

Schur positivity and ribbon shapes with interval support in the dominance lattice

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Lisbon, September 21, 2015

Outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Classification of a disjoint union of stair ribbons or products of stair ribbon Schur functions with interval support

(Skew) Schur functions

- Schur functions s_λ , λ a partition, are considered to be the most important and interesting basis for the ring of symmetric functions $\mathbb{C}m_\lambda$ (the vector space spanned by all the m_λ).

$$m_{21} = m_{21}(x) = m_\lambda(x_1, x_2, \dots) = x_1^2 x_2 + x_1 x_2^2 + x_1^2 x_3 + x_1 x_3^2 + x_2^2 x_3 + \dots$$

- Given partitions $\mu \subseteq \lambda$, $A := \lambda/\mu$.

$$\mu = 1 = \square \quad \lambda = 521 = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline \square & \square & \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \square & \square & & & \\ \hline \square & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad A = 521/1 = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline & \square & \square & \square & \square \\ \hline \square & \square & & & \\ \hline \square & & & & \\ \hline \end{array}$$

- The skew-Schur function s_A is the generating function for SSYT T of shape A

$$s_A(x) = \sum_T x^T,$$

where the sum is over all SSYT T of shape A , $x^T = x_1^{\#1's \text{ in } T} x_2^{\#2's \text{ in } T} \dots$ is the monomial weight of T .

$$T = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline & 2 & 2 & 4 & 4 \\ \hline 1 & 3 & & & \\ \hline 3 & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad x^T = x_1 x_2^2 x_3^2 x_4^2 \quad U = \begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|} \hline & 2 & 2 & 5 & 5 \\ \hline 2 & 5 & & & \\ \hline 6 & & & & \\ \hline \end{array} \quad x^U = x_2^3 x_5^3 x_6$$

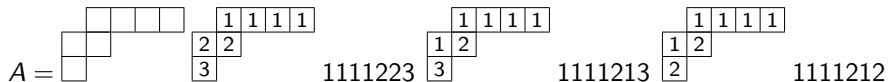
The Littlewood-Richardson rule

- s_A is a symmetric function and can be expressed as a linear combination of Schur functions.

$$s_A = \sum_{\nu} c_A^{\nu} s_{\nu},$$

where $c_A^{\nu} := c_{\mu, \lambda}^{\nu} \geq 0$ is the number of SSYT of shape A and content ν , satisfying the Littlewood-Richardson rule.

- The LR rule.** A SSYT T is said to be an LR-filling if, as we read the entries of T from right to left along rows and top to bottom, the number of appearances of i always stays ahead of the number of appearances of $i + 1$, for $i = 1, 2, \dots$



$$c_A^{421} = 1 \quad c_A^{511} = 1 \quad c_A^{52} = 1$$

$$s_A = s_{421} + s_{511} + s_{52}$$

Dominance order on partitions

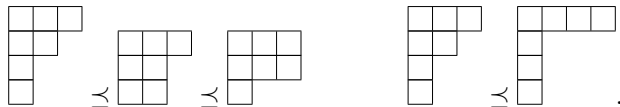
- The *dominance order* \preceq on partitions of N , $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_l)$, $\mu = (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_s)$ is defined by setting $\lambda \preceq \mu$ if

$$\lambda_1 + \dots + \lambda_i \leq \mu_1 + \dots + \mu_i,$$

for $i = 1, \dots, l$, where we set $\mu_i = 0$ if $i > l$.

The set of partitions of size N equipped with the dominance order is a lattice with maximum element (N) and minimum element (1^N) .

- $\lambda \preceq \mu$ if and only if the Young diagram of μ is obtained by “*lifting*” at least one box in the Young diagram of λ .

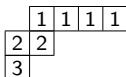
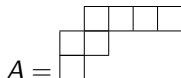


$$\lambda \preceq \mu \Leftrightarrow \mu' \preceq \lambda'$$

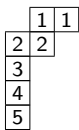
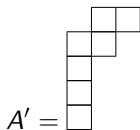
Schur interval

- $c_A^\nu = c_{A'}^{\nu'}$

-



$$r(A) = 421 \quad c_A^\nu > 0 \Rightarrow r(A) = 421 \preceq \nu$$



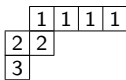
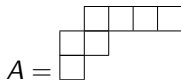
$$c_{A'}^{\nu'} > 0 \Rightarrow r(A') = c(A) = 22111 \preceq \nu'$$

$$c_A^\nu > 0 \Rightarrow r(A) = 421 \preceq \nu \preceq c(A)' = 52$$

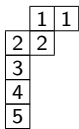
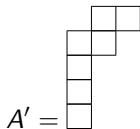
$$[r(A) = 421, c(A)' = 52] = \{421, 43, 511, 52\}.$$

Schur interval

- $c_A^\nu = c_{A'}^{\nu'}$



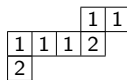
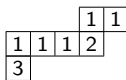
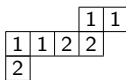
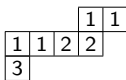
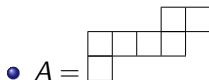
$r(A) = 421 \quad c_A^\nu > 0 \Rightarrow r(A) = 421 \preceq \nu$



$c_{A'}^{\nu'} > 0 \Rightarrow r(A') = c(A) = 22111 \preceq \nu'$

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Skew Schur function support



$$s_A = \sum_{r(A) \preceq \nu \preceq c(A)'} c_{\mu, \lambda}^{\nu} s_{\nu} = s_{r(A)} + \cdots + c_A^{\nu} s_{\nu} + \cdots + s_{c(A)'} = s_{A^{\pi}}$$

$$s_{A'} = \sum_{c(A) \preceq \nu' \preceq r(A)'} c_{\mu, \lambda}^{\nu'} s_{\nu'} = s_{c(A)} + \cdots + c_A^{\nu'} s_{\nu'} + \cdots + s_{r(A)'}$$

- The support of a skew shape A , $\text{supp}A$, considered as a subposet of the *dominance lattice*, has a top element and a bottom element uniquely defined by the shape A ,

$$r(A), c(A)' \in \text{supp}A = \{\nu : c_A^{\nu} > 0\} \subseteq [r(A), c(A)']$$

$$c(A), r(A)' \in \text{supp}A' = \{\nu' : c_A^{\nu'} > 0\} \subseteq [c(A), r(A)']$$

$$c_A^{c(A)'} = c_A^{r(A)} = 1$$

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$$c_A^{c(A)'} = c_A^{r(A)} = 1$$

- The support of s_A is the support of A .

Problems

Given the skew shape A and $\nu \in [r(A), c(A)']$

- 1 How does the shape of A govern the positivity of c_A^ν ?
How does the shape of A govern the support of A ?

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- 2 Under what conditions do we have $c_A^\nu > 0$ whenever $\nu \in [r(A), c(A)']$?

Problems

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Which skew shapes have interval support?

A., *The admissible interval for the invariant factors of a product of matrices*, Linear and Multilinear Algebra (1999).

If A is a skew shape with two or more components and A has interval support, then the components of A are ribbon shapes.

Ribbon shapes and disjoint unions of ribbon shapes

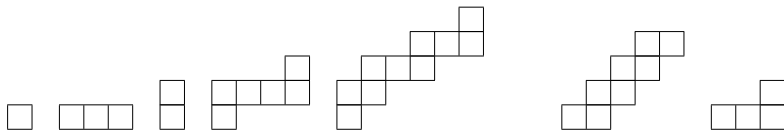
- Which are the ribbon shapes with interval support?

Ribbon shapes and disjoint unions of ribbon shapes

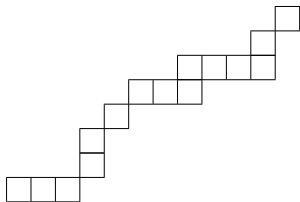
- Which are the ribbon shapes with interval support?
Which disjoint unions of ribbon shapes have interval support?

Ribbon shapes and disjoint unions of ribbon shapes

- Which are the ribbon shapes with interval support?
Which disjoint unions of ribbon shapes have interval support?
- **Our answer.** *Ribbons whose column (row) lengths are at most two.*



Disjoint union of similar ribbons



Example. *(Disjoint union) Ribbons such that all columns and row lengths differ by at most one.*

Skew Schur functions and support

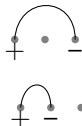
• $A =$

$$s_A = s_{221} + s_{311} + s_{32}$$


$$c(A)' = 32$$

$$311$$

$$r(A) = 221$$



Skew Schur functions and support

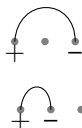
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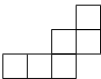
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$$r(A) = 221$$



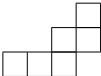
$$0 \leq 1 - 1, \quad 1 \leq 2 + 1 - 2$$

Skew Schur functions and support

• $A =$ 

$B =$ 

Skew Schur functions and support

• $A =$ 

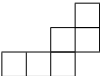
$B =$ 

$C =$ 

$$s_A = s_{321} + s_{411} + 0s_{33} + s_{42}$$

$$s_B = s_{321} + s_{411} + 0s_{33} + s_{42} + s_{51}$$

Skew Schur functions and support

• $A =$ 

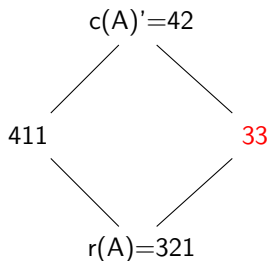
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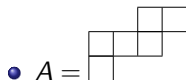
$$s_C = s_{321} + s_{411} + 1s_{33} + 2s_{42} + s_{51}$$



$$1 \not\leq 1 - 1,$$

$$1 \leq 2 + 1 - 2$$

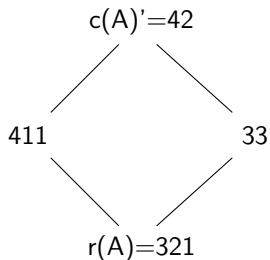
Skew Schur functions and support



$$s_A = s_{321} + s_{411} + s_{33} + s_{42}$$



$$s_B = s_{321} + s_{411} + s_{33} + s_{42} + s_{51}$$



Stair ribbons and disjoint union of stair ribbon shapes

Definition

Let $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_s)$ be a composition.

R_α denotes a skew-shape consisting of s row strips (α_i) , $i = 1, \dots, s$, right to left, so that any two of them overlap at most in one column, and the size of each column is at most two.

Let $0 \leq p < s$ be the number of columns of size two. When $p = s - 1$, R_α is a ribbon and one writes $R_\alpha = \langle \alpha \rangle$. Otherwise, it is a disjoint union of $s - p$ ribbons.

$\text{supp } R_\alpha \subseteq [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)]$, $\alpha^+ = (\alpha_1^+, \dots, \alpha_s^+)$ the decreasing rearrangement of α .

$R_{(2,3,2,2)}$

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \langle 2322 \rangle = \begin{array}{cccc} & & & \text{X} \\ & & & \text{X} \\ & & \text{X} & \\ & \text{X} & & \\ \text{X} & & & \end{array} & p = 3, & \langle 23 \rangle \oplus \langle 22 \rangle = \begin{array}{cccc} & & & \text{X} \\ & & & \text{X} \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ & & & \\ \text{X} & & & \\ \text{X} & & & \end{array} & p = 2 \\
 [\alpha^+ = 32^3; 63] & & [\alpha^+ = 32^3; 72] & &
 \end{array}$$

Stair ribbons and disjoint union of stair ribbon shapes

Definition

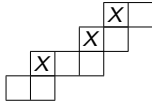
Given the composition $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_s)$, and a skew shape R_α , let

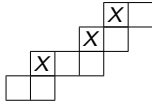
$$R_\alpha^1 := R_\alpha, \text{ and } R_\alpha^{i+1} := R_\alpha^i \setminus \langle \alpha_i^+ \rangle, \quad i = 1, \dots, s-1,$$

giving priority to the rightmost row strip $\langle \alpha_i^+ \rangle$ of R_α , in case of equal size.

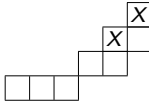
The *overlapping sequence* of R_α is the non increasing sequence of nonnegative integers $p_1 = p, p_2, \dots, p_{s-1}, p_s = 0$, where p_i is the number of columns with size two of R_α^i , $1 \leq i \leq s$.

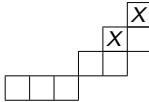
Note that $0 \leq p_{i+1} \leq p_i \leq s - i \leq \sum_{j=i+1}^s \alpha_j^+$, for $i = 1, \dots, s - 1$.



$\langle 2232 \rangle =$ 

$p_1 = 3, p_2 = 1, p_3 = p_4 = 0$
 $\text{supp}R \subseteq [32^3; 63]$



$\langle 1, 2, 2 \rangle \oplus \langle 3 \rangle =$ 

$p_1 = 2 = p_2, p_3 = p_4 = 0$
 $\text{supp}R \subseteq [\alpha^+ = 32^21; 62]$

Support criterion for a disjoint union of stair ribbons

Theorem

Given the composition $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_s)$, consider R_α with overlapping sequence $(p_1, \dots, p_{s-1}, 0)$. Then

$$c_{R_\alpha}^\nu > 0 \text{ if and only if } \begin{cases} \nu \in [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)] \Leftrightarrow \alpha^+ \preceq \nu \preceq (|\alpha| - p, p) \\ \nu_i \leq \sum_{j=i}^s \alpha_j^+ - p_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, s. \end{cases}$$

Support criterion for a disjoint union of stair ribbons

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Equivalently, $c_{R_\alpha}^\nu > 0$ if and only if, $\nu \in [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)]$, and

$$0 \leq \epsilon_i \leq \sum_{j=i+1}^s \alpha_j^+ - p_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, s-1,$$

where ϵ_i is the number of lifted boxes from the last $s - i$ rows of α^+ to the i th row α_i^+ .

Sketch of proof for the "only if part"

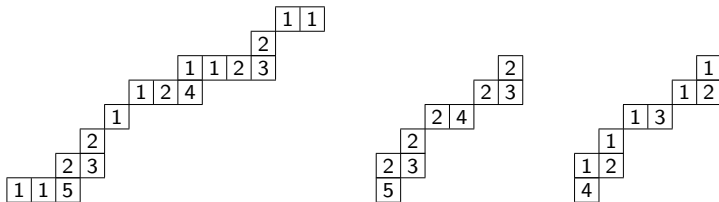
$$c_{R_\alpha}^\nu > 0 \text{ only if } \begin{cases} \nu \in [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)] \\ \nu_i \leq \sum_{j=i}^s \alpha_j^+ - p_i, \quad i = 1, \dots, s. \end{cases}$$

By induction on $s \geq 1$. If $s = 1$, then $p = 0$, and $\nu = (\alpha_1) = \alpha^+ = (|\alpha|)$.

Let $s \geq 2$ and assume the claim true for α with $1 \leq k < s$ parts.

Fix a $\nu = (\nu_1, \dots, \nu_u, 0^{s-u})$ LR filling of R_α . If $u = 1$, then $p = 0$, $\nu = (|\alpha|)$ and there is nothing to prove.

Otherwise, $u \geq 2$ and delete all the boxes of R_α filled with 1.



Sketch of proof

The first row will disappear and some other rows will be shortened. We get another disjoint union of similar ribbons, $R_{\tilde{\alpha}}$, $\tilde{\alpha} = (\tilde{\alpha}_1, \dots, \tilde{\alpha}_t)$, $1 \leq u \leq t < s$, filled in the alphabet $\{2, \dots, u\}$. Subtracting one unity to each entry of $R_{\tilde{\alpha}}$, we get a $\tilde{\nu} = (\nu_2, \dots, \nu_u, 0^{s-u})$ LR filling of $R_{\tilde{\alpha}}$.

By induction

$$\nu_i \leq \sum_{j=i}^t \tilde{\alpha}_j^+ - \tilde{p}_i \leq \sum_{j=i}^s \alpha_j^+ - p_i, \quad i = 2, \dots, s.$$

Horn-Klyachko linear inequalities

- Let $N = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$, then for fixed d , with $1 \leq d \leq n$, let $I = \{i_1 > i_2 > \dots > i_d\} \subseteq N$.

Horn-Klyachko linear inequalities

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- Let $I, J, K \subseteq N$ with $\#I = \#J = \#K = d$ and ordered decreasingly. One defines the partitions

$$\alpha(I) = I - (d, \dots, 2, 1),$$

$$\beta(J) = J - (d, \dots, 2, 1),$$

$$\gamma(K) = K - (d, \dots, 2, 1).$$

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$$\alpha(I) = I - (d, \dots, 2, 1),$$

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$$\gamma(K) = K - (d, \dots, 2, 1).$$

- Let T_d^n be the set of all triples (I, J, K) with $I, J, K \subseteq N$ and $\#I = \#J = \#K = d$ such that $c_{\alpha(I), \beta(J)}^{\gamma(K)} > 0$.

Horn-Klyachko linear inequalities and Littlewood-Richardson coefficients

- $c_{\mu,\nu}^{\lambda} > 0$ if and only if the Horn-Klyachko inequalities are satisfied

$$\sum_{k=1}^n \lambda_k = \sum_{i=1}^n \mu_i + \sum_{j=1}^n \nu_j$$

$$\sum_{k \in K} \lambda_k \leq \sum_{i \in I} \mu_i + \sum_{j \in J} \nu_j$$

for all triples $(I, J, K) \in T_d^n$ with $d = 1, \dots, n-1$.

- *Lidskii- Wielandt inequalities and the dominance order*

$$\sum_{i \in I} \lambda_i \leq \sum_{i \in I} \mu_i + \sum_{i \leq d} \nu_i,$$

$$\sum_{i \in I} (\lambda_i - \mu_i) \leq \sum_{i \leq d} (\lambda_i - \mu_i)^+ \leq \sum_{i \leq d} \nu_i,$$

for all $I \subseteq \{1, \dots, n\}$ with $\#I = d$.

• $R = \langle 662322 \rangle$ $p = 5$

$$\alpha^+ = (663222) \preceq (777) \preceq (876) \preceq (21, 21 - 5)$$

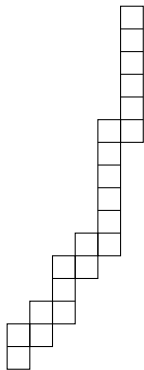
$$4 > \alpha_4^+ + \alpha_5^+ + \alpha_6^+ - p_3 = 2 + 2 + 2 - 3 = 3, \quad p_3 = 3 \Rightarrow (777) \notin \text{supp}R$$

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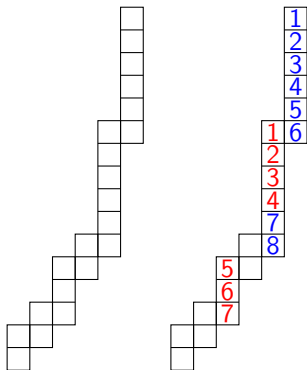
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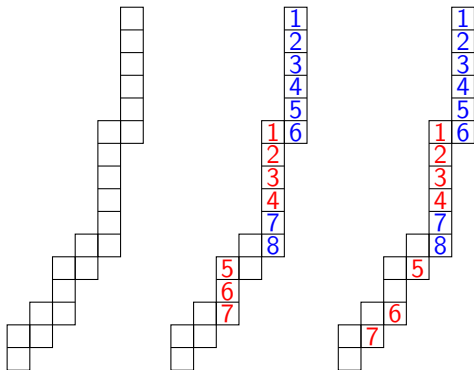
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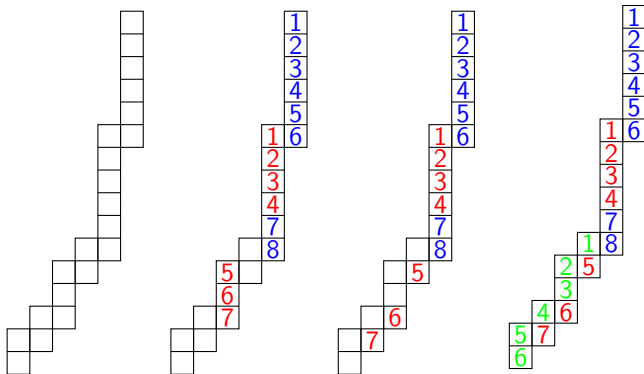
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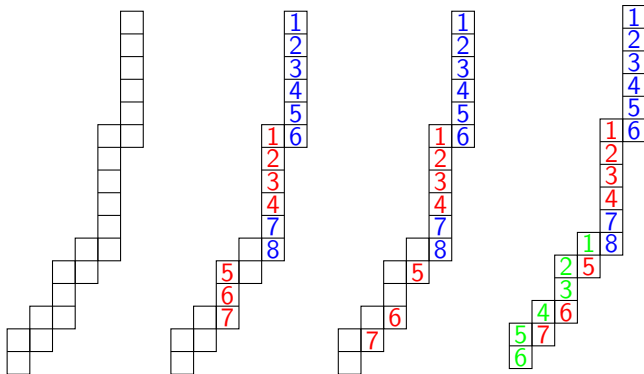
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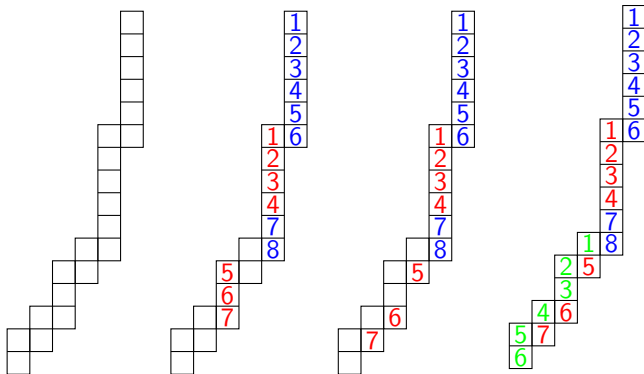
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Classification of products of stair ribbon Schur functions with interval support

Theorem

Given the composition $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_s)$, consider R_α with overlapping sequence $(p_1, \dots, p_{s-1}, 0)$.

$\text{supp}R_\alpha \subsetneq [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)]$ if and only if for some $1 \leq i \leq s - 2$ with $p_{i+1} \geq 1$, there exist integers $g_1, \dots, g_i \geq 0$ with $\sum_{j=1}^i g_j \leq p_{i+1} - 1$, such that

$$\alpha_j^+ + g_j \geq \sum_{q=i+1}^s \alpha_q^+ - p_{i+1} + 1, \quad j = 1, \dots, i.$$

In this case, $(\alpha_1^+ + g_1, \dots, \alpha_i^+ + g_i, \sum_{q=i+1}^s \alpha_q^+ - p_{i+1} + 1, p_{i+1} - \sum_{j=1}^i g_j - 1)^+$ is not in the $\text{supp}R_\alpha$.

Theorem

Given the composition $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_s)$, consider R_α with overlapping sequence (p_1, \dots, p_{s-1}) .

$c_{R_\alpha}^\nu > 0$ whenever $\nu \in [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)]$ if and only if for all $1 \leq i \leq s - 2$ with $p_{i+1} \geq 1$, and for all integers $g_1, \dots, g_i \geq 0$ with $\sum_{j=1}^i g_j \leq p_{i+1} - 1$, one has always, for some $f \in \{1, \dots, i\}$,

$$\alpha_f^+ + g_f \leq \sum_{q=i+1}^s \alpha_q^+ - p_{i+1}.$$

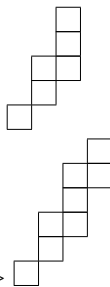
Corollary

- If $p_1 = 0$ or $p_2 = 0$, $\text{supp} R_\alpha = [\alpha^+; (|\alpha| - p, p)]$.

$$\langle \alpha_1 \rangle \oplus \cdots \oplus \langle \alpha_s \rangle$$

$$\langle \alpha_1^+, \alpha_2^+ \rangle \oplus \cdots \oplus \langle \alpha_s \rangle$$

$$\langle \alpha_1^+, \alpha_2^+, \alpha_3^+ \rangle \oplus \cdots \oplus \langle \alpha_s \rangle$$



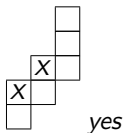
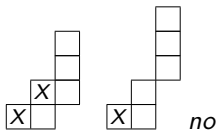
- If $p_2 = 1, p_3 = 0$, R_α has interval support **except** when

$$\alpha_1^+ \geq \sum_{q=2}^s \alpha_q^+$$

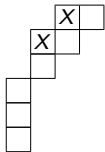
- If $p_2 = 1 = p_3, p_4 = 0$, R_α has interval support **except** when

$$\alpha_1^+ \geq \sum_{q=2}^s \alpha_q^+ \quad \text{or} \quad \alpha_1^+, \alpha_2^+ \geq \sum_{q=3}^s \alpha_q^+$$

$R_{(\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3)}$ has interval support **except** when $\alpha_1 \geq \alpha_2 + \alpha_3$ or $\alpha_3 \geq \alpha_1 + \alpha_2$.



$s = 4$

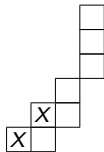


$$p_1 = p_2 = 2$$

$$p_3 = 0$$

no

$$\alpha_1^+ + 1 \geq 2 + 2 + 1 - 2 + 1$$

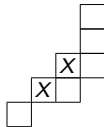


$$p_1 = p_2 = 2$$

$$p_3 = 1$$

no

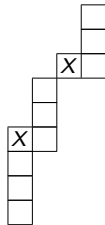
$$\alpha_1^+ < \alpha_2^+ + \alpha_3^+ + \alpha_4^+$$



$$p_1 = 2, p_2 = 1$$

$$p_3 = 0$$

yes



$$p_1 = 2, p_2 = 1$$

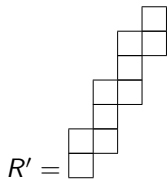
$$p_3 = 0$$

yes

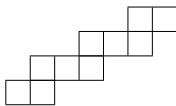
Corollary

McNamara, van Willigenburg, 2011

Ribbon shapes whose column and row lengths differ at most one have full support.

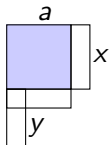
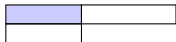
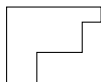


$R = \langle 2332 \rangle =$

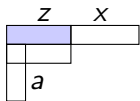


Corollary

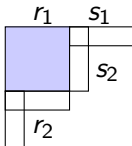
The Schur function product $s_\mu s_\nu$ has interval support if and only if one of the following is true: $\mu = (r_1, 1^{r_2})$ and $\nu = (s_1, 1^{s_2})$ are hooks such that $s_2 = r_2 = 1$, and either $r_1 = s_1 \geq 2$ or $s_1 = r_1 + 1$ (or vice versa).



$a = 2$ and $1 \leq x \leq y + 1$,
or $a \geq 3$ and $x = 1$;



$a = 1$ and $1 \leq x \leq z$,
or $a \geq 2$ and $x = 1$;



$s_2 = r_2 = 1$, and either
 $r_1 = s_1 \geq 2$ or
 $s_1 = r_1 + 1$.

More examples

- $\alpha = (6, 2, 2, 2, 2, 7, 6), \quad \alpha^+ = (7, 6, 6, 2, 2, 2, 2), \quad i = 3, \quad p_4 = 3$

$$7, 6 \geq \alpha_4^+ + \alpha_5^+ + \alpha_6^+ - p_4 + 1 = 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 - 2$$
$$g_1 + g_2 + g_3 = 0$$

$$\nu = (7, 6, 6, 6, 2) \notin \text{supp}R_\alpha$$

$$\nu = (7, 6 + 1, 6 + 1, 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 - 2) = (7, 7, 7, 6) \notin \text{supp}R_\alpha,$$
$$g_1 = 0, g_2 = g_3 = 1$$

$$\nu = (6 + 2, 7, 6, 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 - 2) = (8, 7, 6, 6) \notin \text{supp}R_\alpha,$$
$$g_1 = 0 = g_2, g_3 = 2$$

$$\nu = (7 + 2, 6, 6, 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 - 2) = (9, 6, 6, 6) \notin \text{supp}R_\alpha,$$
$$g_1 + g_2 + g_3 = 2.$$

Note that $p_4 = 3 \Rightarrow 3 \leq p_2, p_3 \leq 4$.

If $p_3 = 4, 7 + 3, 6 + 3 \not\leq 6 + 2 + 2 + 2 + 2 - 3$