

## Rearrangement Problems on Permutations

### Review

Let  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  be two permutations of  $S_n$ . Then, the composition of  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , denoted by  $\alpha \circ \beta$ , maps  $i$  into  $(\alpha \circ \beta)(i)$ .

$(\alpha \circ \beta)(i) = \alpha(\beta(i))$ . For example,  $\alpha = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 3 & 1 & 4 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$ ,  $\beta = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 1 & 3 & 4 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$ ,

(or  $\alpha = (3142)$ ,  $\beta = (1342)$  in short, then

$$\alpha \circ \beta = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 3 & 4 & 2 & 1 \end{pmatrix} = (3421).$$

(\*) If  $\alpha \circ \beta = \gamma$ , then  $\beta = \alpha^{-1} \circ \gamma$ . (Notice that  $S_n$  is a

symmetric group with "operation", composition.) (\*)  $(\alpha \circ \beta)^{-1} = \beta^{-1} \circ \alpha^{-1}$ .

### Problem

Given any two permutations  $\pi$  and  $\sigma$  in  $G$  and a set  $S$  of generators of  $G$ , find a minimum number permutations in  $S$ , <sup>(say  $S_n$ )</sup>

$p_1, p_2, \dots, p_k$  such that  $\pi \circ p_1 \circ p_2 \circ \dots \circ p_k = \sigma$ , equivalently,

$$\alpha^{-1} \circ \pi = \underbrace{p_k^{-1} \circ p_{k-1}^{-1} \circ \dots \circ p_1^{-1}}_{\text{Minimum length factorization}}$$

Minimum length factorization.

(\*) Finding a minimum length factorization of permutations is an NP-hard problem. [Even and Goldreich, J. Algorithm 2 (1981), 311-313.]

### Definition (Invariant distance)

Given a set of generators  $S$  of a permutation group, A distance between two permutations  $\pi$  and  $\sigma$  (w.r.t.  $S$ ) can be defined as the minimum number of generators  $\rho_1, \rho_2, \dots, \rho_k$  (in  $S$ ) such that  $\pi \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = \sigma$ , denoted by  $d_S(\pi, \sigma) = k$ .

(\*) By the definition of 'metric',  $d_S$  is indeed a metric.

### Definition (Left-invariant)

A distance  $d$  on  $G$  is left-invariant if for all  $\pi, \sigma, \tau$  in  $G$ ,  $d(\pi, \sigma) = d(\tau \circ \pi, \tau \circ \sigma)$ .

(\*\*)  $\pi \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = \sigma \Rightarrow (\sigma^{-1} \circ \pi) \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = \tilde{e}$  (identity).

$$d(\pi, \sigma) = d(\sigma^{-1} \circ \pi, \tilde{e})$$

(\*)  $d_S$  is left-invariant.

$$d(\pi, \tilde{e}) = d(\pi^{-1}, \tilde{e}) \rightarrow d(\tilde{e}, \pi)$$

Let  $d_S(\pi, \sigma) = k$  and

$\pi \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = \sigma$ . Then,

$$(\tau \circ \pi) \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = (\tau \circ \sigma)$$

$$\Rightarrow d_S(\tau \circ \pi, \tau \circ \sigma) \leq k \leq d_S(\pi, \sigma)$$

Apply  $\tau^{-1}$  to obtain  $d_S(\pi, \sigma) \leq d_S(\tau \circ \pi, \tau \circ \sigma)$ .

### Definition (Sorting Sequence)

Given a permutation  $\pi$ , a sequence of rearrangements

$\rho_1, \rho_2, \dots, \rho_k$  is called a sorting sequence for  $\pi$  if

$$\pi \circ \rho_1 \circ \rho_2 \circ \dots \circ \rho_k = \tilde{e}$$

How to find the distance?

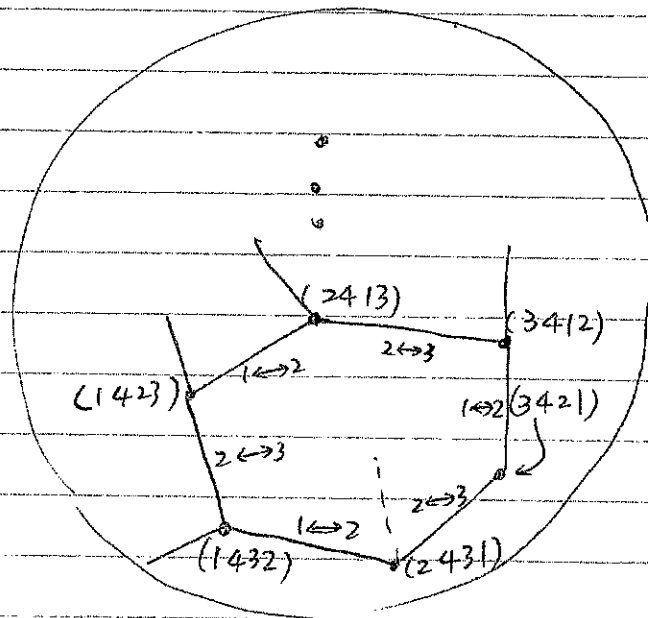
Definition (Cayley graph)

Given a set  $S$  of generators of a permutation group  $G$ , the Cayley graph associated with  $(S, G)$  is the graph whose vertices are the elements of  $G$  and two vertices are adjacent if the corresponding permutations can be transformed into one another using an element of  $S$ .

Example

$G = S_4$ ,  $S = \{ \text{exchange of adjacent elements} \}$   
 $1 \leftrightarrow 2, 2 \leftrightarrow 3, 3 \leftrightarrow 4$

$G = \text{Cayley}(S_4, S)$



(Bubble sort)

3-regular graph of order 24.

(\*) The distance of two permutations is equal to the shortest distance in  $G = \text{Cayley}(S_4, S)$ .

# Reversals

permutation  $\pi = (\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_{i-1}, \pi_i, \pi_{i+1}, \dots, \pi_j, \pi_{j+1}, \dots, \pi_n)$

↓

$(\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_{i-1}, \pi_j, \pi_{j-1}, \dots, \pi_i, \pi_{i+1}, \dots, \pi_n)$

Let  $\rho = (1, 2, \dots, i-1, j, j-1, \dots, i+1, i, j+1, j+2, \dots, n)$ .

Then  $\pi \circ \rho =$

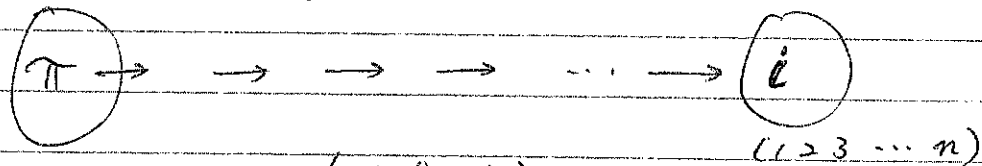
e.g.  $(1, 3, 5, 2, 4) \circ (1, 4, 3, 2, 5) = (1, 2, 5, 3, 4)$

## Signed permutation

$\rho = (1, 2, \dots, i-1, -j, -j+1, \dots, -i-1, -i, j+1, \dots, n)$

$\pi \circ \rho = (\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_{i-1}, -\pi_j, -\pi_{j-1}, \dots, -\pi_{i+1}, -\pi_i, \pi_{j+1}, \dots, \pi_n)$

Problem Use only reversals to find the minimum length factorization.



(at least)

Observation  $\pi_1 \neq 1$  one reversal is needed!

$\pi_n \neq n$  "

$\pi_{j+1} > \pi_j$  "

⋮

## (\*) Similarity between permutations

(\*) If a group of genes appears consecutively in several species, then they must have been present in the same order in the ancestral species, and were not separated during evolution.

### Definition (Linear extension)

The linear extension of (signed or unsigned) permutation  $\pi$  of  $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  is the permutation of  $\{0, 1, 2, \dots, n, n+1\}$  defined by  $\pi^l = (0 \pi_1 \pi_2 \dots \pi_n n+1)$ . (If signed permutations are considered, then we let "0" be of positive sign.)

Example  $(0 \ 4 \ 8 \ 9 \ 7 \ 6 \ 5 \ 1 \ 3 \ 2 \ 10)$  is a linear extension of  $(4 \ 8 \ 9 \ 7 \ 6 \ 5 \ 1 \ 3 \ 2)$ .

### Definition (Break points)

Let  $\pi^l$  be the linear extension of  $\pi$ . A point of  $\pi$  is an ordered pair  $(\pi_i^l, \pi_{i+1}^l)$  (denoted by  $\pi_i^l \circ \pi_{i+1}^l$  in short),  $0 \leq i \leq n$ .

- If  $\pi_{i+1}^l = \pi_i^l + 1$ , <sup>then</sup> it is called an adjacency (point);
- If  $\pi_{i+1}^l = \pi_i^l - 1$ , <sup>then</sup> it is called a reverse adjacency (point);
- If it is not an adjacency, <sup>then</sup> it is called a breakpoint;
- If it is neither an adjacency nor a reverse adjacency, then it is called a strong breakpoint.

e.g.

0 • 4 • 8 • 9 • 7 • 6 • 5 • 1 • 3 • 2 • 10

↑  
adjacency↑  
reverse adjacency  
(break points)

All the others are strong break points.

 $p(\pi)$ : The # of points $bp(\pi)$ : The # of breakpoints $sb(\pi)$ : The # of strong breakpoints

(\*) Breakpoints yield a first example of an evolutionary distance between genomes: the "breakpoint distance"

between two permutations. (The difference of adjacencies)

$$\downarrow \pi, \alpha$$

$$bp(\pi, \alpha) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} bp(\sigma^{-1} \circ \pi)$$

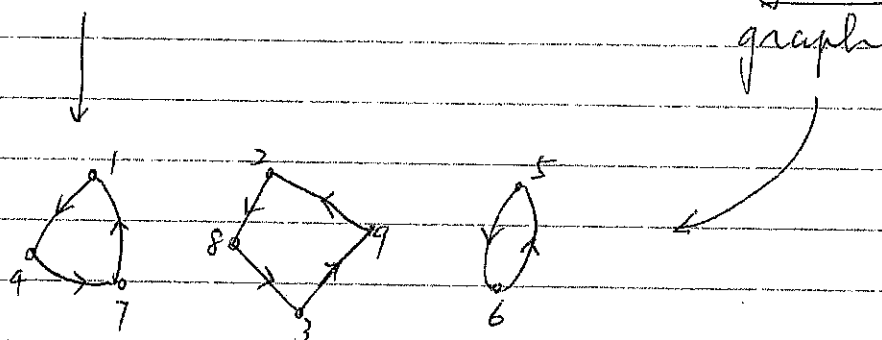
(breakpoint distance)

## Cycle graph of a permutation

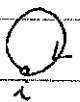
It is known in Algebra that each permutation can be written as a composition of disjoint cycles.

eg. 
$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 & 8 & 9 \\ 4 & 8 & 9 & 7 & 6 & 5 & 1 & 3 & 2 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$= (147)(2839)(56)$$
 ← Cycle decomposition



The graph (digraph) which represents the cycles of a permutation is called a cycle decomposition graph of the permutation.

(i) We consider (i) a cycle (loop), .

(ii) If the cycle decomposition graph of a permutation is connected (strongly);

then the permutation is called a circular permutation,

denoted by  $[x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n]$ . So, a circular permutation

has  $n$  equivalent forms  $(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n), (x_2, x_3, \dots, x_n, x_1), \dots,$

$(x_n, x_1, \dots, x_{n-1})$ .

## Cycle graph of $\pi$

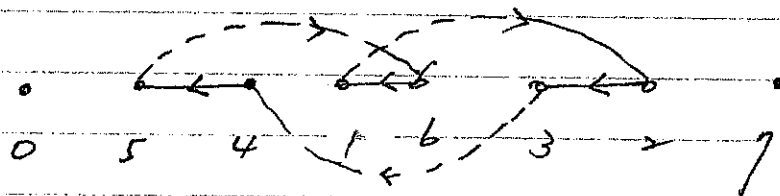
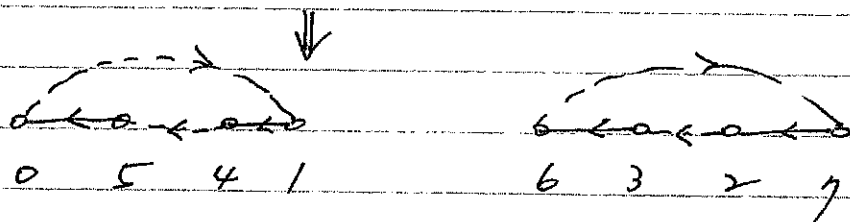
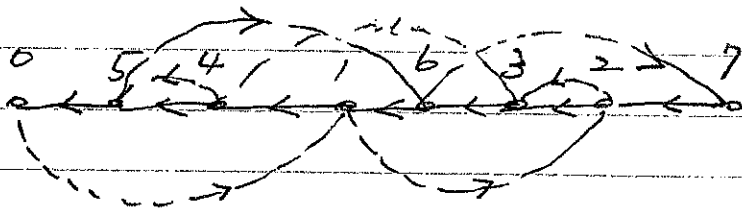
### Definition (Cycle graph)

The cycle graph of a permutation  $\pi$  of  $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  is the directed graph  $G(\pi)$  with vertex set  $\{0, 1, 2, \dots, n, n+1\}$  and whose arcs are:

- (1) black arcs  $(\pi_i^l, \pi_{i+1}^l)$  for  $1 \leq i \leq n+1$ , and  
(reality)
- (2) gray arcs  $(i, i+1)$  for  $0 \leq i \leq n$ .  
(desired)

Example  $\pi = (5\ 4\ 1\ 6\ 3\ 2)$ ,  $\pi^l$ : linear extension of  $\pi$

$G(\pi)$ :



alternating cycles  $\leftarrow$  The # of  $c(G(\pi))$ .

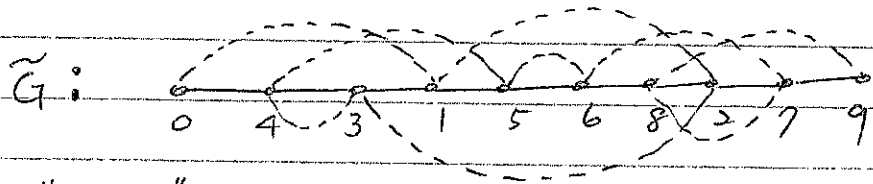


## Definition (Breakpoint graph)

The breakpoint graph of a permutation  $\pi$  is the undirected graph  $BG(\pi)$ , whose vertex set is the vertex set of the cycle graph of  $\pi$ , and whose edges are the arcs of the cycle graph of  $\pi$  taken without their orientation.

e.g. circular permutation (43156827)

extension 0.4.3.1.5.6.8.2.7.9



Incident edges "..."

$\tilde{G}$  is obtained by adding incident edges  $01, 12, 23, \dots, 89$ .

$\tilde{G}$  is an eulerian graph.

$\tilde{G}$  can be decomposed into alternating <sup>(circuits)</sup> cycles:

$(0, 4, 5, 1), (5, 6), (4, 3), (6, 8, 9, 7), (3, 1, 2, 8, 7, 2)$

Let  $c^*(BG(\pi))$  denote the number of cycles in a maximal alternating cycle decomposition of  $BG(\pi)$ .

The goal of finding minimum length factorization can be accomplished by using both the cycle graph and breakpoint graph of  $\pi$ . Though, not able to find an explicit solution, we are able to estimate the upper bounds, hopefully a tight bound.

## Transposition Distance

(\*) The term "transposition" comes from biology and refers to "transposons", which are sequences of DNA that can be displaced in a genome.

Note: Algebraic transposition is a 2-cycle in a permutation, for  $(ij)$  which represents  $i \rightarrow j$  and  $j \rightarrow i$ .

### Definition (Interval of permutation)

An interval (or segment) of a permutation  $\pi = (\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_n)$  is a set  $\{|\pi_a|, |\pi_{a+1}|, \dots, |\pi_b|\}$  with  $1 \leq a \leq b \leq n$ . The absolute value is meaningful for signed permutation, and the elements  $\pi_a$  and  $\pi_b$  are the extremities of the interval.



### Definition (Transposition $\tau(i, j, k)$ )

For any permutation  $\pi$  in  $S_n$ , the transposition  $\tau(i, j, k)$  with  $1 \leq i < j < k \leq n+1$  applied to  $\pi$  exchanges the intervals

determined respectively by  $i$  and  $j-1$  and by  $j$  and  $k-1$ , transforming  $\pi$  into  $\pi \circ \tau(i, j, k)$ . Therefore,

$$\tau(i, j, k) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & \dots & i-1 & \boxed{i \dots j-2 \ j-1} & \boxed{j \ j+1 \dots k-1} & \boxed{k \dots n} \\ 1 & 2 & \dots & i-1 & \boxed{j \ j+1 \dots k-1} & \boxed{i \dots j-2 \ j-1} & \boxed{k \dots n} \end{pmatrix}$$

(\*) 把由  $i$  到  $j-1$  的 interval 移到  $k-1$  的後面,  $k$  的前面。  
(插入到  $k-1$  与  $k$  之間)

(\*) We use  $td(\pi)$  to denote the transposition distance of  $\pi$ , i.e., after  $td(\pi)$  transpositions, we end it up with  $i$  (identity)

e.g.  $\pi = (5 \ 1 \ 3 \ 2 \ 4)$

$$\pi \circ \tau(3, 4, 5) = (5 \ 1 \ 2 \ 3 \ 4)$$

e.g.  $\pi = (4 \ 1 \ 6 \ 2 \ 5 \ 7 \ 3)$ ,  $\tau(3, 5, 6)$

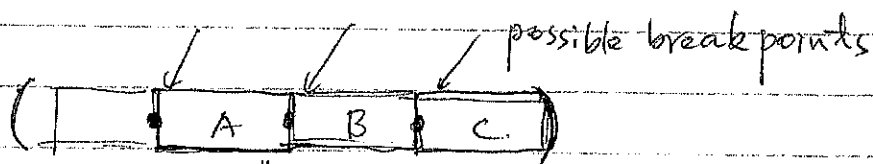
$$\pi \circ \tau(3, 5, 6) = (4 \ 1 \ 5 \ 6 \ 2 \ 7 \ 3)$$

$\uparrow$   
 $j-1 = k-1$

Proposition Let the number of breakpoints be  $bp(\pi)$ . Then,

$$td(\pi) \geq \frac{bp(\pi)}{3}$$

Proof



一次最多步 3 个 b.p.!

Breakpoints  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{ascents} \quad \pi_{i+1} > \pi_i \quad (\text{But, not } \pi_{i+1} = \pi_i + 1) \\ \text{descents} \quad \pi_{i+1} < \pi_i \end{array} \right.$

(\*)  $\text{des}(\pi)$ : The # of descents in  $\pi$ .

Proposition  $\forall \pi \in S_n, \text{td}(\pi) \geq \max \left\{ \frac{\text{des}(\pi)}{2}, \frac{\text{des}(\pi^{-1})}{2} \right\}$ .  
It suffices to claim that the # of descents decrease only at most 2.

Proof.  $\wedge$  Suppose not.

Let  $\pi_{i-1} = a, \pi_i = b, \pi_{j-1} = c, \pi_j = d, \pi_{r-1} = e$  and  $\pi_r = f$ . Moreover,

$a > b, c > d$  and  $e > f$ . Following the transposition  $\tau(i, j, k)$ ,

we have  $a - d; e - b; c - f$ ; Also,  $a < d, e < b$  and  $c < f$ .

But, this is not possible. If  $a < d$  and  $e < b$ , then

$c > d > a > b > e > f$ .  $\rightarrow$  If  $a < d$  and  $c < f$ , then

$b < a < d < c < f < e$ .  $\rightarrow$  Finally, if  $e < b$  and  $c < f$ , then

$a > b > e > f > c > d$ .  $\rightarrow$

Since the distance between  $\pi$  and  $i$  is the same as the distance between  $i$  and  $\pi^{-1}$ , and  $\text{des}(\pi)$  may be different from  $\text{des}(\pi^{-1})$ , the assertion holds.  $\blacksquare$

(\*) A strip is a maximal interval of  $\pi$  containing no breakpoints of  $\pi$

(\*) Reduced permutation

$$4\ 5\ 6\ 3\ 1\ 7\ 8\ 2 \rightarrow (4\ 3\ 1\ 5\ 2)$$



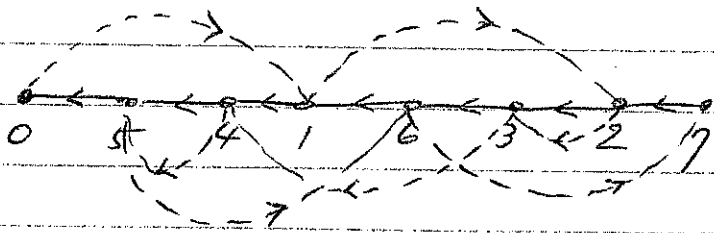
They have the same transposition distance.

Review "cycle graph of  $\pi$ ":  $G(\pi)$

Let  $c(G(\pi))$  denote the number of alternating cycles.

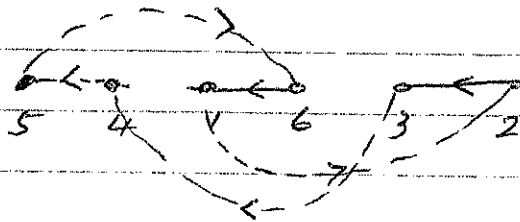
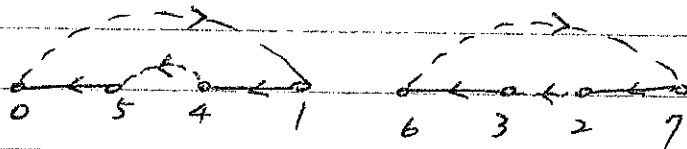
$$\pi = (5\ 4\ 1\ 6\ 3\ 2)$$

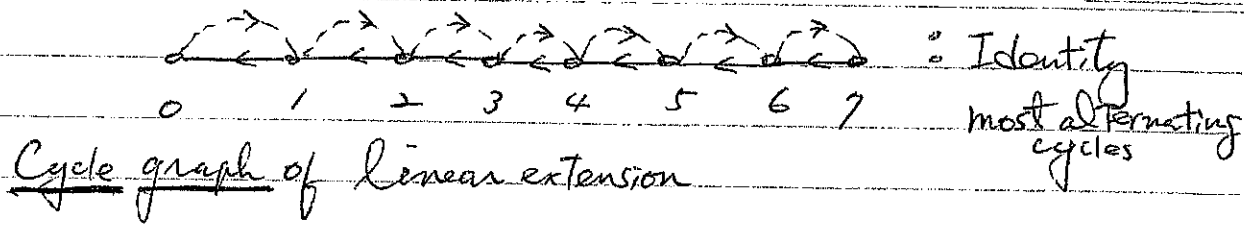
$G(\pi)$ :



$c(G(\pi))$

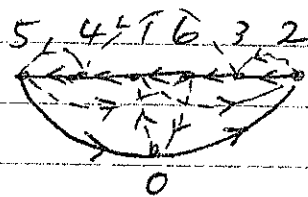
$\parallel$   
3





(\*) We can define the cycle graph of  $\pi$  by using circular extension instead of linear extension.

• Example,



"只加0, 不加7!"

应该部份仍依顺序, 6接回0.

Proposition  $\forall \pi \in S_n, td(\pi) \geq \frac{p(\pi) - c(G(\pi))}{2}$ .

Proof. It suffices to show that a transposition may increase the number of alternating cycles by at most two.

Let  $\tau(i, j, k) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \tau$  be the transposition, and  $\Delta c(\tau) = c(G(\pi \circ \tau)) -$

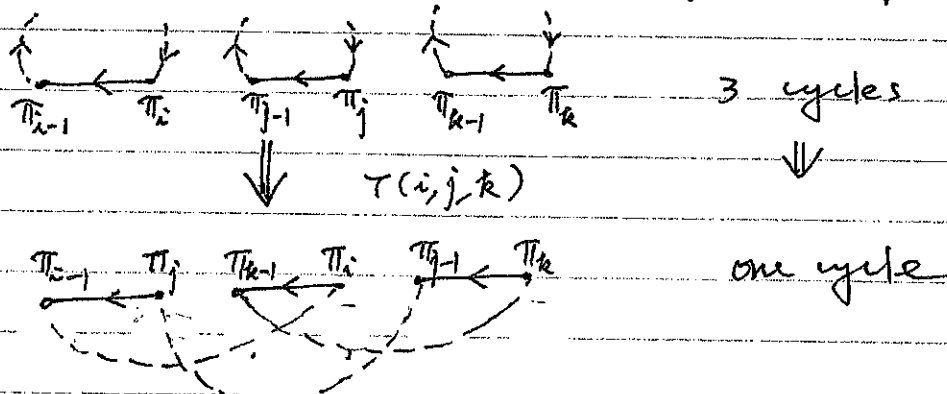
$c(G(\pi))$  be the number of alternating cycles which are changed.

Now, we claim  $\Delta c(\tau) = \{-2, 0, 2\}$ .

By definition, the vertices of  $G(\pi)$  which are involved in the transpositions are  $\pi_{i-1}, \pi_i, \pi_{j-1}, \pi_j, \pi_{k-1}$  and  $\pi_k$ . Following the transposition  $\tau(i, j, k)$ , the black edges  $(\pi_i, \pi_{i-1}), (\pi_j, \pi_{j-1})$  and (directed)

$(\pi_k, \pi_{k-1})$  are removed and adding new black edges  $(\pi_j, \pi_{k-1}), (\pi_i, \pi_{k-1})$   
 (in new permutation)  
 and  $(\pi_k, \pi_{j-1})$ .

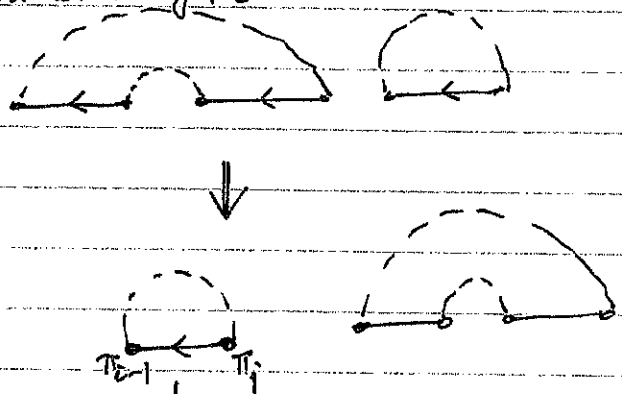
Case 1. Three removed edges are in three alternating cycles  
 (of the decomposition of  $G(\pi)$ ).



3 cycles  
 $\Downarrow$

one cycle

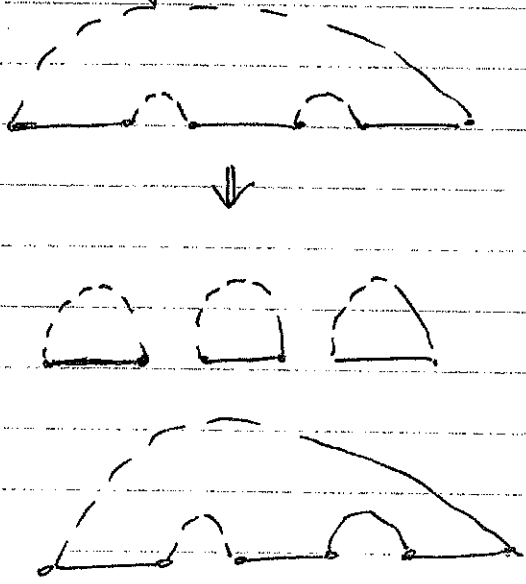
Case 2 In two cycles



Two cycles  
 $\Downarrow$

Two cycles

Case 3 In one cycle



one cycle  
 $\Downarrow$

Three cycles.

or

One cycle



## Definition (Odd or even alternating cycles)

An alternating cycle is said to be odd if it contains an odd number of "black" edges (arcs), and even otherwise.

Example In the decomposition of  $[0\ 5\ 4\ 1\ 6\ 3\ 2]$ , there are two even cycles and one odd cycle.

(\*) The change of odd cycles in a transposition is <sup>either or</sup>  $-2, 0, 2$ .

Proposition  $td(\pi) \geq \frac{|\text{PC}(\pi) - c_o(G(\pi))}{2}$  where  $c_o(G(\pi))$  denotes the number of odd cycles.

## Reference

V. Bafna and P. A. Pevzner, Sorting by transpositions,  
SIAM J. Discrete Math., Vol. 11, No 2, 224-240.

# Upper bounds

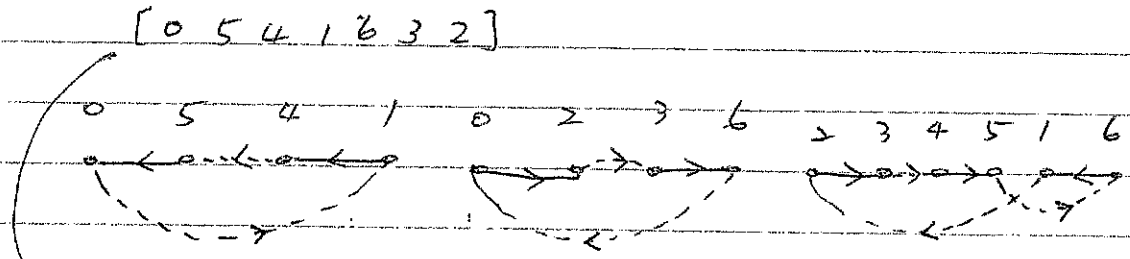
In order to obtain a good upper bound, we need to provide a suitable algorithm to sort the permutations by way of transpositions.

Proposition  $td(\pi) \leq p(\pi) - c(G(\pi))$ .

We shall use circular permutations, thus  $p(\pi) = n+1$  if  $\pi \in S_n$ .

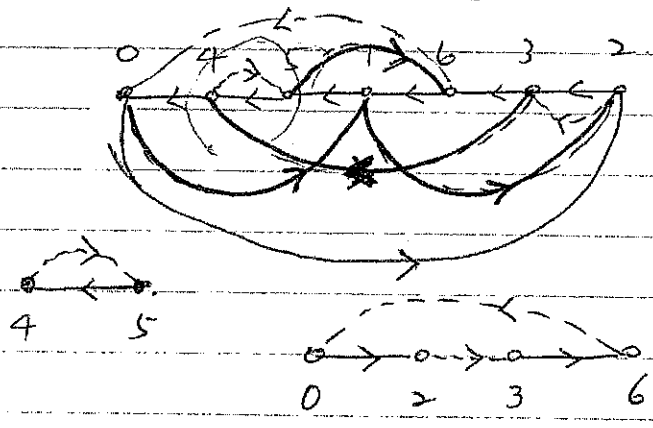
Proof. At each step, we create one "more" adjacency. Corresponding to this fact, we obtain one more alternating cycle in cycle decomposition of  $G(\pi)$ . (How?)

Example

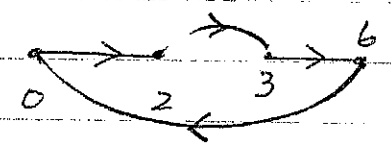
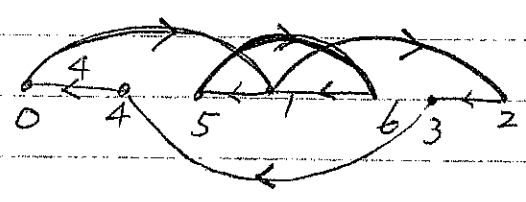
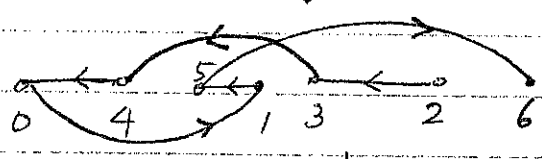
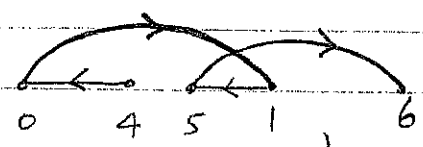
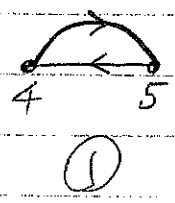
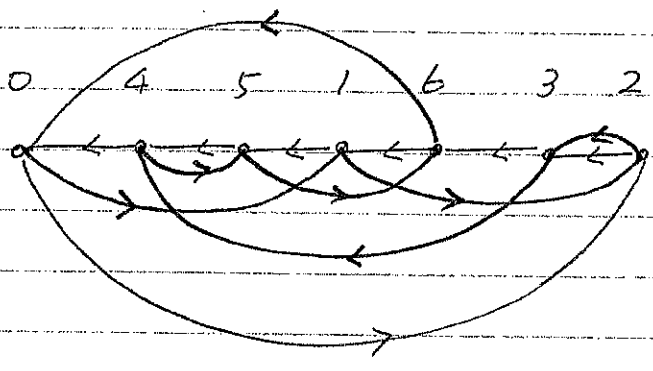


[0 4 5 1 6 3 2]

What happen?



?  
4 0 1 5 6 1 2 3



②

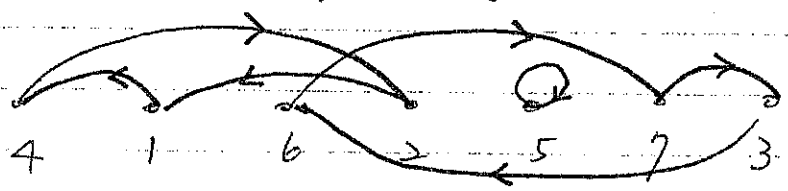
③

Definition ( $\Gamma$ -graph)

The  $\Gamma$ -graph of a permutation  $\pi \in S_n$  is the digraph

$\Gamma(\pi)$  with ordered vertex-set  $(\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_n)$  and

$(\pi_i, \pi_j) \in A(\Gamma(\pi))$  if  $\pi_i = j$ .



$\exists$  odd directed cycles!

$(4 \ 1 \ 6 \ 2 \ 5 \ 7 \ 3)$   
 $\pi_1 \ \pi_2 \ \pi_3 \ \pi_4 \ \pi_5 \ \pi_6 \ \pi_7$

$$\pi = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5 & 6 & 7 \\ 4 & 1 & 6 & 2 & 5 & 7 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$$

The cycles of  $P(\pi)$  can be obtained by finding the cycle decomposition of  $\pi$ . Here,  $\pi = \underline{(1\ 4\ 2)} \underline{(3\ 6\ 7)} \underline{(5)}$ .

So, the number of cycles (directed) in  $P(\pi)$  is exactly the number of cycles in "cycle decomposition" (representation). ↑ ↗ odd cycles

### Proposition

For all  $\pi \in S_n$ ,  $td(\pi) \leq n - \# \text{ of odd cycles in } P(\pi)$ .

Proof. Try !!

(\*) We can find the longest increasing subsequence of  $\pi$  to obtain an upper bound.

### Proposition

Let  $|LIS(\pi)|$  denote the length of a longest increasing sequence. Then,  $td(\pi) \leq n - |LIS(\pi)|$ .

$n - |\text{LIS}(\pi)|$  is also denoted by  $\text{ulam}(\pi)$ , called Ulam's distance.

Proof. We may use transposition to increase  $\text{LIS}(\pi)$  one

by one.

(at least one!)

Example

4 (1) 6 (2) (5) (7) 3

↓

4 (1) (2) (5) (6) (7) 3

4  
1 2 4 5 6 7 3

3

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

(4) (5) (6) (7) [1 2 3]

From 4 to 7.

Another idea

Definition (Coding a permutation)

Given a permutation  $\pi = (\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_n)$ , the left code of the element  $\pi_i$  of  $\pi$ , denoted by  $lc(\pi_i) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \downarrow$  next page

$|\{\pi_j \mid \pi_j > \pi_i \text{ and } 0 \leq j \leq i-1\}|$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . ( $\pi_0 = 0$ , as an invention.)

Similarly, the right code of  $\pi_i$ , denoted by  $rc(\pi_i) \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} |\{\pi_j \mid \pi_j < \pi_i \text{ and } i+1 \leq j \leq n+1\}|$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq n$ . ( $\pi_{n+1} = n+1$ )

(\*) The left code of  $\pi$  is  $(lc(\pi_1), lc(\pi_2), \dots, lc(\pi_n))$  and the right code of  $\pi$  is  $(rc(\pi_1), rc(\pi_2), \dots, rc(\pi_n))$ .

Example  $\pi = (6 \ 3 \ 2 \ 1 \ 4 \ 5)$

↓

$lc(\pi) = (0, 1, 2, 3, 1, 1)$  and

( : 左边项比该项大的个数! )

$rc(\pi) = (5, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0)$ .

( 右边项比该项小的个数! )

Example  $lc(i) = rc(\pi) = (0, 0, \dots, 0)$ .

Definition (plateau (複數 plateaux))

Let  $\vec{s}$  be a <sup>sequence of</sup> non-negative integers. A plateau of  $\vec{s}$  is any maximal length subsequence of contiguous elements in  $\vec{s}$  that have the same nonzero value. The number of plateaux in  $\vec{s}$  is denoted by  $\tilde{p}(\vec{s})$ .

Example  $\vec{s} = lc(\pi)$  where  $\pi = (6 \ 3 \ 2 \ 1 \ 4 \ 5)$ .  
 $= (0, 1, 2, 3, 1, 1)$ .  $\tilde{p}(\vec{s}) = 4$ .

$$\vec{\alpha} = \text{rc}(\pi) = (5, 2, 1, 0, 0, 0)$$

$$\Downarrow$$

$$\tilde{p}(\vec{\alpha}) = 3$$

Lemma Given a permutation  $\pi$ , the leftmost (resp. rightmost) plateau of  $\text{lc}(\pi)$  (resp.  $\text{rc}(\pi)$ ) can be removed by a transposition to the left (resp. the right) without creating any new plateaux in the code.

Proof. We prove the left code case. Let the leftmost plateau be from position  $i$  to  $j-1$ . Then, all entries of  $\text{lc}(\pi_i)$  before position  $i$  is "0". That is  $\pi_1, \pi_2, \dots, \pi_{i-1}$  are in increasing order. So, if  $\text{lc}(\pi_i) = a$ , then  $\underline{p(i, j, i-a)}$  removes the first plateau from the left.  $\square$

$$a=1$$

Example

$$\pi = (6 \textcircled{3} 2 1 4 5)$$

$$\Downarrow$$

$$i=2, a=1 \quad \pi' = (3 6 2 1 4 5)$$

$$\text{lc}(\pi') = (0, 0, 2, 3, 1, 1)$$

$$\pi'' = (2 3 6 1 4 5)$$

$$\text{lc}(\pi'') = (0, 0, 0, 3, 1, 1)$$

$$\vdots$$

Proposition  $ld(\pi) \leq \min \{ \tilde{p}(lc(\pi)), \tilde{p}(rc(\pi)) \}$ .

Proof. We may choose the one with less plateaux among  $lc(\pi)$  and  $rc(\pi)$ .