φ) with $\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(\mathrm{C}_G(u_i))$. Then Q_p is invertible, in particular it has square shape.

Generalized decomposition matrices of blocks

According to Brauer's second main theorem, Q_p can be arranged in the form

$$Q_p = \begin{pmatrix} W_1 & & 0 \\ & \ddots & \\ 0 & & W_n \end{pmatrix}$$

where the W_i correspond to the blocks B_i of G. We call W_i the generalized decomposition matrix of B_i.

The generalized decomposition matrix of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$Q_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & . & . & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & . & 1 & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 2 & 1 & 1 & -2 & . & . & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & 1 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

The generalized decomposition matrix of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$Q_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & . & . & . & 1 & 1 & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & . & 2 & -1 & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & . & -1 & 2 & . \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & . & -1 & -1 & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & 1 & -1 & -1 & . \\ . & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

The generalized decomposition matrix of A_6

Example

Again let $G = A_6$. Then

$$Q_5 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & . & 1 & 1 & . & . & . \\ . & 1 & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & . & . & . \\ . & 1 & \frac{1-\sqrt{5}}{2} & \frac{1+\sqrt{5}}{2} & . & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & -1 & -1 & . & . & . \\ . & . & . & . & 1 & . & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & 1 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Another orthogonality

Theorem (Orthogonality of generalized decomposition numbers)

The generalized decomposition matrix Q_B *of a block* B *can be arranged such that*

$$Q_B^t\overline{Q_B} = \begin{pmatrix} C_1 & & 0 \\ & \ddots & \\ 0 & & C_l \end{pmatrix}$$

where each C_i *is the Cartan matrix of a block* b *of* $\mathrm{C}_G(u)$ *such that* $b^G = B$*. In particular,* $Q_B^t\overline{Q_B}$ *is integral and positive definite. Moreover,* $\det(Q_B^t\overline{Q_B})$ *is a* p*-power.*

Another orthogonality of A_6

Example

Let $G = A_6$ and $p = 2$.

$$Q_2 = \left(\begin{array}{ccc|c|c|cc} 1 & . & . & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & . & 1 & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 2 & 1 & 1 & -2 & . & . & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & 1 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & 1 \end{array}\right)$$

Another orthogonality of A_6

Example

Let $G = A_6$ and $p = 2$.

$$Q_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & . & . & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & . & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & . & 1 & 1 & -1 & . & . \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & . & . \\ 2 & 1 & 1 & -2 & . & . & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & 1 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$-1 \cdot 1 + 1 \cdot 1 = 0$$

Refinements

- By the theorem above, we may restrict ourselves to the matrix

$$Q_B^{(u,b)} := (d^u_{\chi\varphi})_{\chi\in B,\,\varphi\in \mathrm{IBr}(b)}$$

  where $u \in G_p$ and b is a block of $\mathrm{C}_G(u)$ with $b^G = B$.
- Let p^r be the order of u, and let $\zeta := e^{\frac{2\pi i}{p^r}} \in \mathbb{C}$.
- Then $1, \zeta, \ldots, \zeta^s$ where $s := p^{r-1}(p-1) - 1$ is an integral basis for $\mathbb{Q}_{p^r}$.
- Hence, for $\chi \in B$ and $\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(b)$ there exist integers $a_i(\chi, \varphi)$ such that $d^u_{\chi\varphi} = \sum_{i=0}^{s} a_i(\chi, \varphi)\zeta^i$.

Discrete Fourier transformation

- Consequently, $Q_B^{(u,b)}$ can be represented by an integral matrix A of size $|B| \times s|\mathrm{IBr}(b)|$. This can be understood as a discrete Fourier transformation.
- By the results above, it is natural to ask if $A^{\mathrm{t}}A$ actually depends on $Q_B^{(u,b)}$.

Theorem (S. 2015)

The matrix $A^{\mathrm{t}}A$ only depends on the following local invariants:

1. *the Cartan matrix C_b of b,*
2. *the group $\mathcal{N} := \mathrm{N}_G(\langle u\rangle, b)/\mathrm{C}_G(u)$,*
3. *the action of $\mathcal{N}$ on $\mathrm{IBr}(b)$ by conjugation.*

A special case

Unfortunately, $A^{\mathsf{t}}A$ does not have a "nice" shape in terms of these three ingredients (it is usually not invertible). But in a special case things behave better.

Proposition (S. 2015)

Suppose that $\mathcal{N}$ acts trivially on $\mathrm{IBr}(b)$. Then $A^{\mathsf{t}}A$ is a Kronecker product of the form $C_b \otimes S$ where S is related to the semidirect product $\langle u\rangle \rtimes \mathcal{N}$.

A trivial case

For $u = 1$, $Q_B^{(1,B)}$ is already integral and $A^{\mathsf{t}}A = C_B$. Here the following is of interest.

Basic set conjecture (≤ 1991)

There exists $J \subseteq B$ such that $|J| = |\mathrm{IBr}(B)|$ and the matrix $(d^1_{\chi\varphi})_{\chi\in J,\,\varphi\in\mathrm{IBr}(B)}$ has determinant ± 1.

This conjecture is satisfied if G is (p-)solvable or $|\mathrm{IBr}(B)| = 1$ (Malle-Navarro-Späth 2015).

The number of characters in a block

For $\chi \in \mathrm{Irr}(G)$ it is known that $\chi(1) \in \mathbb{N}$ divides $|G|$.

Definition

Let B be a p-block of G. Then the largest integer d such that $p^d \mid \frac{|G|}{\chi(1)}$ for some $\chi \in B$ is called the defect of B. We write $d(B) := d$.

Conjecture (Brauer, 1954)

For every block B we have $|B| \leq p^{d(B)}$.

Theorem (Brauer-Feit)

For every block B we have $|B| \leq p^{2d(B)}$.

Non-zero decomposition numbers

Proposition

Let b be a block of $\mathrm{C}_G(u)$ such that b and $B := b^G$ have the same defect. Then for every $\chi \in B$ there exists a $\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(b)$ such that $d^u_{\chi\varphi} \neq 0$.

- It follows that

$$|B| \le \sum_{\chi \in B} \sum_{\varphi \in \mathrm{IBr}(b)} |d^u_{\chi\varphi}|^2 = \mathrm{tr}(C_b).$$

- The proposition applies with $u = 1$ and $B = b$. In this case we also have $|B| \le \det(C_B)$ (S. 2015).
- To improve these bounds we apply the discrete Fourier transformation introduced earlier.

A global-local bound

Theorem (S. 2015)

Let $A^{\mathsf{t}}A$ be the integral matrix coming from the discrete Fourier transformation of $Q_B^{(u,b)}$. Let $m \in \mathbb{N}$ be maximal with the property that there exists an integral matrix M with m non-zero rows such that $M^{\mathsf{t}}M = A^{\mathsf{t}}A$. Then $|B| \le m$.

- The importance of the theorem is that $A^{\mathsf{t}}A$ is locally determined and thus easier to compute than A itself.
- There is an algorithm by Plesken which finds all matrices M such that $M^{\mathsf{t}}M = A^{\mathsf{t}}A$. This can be used to compute m in the theorem above.

A bigger example

Example

- Let $G = {}^2F_4(2)'$. This is a simple group of Lie type of order
$$|G| = 17{,}971{,}200 = 2^{11} \cdot 3^3 \cdot 5^2 \cdot 13.$$
- Let B be the principal 3-block ($1_G \in B$).
- Then $d(B) = 3$ and Brauer's conjecture asserts that $|B| \leq 27$.
- Let $u \in G$ be of order 3 and let b be a block of $\mathrm{C}_G(u)$ such that $b^G = B$.

A bigger example

Example (continued)

- Then $d(b) = 3$ and
$$C_b = 3\begin{pmatrix} 3 & 2 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 3 & 2 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 3 & 2 \\ 2 & 2 & 2 & 3 \end{pmatrix}.$$
- In fact, C_b is determined by $\mathrm{C}_G(u)/\langle u\rangle \cong Z_3^2 \rtimes Z_4$, a group with only 36 elements.
- This implies $|B| \leq 18$ (use something more clever than $\mathrm{tr}(C_b)$).

A bigger example

Example (continued)

The matrix $A^{\mathsf{t}}A$ is given by

$$A^{\mathsf{t}}A = \begin{pmatrix} 8 & 1 & 7 & -1 & 6 & . & 6 & . \\ 1 & 2 & -1 & -2 & . & . & . & . \\ 7 & -1 & 8 & 1 & 6 & . & 6 & . \\ -1 & -2 & 1 & 2 & . & . & . & . \\ 6 & . & 6 & . & 9 & . & 6 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & . & . \\ 6 & . & 6 & . & 6 & . & 9 & . \\ . & . & . & . & . & . & . & . \end{pmatrix}.$$

Plesken's algorithm gives $|B| \le 15$. In fact, it is known that $|B| = 13$.

Applications

An application of the global-local bound together with other ideas leads to the following.

Theorem (S. 2015)

Let B be a p-block with $d(B) \leq 3$ (or $d(B) \leq 5$ if $p = 2$). Then $|B| \leq p^{d(B)}$, i. e. Brauer's conjecture holds for B.

Defect groups

Definition

Let B be a block of G. A defect group of B is a maximal p-subgroup $D \leq G$ such that B has a Brauer correspondent in $\mathrm{N}_G(D)$.

- One can show that D is unique up to conjugation and $|D| = p^{d(B)}$.
- When we study the matrix $Q_B^{(u,b)}$, we may always assume that u lies in a defect group of B.

Abelian defect groups

Proposition

Let B be a block with defect group D, let $u \in \mathrm{Z}(D)$ and let b be a block of $\mathrm{C}_G(u)$ such that $b^G = B$. Then $d(b) = d(B)$ and the global-local bound established above applies.

If D is abelian, then $\mathrm{Z}(D) = D$ and the methods are particularly strong.

Theorem (S. 2014)

Let B be a block with abelian defect group. Then $|B| \leq p^{3d(B)/2}$.

Abelian defect groups

Theorem (S. 2015)

Let B be a block with abelian defect group of rank ≤ 3 (or ≤ 7 if $p = 2$). Then $|B| \le p^{d(B)}$.

Both results rely implicitly on the classification of the finite simple groups.