

# Integer zeroes of generalized exponential polynomials

Joint work with Vichian Laohakosol

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## Skolem-Mahler-Lech Theorem

If an exponential polynomial has infinitely many integer zeros, then all but finitely many of such zeros form a finite union of arithmetic progressions.

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## A generalized exponential polynomial

$$F(x) = \sum_{i=1}^m P_i(x) A_i^{Q(x)},$$

where  $A_i$ 's are distinct elements of  $\mathbb{C} \setminus \{0\}$ ,  $P_i(x) \in \mathbb{C}[x] \setminus \{0\}$  and  $Q(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x] \setminus \mathbb{Z}$ .

Does the classical Skolem-Mahler-Lech assertion remains valid for generalized exponential polynomials?

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## Factorization Theorem

If  $F$  has infinitely many integer zeroes, then there exist  $T \in \mathbb{N}$  and a subset  $E \subseteq \{0, 1, \dots, T-1\}$  such that

$$F(x) = \left( \prod_{r \in E} \left( \eta^{Q(x)} - \eta^{Q(r)} \right)^{m_r} \right) G(x),$$

where  $\eta$  is a primitive  $T^{\text{th}}$  root of unity,  $m_r \in \mathbb{N}$ , and  $G$  is a generalized exponential polynomial but with finitely many integer zeroes.

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## Outline of Proof .

## Lemma

*If  $F$  has infinitely many integer zeros, then for each  $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$ , there exists  $j \neq i$  such that  $A_i A_j^{-1}$  is a root of unity, and there exists  $T \in \mathbb{N}$  such that for each  $r \in \{0, \dots, T-1\}$ , we have either  $F(xT+r) = 0$  for all  $x \in \mathbb{Z}$ , or there are only finitely many  $x \in \mathbb{Z}$  for which  $F(xT+r) = 0$ .*

- Denote by  $C_1, \dots, C_m$ , all those  $A_i$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ) having the property that none of the  $C_k C_\ell^{-1}$  is a root of unity for  $k \neq \ell$ .

Write  $A_i = C_{k_i} \eta^{s_i}$  ( $i = 1, \dots, k$ ), where  $\eta$  is a primitive  $T$ -th root of unity, and  $s_i \in \mathbb{N}$ .



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- Since  $C_k C_l^{-1}$  are not roots of unity for  $k \neq l$ , all the coefficients

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## Theorem

*If a generalized exponential polynomial has infinitely many integer zeros, then all but finitely many of such zeros form a finite union of arithmetic progressions.*

Outline of proof. From the factorization theorem,

$$F(x) = \left( \prod_{r \in E} (\eta^{Q(x)} - \eta^{Q(r)})^{m_r} \right) G(x),$$

To determine the integer zeroes of  $F(x)$ , we must solve  $\eta^{Q(x)-Q(r)} = 1$ .

This means  $Q(x) - Q(r)$  is a multiple of  $T$ .

We need to find all integral solutions  $(x, y)$  of the Diophantine equation

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Let  $Q(x) = a_n x^n + a_{n-1} x^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 x + a_0$ . Then

$$\begin{aligned}yT &= Q(x) - Q(r) \\ &= a_n(x^n - r^n) + a_{n-1}(x^{n-1} - r^{n-1}) + \dots + a_1(x - r) \\ &= (x - r) [a_n(x^{n-1} + x^{n-2}r + \dots + r^{n-1}) + \dots + a_1].\end{aligned}$$

Thus,  $x - r = kT_1$ , where  $T_1$  is a positive divisor of  $T$  and  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ , and then

$$f(k) := a_n((kT_1 + r)^n - r^n) + \dots + a_1((kT_1 + r) - r) = yT. \quad (1)$$

Write  $T = p_1^{\alpha_1} p_2^{\alpha_2} \dots p_s^{\alpha_s}$ .

To solve (1) is equivalent to solving the system of congruences

$$f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{p_i^{\alpha_i}} \quad (i = 1, 2, \dots, s). \quad (2)$$

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To solve

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we consider first the congruence

$$f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{p_i}. \quad (3)$$

It has at most  $n$  integral solutions mod  $p_i$ .

For each solution  $k_0 \pmod{p_i}$  of (3), the number of integral solutions of (2i) corresponding to  $k_0$  is at most  $p_i$ .

This means the solutions of (2i) are composed from a finite number of arithmetic progressions.

From the fact that

the intersection of any pair of arithmetic progressions, if nonempty, is again an arithmetic progression,

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Example. The generalized exponential polynomial

$$F(x) = 1 - \left( \frac{1}{2} + \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}i \right) e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^3+x^2+x)} - \left( \frac{1}{2} - \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}i \right) e^{-\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^3+x^2+x)}$$

with  $Q(x) = x^3 + x^2 + x$

can be factored as

$$F(x) = \left( e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^3+x^2+x)} - 1 \right) \left( e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^3+x^2+x)} + e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i} \right) e^{\frac{4}{3}\pi i} e^{-\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^3+x^2+x)}$$

with  $\eta = e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i}$  is a primitive 6<sup>th</sup> root of unity,  $r = 0$ , and

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- Find the integral solutions of

$$Q(x) - Q(r) = (x - r)(x^2 + xr + r^2 + x + r + 1) = 6y. \quad (4)$$

- If  $T_1 = 1$ , then (4) becomes  $f(k) := k^3 + k^2 + k = 6y$ .  
We need to solve the system

$$f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{2} \quad \text{and} \quad f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}.$$

- The set of integral solutions of the former is the progression  $(2l_1)_{l_1}$ .  
The set of integral solutions of the latter are the progressions  $(3l_2)_{l_2}$  or  $(3l_2 + 1)_{l_2}$ .
- Hence, the set of integer zeros of  $F(x)$  for  $T_1 = 1$  is

$$\{(2l_1)_{l_1} \cap (3l_2)_{l_2}\} \cup \{(2l_1)_{l_1} \cap (3l_2 + 1)_{l_2}\} = (6l)_l \cup (6l + 4)_l.$$

- The other cases of  $T_1$  are treated similarly.



- Find the integral solutions of

$$Q(x) - Q(r) = (x - r)(x^2 + xr + r^2 + x + r + 1) = 6y. \quad (4)$$

- If  $T_1 = 1$ , then (4) becomes  $f(k) := k^3 + k^2 + k = 6y$ .  
We need to solve the system

$$f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{2} \quad \text{and} \quad f(k) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}.$$

- The set of integral solutions of the former is the progression  $(2l_1)_{l_1}$ .  
The set of integral solutions of the latter are the progressions  $(3l_2)_{l_2}$  or  $(3l_2 + 1)_{l_2}$ .
- Hence, the set of integer zeros of  $F(x)$  for  $T_1 = 1$  is

$$\{(2l_1)_{l_1} \cap (3l_2)_{l_2}\} \cup \{(2l_1)_{l_1} \cap (3l_2 + 1)_{l_2}\} = (6l)_l \cup (6l + 4)_l.$$

- The other cases of  $T_1$  are treated similarly.

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- The set of integral solutions of the former is the progression  $(2\ell_1)_{\ell_1}$ .  
The set of integral solutions of the latter are the progressions  $(3\ell_2)_{\ell_2}$  or  $(3\ell_2 + 1)_{\ell_2}$ .
- Hence, the set of integer zeros of  $F(x)$  for  $T_1 = 1$  is

$$\{(2\ell_1)_{\ell_1} \cap (3\ell_2)_{\ell_2}\} \cup \{(2\ell_1)_{\ell_1} \cap (3\ell_2 + 1)_{\ell_2}\} = (6\ell)_{\ell} \cup (6\ell + 4)_{\ell}.$$

- The other cases of  $T_1$  are treated similarly.

Finally we get

$T_1$	The integer zeros of $F(x)$
1	$(6l)_\ell \cup (6l + 4)_\ell$
2	$(6l)_\ell \cup (6l + 4)_\ell$
3	$(6l)_\ell$
6	$(6l)_\ell$

Example. The generalized exponential polynomial

$$F(x) = 1 - e^{\frac{\pi}{2}ix^2} - e^{\frac{\pi}{3}ix^2} + e^{\frac{5\pi}{6}ix^2},$$

can be factorized as

$$F(x) = \left( e^{\frac{\pi}{6}ix^2} - 1 \right) \left( e^{\frac{\pi}{6}ix^2} - e^{\frac{2\pi}{3}i} \right) \left( e^{\frac{\pi}{2}ix^2} + e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^2+1)} - e^{\frac{\pi}{6}ix^2} + e^{\frac{4\pi}{3}i} \right)$$

where  $\eta = e^{\frac{\pi}{6}i}$  is a primitive 12<sup>th</sup> root of unity,  $r \in \{0, 2\}$ , and  $G(x) = e^{\frac{\pi}{2}ix^2} + e^{\frac{\pi}{3}i(x^2+1)} - e^{\frac{\pi}{6}ix^2} + e^{\frac{4\pi}{3}i}$ .

Find the integral solutions of

$$Q(x) - Q(r) = x^2 - r^2 = (x - r)(x + r) = 12y, \quad (5)$$

so

$$\begin{aligned}x - r &= k_1 T_1 \\x + r &= k_2 \frac{12}{T_1}\end{aligned}$$

where  $T_1$  is a positive divisor of 12.

The set of  $x$  from the integral solutions of (5) is

$$(T_1 k_1 + r)_{k_1} \cap (12k_2/T_1 - r)_{k_2}.$$

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	$T_1$	$x$		$T_1$	$x$
$r = 0$	1	$(12 - 12n)_n$	$r = 2$	1	$(10 - 12n)_n$
	2	$(6 - 6n)_n$		2	$(4 - 6n)_n$
	3	$(12 - 12n)_n$		3	$(2 - 12n)_n$
	4	$(12 - 12n)_n$		4	$(10 - 12n)_n$
	6	$(6 - 6n)_n$		6	$(2 - 6n)_n$
	12	$(12 - 12n)_n$		12	$(2 - 12n)_n$

Thank you.