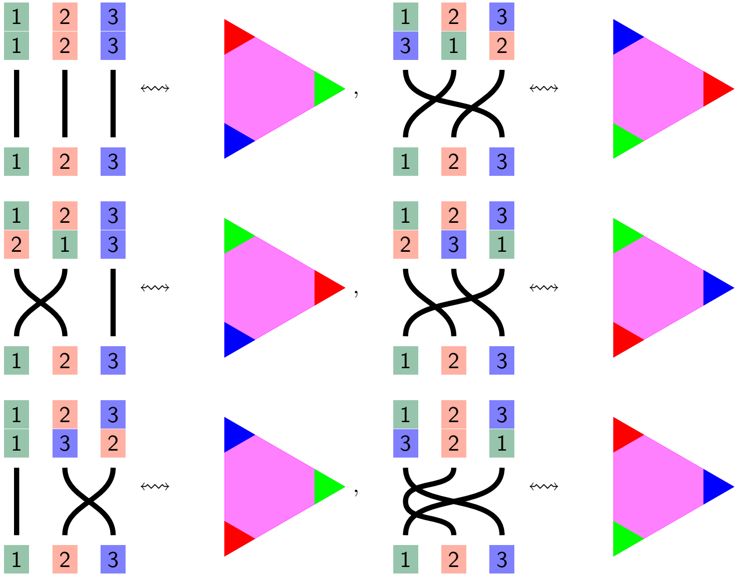
What is...Maschke's theorem?

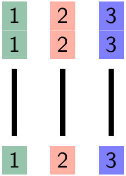
Or: Blocks out of the blue

An action of the symmetric group S_3

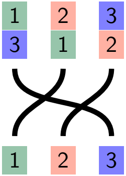


Action Symmetry of objects via groups

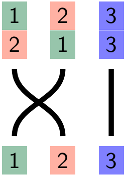
A linear action of the symmetric group S_3



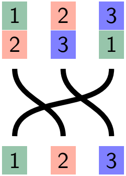
$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$,



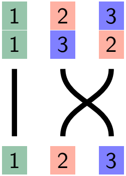
$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$



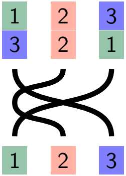
$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$,



$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$



$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$,



$\rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$

Representation Consider objects as vectors and group elements as matrices

A block decomposition

Base change matrix: $P = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$

Before	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
After	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$

Before	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$
After	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & 1 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$

- We can simultaneously put all six matrices in block form
- Note that $(1, -1, 0)$ and $(0, 1, -1)$ are orthogonal to $(1, 1, 1)$
- Question In what generality does this work?

Enter, the theorem

For any action ϕ of a group G on a $\mathbb{C}$-vector space V we have

- $\exists$ a basis such that all $\phi(g)$ have the same blocks One basis, same blocks
- If $V = \mathbb{C}[G]$, then $k \times k$ blocks appear k times Size=number

- Example for the second point (action of S_3 on $\mathbb{C}[S_3]$):

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \rightsquigarrow \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

The same works for the other five matrices

- The above actually works more generally if $\mathrm{char}(\mathbb{K}) \nmid |G|$ for $\mathbb{K} = \overline{\mathbb{K}}$

Careful with the ground field

$$\text{Base change matrix: } P = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\text{Inverse base change matrix: } P^{-1} = \frac{1}{3}\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 2 & -1 & -1 \\ 1 & 1 & -2 \end{pmatrix}$$

- The matrix P is regular in characteristic $\neq 3$
- The matrix P is singular in characteristic 3
- In characteristic 3 one, after base change, rather gets matrices of the form

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & * & * \\ 0 & * & * \\ 0 & * & * \end{pmatrix}$$

So these do not quite have block form

Thank you for your attention!

I hope that was of some help.