

# A new family of maximum rank distance codes

or: Maximum rank distance codes and finite semifields

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# Rank metric codes

A **rank metric code** is a set  $\mathcal{C} \subset M_n(\mathbb{F})$  of  $n \times n$  matrices over a field  $\mathbb{F}$  with the distance function

$$d(X, Y) := \text{rank}(X - Y).$$

- ▶ Mostly we will be concerned with  $\mathbb{F} = \mathbb{F}_q$ .
- ▶ A code is  $\mathbb{F}_{q_0}$ -linear if it is a subspace over  $\mathbb{F}_{q_0} \leq \mathbb{F}_q$ .
- ▶ Goals:
  - ▶ Illustrate the link with semifields.
  - ▶ Construct a new family of linear MRD-codes for all parameters.

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# Equivalence of rank metric codes

Two codes  $\mathcal{C}_1$  and  $\mathcal{C}_2$  are said to be **equivalent** if there exist invertible matrices  $A, B$ , a matrix  $D$ , and an automorphism  $\rho$  of  $\mathbb{F}$  such that

$$\mathcal{C}_2 = \{AX^\rho B + D : X \in \mathcal{C}_1\}$$

or

$$\mathcal{C}_2 = \{A(X^T)^\rho B + D : X \in \mathcal{C}_1\}$$

Clearly operations of this form preserve rank distance.

Can be viewed as codes in  $(\mathbb{F}_{q^n})^n$ .

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## Easy upper bound (Singleton-like)

Suppose  $\mathcal{C} \subset M_n(\mathbb{F}_q)$  is a rank metric code with minimum distance  $d$ . Then  $|\mathcal{C}| \leq q^{n(n-d+1)}$ .

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A code meeting this bound is said to be a **Maximum Rank Distance (MRD)** code.

If  $\mathcal{C}$  is an MRD-code which is linear over  $\mathbb{F}_q$  with dimension  $nk$  and minimum distance  $n - k + 1$ , we say it has parameters  $[n^2, nk, n - k + 1]_q$ .

Duality:  $\mathcal{C}^\perp$  the orthogonal space with respect to e.g.  
 $b(X, Y) := \text{tr}(\text{Tr}(XY^T))$ .

Delsarte:  $\mathcal{C}$  MRD  $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{C}^\perp$  MRD; parameters  $[n^2, n(n - k), k + 1]_q$ .

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# Linearized polynomials

A **linearized polynomial** is a polynomial in  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}[x]$  of the form

$$f(x) = f_0x + f_1x^q + \cdots + f_{n-1}x^{q^{n-1}}.$$

Each such polynomial is an  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear map from  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$  to itself.

In fact, every  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear map on  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$  can be uniquely realised as a linearized polynomial of degree at most  $q^{n-1}$  ( **$q$ -degree** at most  $n - 1$ ).

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The **Delsarte/Gabidulin code**  $\mathcal{G}_k$  is a the set of linearized polynomials of  $q$ -degree at most  $k - 1$ , i.e.

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Clearly each element of  $\mathcal{G}_k$  has at most  $q^{k-1}$  roots, and hence rank at least  $n - k + 1$ .

$\mathcal{G}_k$  has dimension  $nk$  over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ . (In fact, it is linear over  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$ ).

Hence  $\mathcal{G}_k$  is a linear MRD-code with parameters  $[n^2, nk, n - k + 1]_q$ .

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## Other known examples

The first non-trivial example of a non-linear MRD-code was recently given by Cossidente, Marino and Pavese for the case  $n = 3$ ,  $d = 2$  (presented at Irsee 2014).

No others were known (up to equivalence)... except in the case  $k \in \{1, n - 1\}$  ( $d \in \{n, 2\}$ )... semifields.

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## (Pre)semifields

A (pre)semifield is a division algebra in which multiplication is not necessarily associative (or commutative).

First non-trivial examples were constructed by Dickson (1906).

They correspond to a particular class of **projective planes**.

If  $\mathbb{S}$  is  $n$ -dimensional over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ , we identify the elements of  $\mathbb{S}$  with  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$ . We write the product of two elements  $x$  and  $y$  by  $\mathbb{S}(x, y)$ .

Every algebra multiplication can be written as

$$\mathbb{S}(x, y) = \sum_{i,j} c_{ij} x^{q^i} y^{q^j}.$$

for some  $c_{i,j} \in \mathbb{F}_{q^n}$ .

**Isotopic** if  $\mathbb{S}'(x, y)^A = \mathbb{S}(x^B, y^C)$ .



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# Semifields and rank metric codes

Denote by  $R_y$  the endomorphism of right multiplication by  $y$ , i.e.  $R_y(x) = \mathbb{S}(x, y)$ .

Let  $\mathcal{C}(\mathbb{S})$  be the set of all such endomorphisms: **semifield spread set**.

Then every nonzero element of  $\mathcal{C}(\mathbb{S})$  is invertible, i.e. is an  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear  $[n^2, n, n]_q$  MRD-code ( $k=1$ ).

Conversely, every linear  $[n^2, n, n]_q$  MRD-code defines a presemifield of order  $q^n$ .

This connection is *well-known, but often forgotten*.  
[Bruck-Bose, Dembowski]

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# Semifields and rank metric codes

Denote by  $R_y$  the endomorphism of right multiplication by  $y$ , i.e.  $R_y(x) = \mathbb{S}(x, y)$ .

Let  $\mathcal{C}(\mathbb{S})$  be the set of all such endomorphisms: **semifield spread set**.

Then every nonzero element of  $\mathcal{C}(\mathbb{S})$  is invertible, i.e. is an  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear  $[n^2, n, n]_q$  MRD-code ( $k=1$ ).

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Two semifields are **isotopic** if  $\mathbb{S}'(x, y)^A = \mathbb{S}(x^B, y^C)$  for invertible  $A, B, C$ .

[Maduram]:  $\mathbb{S}$  and  $\mathbb{S}'$  are isotopic if and only if there exist invertible  $A, B$  such that

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The **Knuth orbit** of a semifield is the set of (up to) six semifields obtained via the two operations **transpose** and **dual**:

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# Examples

Albert (1965) defined a multiplication on  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$  by

$$\mathbb{S}(x, y) = xy - cx^{q^i}y^{q^j},$$

$N(c) \neq 1$ , named **Generalized twisted fields**.

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A lot of other constructions.

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## Semifields: classification results

Dickson: *Every semifield two-dimensional over its centre is isotopic to either a field.* Hence there is a unique  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear  $[2^2, 2, 2]_q$  MRD code.

Menichetti (1977): *Every semifield three-dimensional over its centre is isotopic to either a field or generalised twisted field.*

Hence  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear  $[3^2, 3, 3]_q$  MRD codes are completely classified.

By duality,  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear  $[3^2, 6, 2]_q$  MRD codes are also completely classified, and so **all**  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -linear MRD codes in  $M_3(\mathbb{F}_q)$ .

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A lot of recent work in semifields has been focussed on *rank two semifields*, which correspond to  $\mathbb{F}_{q_0}$ -linear MRD codes in  $M_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ .

Full classification for  $q = q_0^2$  (Cardinali-Polverino-Trombetti),  
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Full classification for  $\mathbb{F}_{q_0}$ -linear **symmetric** MRD-codes in  
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Enough about semifields already... what about  $1 < k < n - 1$ ?

# Minimum polynomial of a subspace

Suppose  $U$  is an  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -subspace of  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$  of dimension  $k$ . Then there exists a unique monic linearized polynomial of degree  $q^k$  annihilating  $U$ .

Hence a linearized polynomial of degree  $q^k$  has rank  $n - k$  if and only if it is an  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$ -multiple of the minimum polynomial of some subspace of dimension  $k$ .

$$U = \langle \alpha \rangle_{\mathbb{F}_q}:$$

$$\alpha x^q - \alpha^q x$$

So a degree 1 linearized polynomial has rank  $n - 1$  if and only if  $N(f_1) = N(-f_0)$ .

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$$U = \langle \alpha, \beta \rangle_{\mathbb{F}_q}:$$

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So a degree 2 linearized polynomial has rank  $n - 2$  **only if**  
 $N(f_2) = N(f_0)$ .



# Key Lemma

## Lemma

*Suppose  $f$  is a linearized polynomial of degree  $q^k$ . If  $f$  has rank  $n - k$ , then  $N(f_k) = (-1)^{nk} N(f_0)$ .*

(Proof is a simple induction argument, using the minimum polynomial of a subspace).

Hence if we can choose a subspace of linearized polynomials of degree at most  $q^k$ , avoiding  $N(f_k) = (-1)^{nk} N(f_0)$ , then each element would have rank at least  $n - k + 1$ .

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## New construction

Define  $\mathcal{H}_k(a, h)$  to be the set of linearized polynomials of degree at most  $k$  satisfying  $f_k = af_0^{q^h}$ , with  $N(a) \neq (-1)^{nk}$ .

$$\mathcal{H}_k(a, h) := \{f_0x + f_1x^q + \cdots + f_{k-1}x^{q^{k-1}} + af_0^{q^h}x^{q^k} : f_i \in \mathbb{F}_{q^n}\}.$$

### Theorem (S.)

$\mathcal{H}_k(a, h)$  is an MRD-code with parameters  $[n, nk, n - k + 1]_q$ .  
Furthermore,  $\mathcal{H}_k(a, h)$  is not equivalent to  $\mathcal{G}_k$  unless  $k \in \{1, n - 1\}$  and  $h \in \{0, 1\}$ .

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$\mathcal{H}_k(a, h)$  is an MRD-code with parameters  $[n, nk, n - k + 1]_q$ .  
Furthermore,  $\mathcal{H}_k(a, h)$  is not equivalent to  $\mathcal{G}_k$  unless  $k \in \{1, n - 1\}$  and  $h \in \{0, 1\}$ .

Choosing  $a = 0$  returns the Gabidulin codes.

# Idea of (a) proof of inequivalence

- ▶  $\mathcal{H}_k$  contains a space equivalent to  $\mathcal{G}_{k-1}$ , and is contained in  $\mathcal{G}_{k+1}$ .
- ▶ Lemma: Every subspace of  $\mathcal{G}_s$  equivalent to  $\mathcal{G}_r$  is of the form

$$g\mathcal{G}_rh,$$

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# Twisted Gabidulin codes

When  $k = 1$ ,  $\mathcal{H}_1(a, h)$  corresponds to the spread set of a generalized twisted field.

$$f_0x + af_0^{q^h}x^q = \mathbb{S}(x, f_0).$$

Hence we propose to call these **twisted Gabidulin codes**.

Note that these codes are  $\mathbb{F}_{q^n}$ -linear if and only if  $h = 0$ .

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## More examples?

These codes can be seen as part of a family of codes in one-to-one correspondence with maximum subspaces disjoint from a **hyperregulus** in  $V(2n, q)$ .

These were considered in Lavrauw-S.-Zanella (2014). Known examples give the  $\mathcal{H}$ 's.

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# Infinite fields

MRD codes over infinite fields have applications in **space-time coding**.

Let  $F$  be any field, and  $K$  a cyclic Galois extension of degree  $n$ . Let  $\sigma$  be a generator for  $\text{Gal}(K : F)$ .

Then we can replace linearized polynomials with maps of the form

$$f : x \mapsto \sum_{i=0}^{n-1} f_i x^{\sigma^i}$$

Then the analogues of  $\mathcal{G}_k$  and  $\mathcal{H}_k$  are also MRD-codes.

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Thank you for your attention!