

HILBERT POLYNOMIALS FOR FINITARY MATROIDS

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ABSTRACT. We consider a tuple $\Phi = (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ of commuting maps on a finitary matroid X . We show that if Φ satisfies certain conditions, then for any finite set $A \subseteq X$, the rank of $\{\phi_1^{r_1} \cdots \phi_m^{r_m}(a) : a \in A \text{ and } r_1 + \cdots + r_m = t\}$ is eventually a polynomial in t (we also give a multivariate version of the polynomial). This allows us easily recover Khovanskii's theorem on the growth of sumsets, the existence of the classical Hilbert polynomial, and the existence of the Kolchin polynomial. We also prove some new Kolchin polynomial results for differential exponential fields and derivations on o-minimal fields, as well as a new result on the growth of Betti numbers in simplicial complexes.

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INTRODUCTION

Eventual polynomial growth is a common theme in combinatorics and commutative algebra. The quintessential example is the Hilbert function, which measures the K -linear dimension of the graded pieces M_t of a finitely generated $K[x_1, \dots, x_m]$ -module $M = \bigoplus_t M_t$. This function is eventually equal to a polynomial in t , called the *Hilbert polynomial*. Another example is due to Kolchin, who showed that given a partial differential field $(F, \delta_1, \dots, \delta_m)$ and a tuple \bar{a} in a differential field extension of F , the transcendence degree

$$\text{trdeg}_F F((\delta_1^{r_1} \cdots \delta_m^{r_m} \bar{a})_{r_1 + \cdots + r_m \leq t})$$

is eventually equal to a polynomial in t [12]. This polynomial, called the *Kolchin polynomial*, is a foundational object in differential algebra. In the area of additive combinatorics, Khovanskii showed that for finite subsets A and B of a commutative semigroup, the size of the sumset $A + tB$ is eventually polynomial in t [10].

Khovanskii made use of the Hilbert polynomial to prove his result, and Kolchin's result can also be proven using the Hilbert polynomial, as was shown by Johnson [7]. In this paper, we show that the Hilbert polynomial, the Kolchin polynomial, and Khovanskii's polynomial admit a common generalization in terms of finitary matroids. A *matroid* is a combinatorial structure which axiomatizes the notion of independence. While most matroids studied are finite, it is useful for our purposes to allow infinite matroids, while still requiring that any instance of dependence is witnessed by a finite set. There are many equivalent ways to define a finitary matroid, but for the purposes of this paper, we most frequently use closure operators (where the closure of a set consists of all elements which are not independent from the set) and ranks (where the rank of a finite set is the size of a maximal independent subset).

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We consider how the rank of a finite set grows as one applies commuting operators to the set. We show that, under certain assumptions on the operators, this rank is eventually polynomial in the total number of times the operators are applied. In the case of the Hilbert polynomial, the closure operator is K -linear span in M , the rank is K -linear dimension, and the operators are scalar multiplication by the elements x_i . For the Kolchin polynomial, the closure operator is algebraic closure over F , the rank is transcendence degree over F , and the operators are $\delta_1, \dots, \delta_m$ and the identity map. For Khovanskii's polynomial, the underlying matroid is the semigroup with trivial closure, so the rank coincides with cardinality, and the operators are addition by elements of B .

We are also able to apply our result a number of other settings. We recover a result of Maclagan and Rincón on Hilbert polynomials for homogeneous tropical ideals in the semiring of tropical polynomials [20], we prove that the Betti numbers of a finite subcomplex of a simplicial complex \mathcal{K} grow polynomially under an action of \mathbb{N}^m on \mathcal{K} by simplicial endomorphisms, and we establish an analogue of the Kolchin polynomial for difference-differential exponential fields and derivations on o-minimal fields.

Let us state our main results more precisely. Let (X, cl) be a finitary matroid, let $m \in \mathbb{N}^{>0}$, and let $\Phi := (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ be a finite tuple of commuting maps $X \rightarrow X$. The tuple Φ is said to be a **triangular system** if

$$a \in \text{cl}(B) \implies \phi_i a \in \text{cl}(\phi_1 B \cdots \phi_i B)$$

for all $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, all $a \in X$, and all $B \subseteq X$. For $\bar{r} = (r_1, \dots, r_m) \in \mathbb{N}^m$, we let $|\bar{r}| = r_1 + \dots + r_m$, and we let $\phi^{\bar{r}}: X \rightarrow X$ be the composite map $\phi^{\bar{r}} = \phi_1^{r_1} \cdots \phi_m^{r_m}$. For $t \in \mathbb{N}$ and $A \subseteq X$, put

$$\Phi^{(t)}(A) := \{\phi^{\bar{r}}(a) : a \in A \text{ and } |\bar{r}| = t\}.$$

We prove the following:

Theorem. *Suppose that Φ is a triangular system, let $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite. Then there is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[Y]$ of degree at most $m - 1$ such that*

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{(t)}(A)|\Phi^{(t)}(B)) = P(t)$$

for all sufficiently large $t \in \mathbb{N}$, where rk is the rank function associated to (X, cl) .

The above theorem is a special case of a multivariate version, which can be used to recover multivariate generalizations of the results considered above, such as Nathanson's generalization of Khovanskii's sumset theorem [22] and Levin's multivariate generalizations of the Kolchin polynomial [18]. Fix

$$0 = m_1 < m_2 < \cdots < m_k < m_{k+1} = m,$$

and set $d_i := m_{i+1} - m_i$ for $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$. For each i , we set $\Phi_i := (\phi_{m_i+1}, \phi_{m_i+2}, \dots, \phi_{m_i+d_i})$, and we call the tuple (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) a **partition of Φ** . For a tuple $\bar{r} = (r_1, \dots, r_m) \in \mathbb{N}^m$, we set

$$\|\bar{r}\| := (r_{m_1+1} + \cdots + r_{m_1+d_1}, \dots, r_{m_k+1} + \cdots + r_{m_k+d_k}) \in \mathbb{N}^k,$$

and for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ and $A \subseteq X$, we put $\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A) := \{\phi^{\bar{r}}(a) : a \in A \text{ and } \|\bar{r}\| = \bar{s}\}$.

Theorem A. *Suppose that each Φ_i is a triangular system, let $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite. Then there is a polynomial $P_{A|B}^\Phi \in \mathbb{Q}[Y_1, \dots, Y_k]$ of degree at most $d_i - 1$ in each variable Y_i such that*

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = P_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s})$$

for $\bar{s} = (s_1, \dots, s_k) \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\min\{s_1, \dots, s_k\}$ sufficiently large.

We call the polynomial $P_{A|B}^\Phi$ in Theorem A the **Hilbert polynomial of A over B with respect to the partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k)** . In the proof of Theorem A, we use Proposition 1.4, which describes the generating function associated to a decreasing function, and might be of independent interest.

In order to apply Theorem A to the case of differential fields, we need to consider a slightly more general framework than a triangular system. We say that the system $\Phi = (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is **quasi-triangular** if the augmented system $(\text{id}, \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is triangular, where $\text{id}: X \rightarrow X$ is the identity map. Let \preceq denote the product order on \mathbb{N}^k , and for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ and $A \subseteq X$, put $\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A) := \{\phi^{\bar{r}}(a) : a \in A \text{ and } \|\bar{r}\| \preceq \bar{s}\}$.

Corollary A. *Suppose that each Φ_i is a quasi-triangular system, let $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite. Then there is a polynomial $Q_{A|B}^\Phi \in \mathbb{Q}[Y_1, \dots, Y_k]$ of degree at most d_i in each variable Y_i such that*

$$\mathrm{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) = Q_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s})$$

for $\bar{s} = (s_1, \dots, s_k) \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\min\{s_1, \dots, s_k\}$ sufficiently large.

We call the polynomial $Q_{A|B}^\Phi$ in Corollary A the **Kolchin polynomial of A over B with respect to the partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k)** . Any triangular system is quasi-triangular, so Corollary A applies in a strictly broader context than Theorem A. Indeed, there are quasi-triangular systems for which the conclusion of Theorem A doesn't hold; see Subsection 5.2. As we will see, derivations on fields form a quasi-triangular system with respect to the matroid of algebraic closure.

In addition to the Hilbert and Kolchin polynomials, we define closure operators \mathcal{cl}^Φ and \mathcal{cl}_*^Φ on X , called the **Φ -closure** and **Φ_* -closure**, respectively, with respect to the partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} a \in \mathcal{cl}^\Phi(B) &: \iff \mathrm{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Phi^{(\bar{s})}| \text{ for some } \bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k \\ a \in \mathcal{cl}_*^\Phi(B) &: \iff \mathrm{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}| \text{ for some } \bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k. \end{aligned}$$

Our second theorem relates these closure operators to the Hilbert and Kolchin polynomials.

Theorem B. *Let $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite. If each Φ_i is a triangular system, then (X, \mathcal{cl}^Φ) is a finitary matroid. The rank function rk^Φ corresponding to this matroid satisfies the identity*

$$\mathrm{rk}^\Phi(A|B) = \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\mathrm{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|}.$$

We also have

$$P_{A|B}^\Phi(Y_1, \dots, Y_k) = \frac{\mathrm{rk}^\Phi(A|B)}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)!} Y_1^{d_1 - 1} \cdots Y_k^{d_k - 1} + \text{lower degree terms}.$$

Likewise, if each Φ_i quasi-triangular, then (X, \mathcal{cl}_*^Φ) is a finitary matroid with rank function rk^{Φ_*} satisfying the identities

$$\begin{aligned} \mathrm{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B) &= \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\mathrm{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|}, \\ Q_{A|B}^{\Phi_*}(Y_1, \dots, Y_k) &= \frac{\mathrm{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B)}{d_1! \cdots d_k!} Y_1^{d_1} \cdots Y_k^{d_k} + \text{lower degree terms}. \end{aligned}$$

After some preliminaries in Section 1, we prove our main theorems in Sections 2 and 3. In Section 4, we collect some classical consequences of Theorem A, and in Section 5, we consider an application to simplicial complexes. Some applications of Corollary A for difference-differential fields (as well as difference-differential exponential fields and differential o-minimal fields) are considered in Section 6.

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1. PRELIMINARIES

1.1. Notation and conventions. Throughout, \mathbb{N} denotes the set of natural numbers $\{0, 1, 2, \dots\}$. Let $d \in \mathbb{N}^{>0}$, and let $\bar{r} = (r_1, \dots, r_d)$ and $\bar{s} = (s_1, \dots, s_d)$ range over \mathbb{N}^d . We write $\min(\bar{r})$ to mean $\min\{r_1, \dots, r_d\}$. Let \preceq denote the product order on \mathbb{N}^d , so

$$\bar{r} \preceq \bar{s} : \iff r_i \leq s_i \text{ for each } i = 1, \dots, d,$$

and let $<_{\mathrm{lex}}$ denote the lexicographic order on \mathbb{N}^d with emphasis on the last coordinate, so

$$\bar{r} <_{\mathrm{lex}} \bar{s} : \iff \text{there is } i \in \{1, \dots, d\} \text{ such that } r_i < s_i \text{ and } r_j = s_j \text{ for } i < j \leq d.$$

Let $\bar{0}_d$ be the tuple $(0, \dots, 0)$ consisting of d zeros, so $\bar{0}_d$ is both the minimal element of \mathbb{N}^d with respect to both of the orders \preceq and \leq_{lex} . For $i \in \{1, \dots, d\}$, let $\hat{e}_{i,d} := (0, \dots, 1, \dots, 0)$ be the tuple which consists of a 1 in the i th spot and zeros everywhere else.

1.2. Finitary matroids, triangular systems, and quasi-triangular systems. Recall that a **finitary matroid** consists of a set X , together with a map $\text{cl}: \mathcal{P}(X) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(X)$ which satisfies the following conditions:

- (1) Monotonicity: if $A \subseteq B \subseteq X$, then $A \subseteq \text{cl}(A) \subseteq \text{cl}(B)$;
- (2) Idempotence: $\text{cl}(\text{cl}(A)) = \text{cl}(A)$ for $A \subseteq X$;
- (3) Finite character: if $A \subseteq X$ and $a \in \text{cl}(A)$, then $a \in \text{cl}(A_0)$ for some finite subset $A_0 \subseteq A$;
- (4) Steinitz exchange: For $a, b \in X$ and $A \subseteq X$, if $a \in \text{cl}(A \cup \{b\}) \setminus \text{cl}(A)$, then $b \in \text{cl}(A \cup \{a\})$.

More on finitary matroids can be found in [24], where they are called *independence spaces*. Finitary matroids often appear in model theory, where they are called *pregeometries*; see [25, Appendix C.1]. For the remainder of this paper, we fix a finitary matroid (X, cl) , a positive natural number $m \in \mathbb{N}^{>0}$, and a finite tuple $\Phi := (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ of commuting maps $X \rightarrow X$. We will usually use a, b to denote elements of X and A, B to denote subsets of X . We will often abuse notation and write things like “ $a \in \text{cl}(ABb)$ ” to mean “ $a \in \text{cl}(A \cup B \cup \{b\})$.”

For $A \subseteq X$, we let cl_A denote the following closure operator:

$$a \in \text{cl}_A(B) \quad :\iff \quad a \in \text{cl}(AB).$$

Then (X, cl_A) is also a finitary matroid, called the **localization of (X, cl) at A** . We say that B is **cl -independent over A** if $b \notin \text{cl}_A(B \setminus \{b\})$ for all $b \in B$. A **basis for B over A** is a subset $B_0 \subseteq B$ which is cl -independent over A such that $B \subseteq \text{cl}_A(B_0)$. Steinitz exchange ensures that any two bases for B over A have the same cardinality, called the **rank of B over A** and denoted $\text{rk}(B|A)$. We just write $\text{rk}(B)$ for $\text{rk}(B|\emptyset)$, and we use rk_A for the rank corresponding to the localization (X, cl_A) , so $\text{rk}(B|A) = \text{rk}_A(B)$.

Let Θ be the free commutative monoid on Φ , so Θ consists of all operators $\phi^{\bar{r}} := \phi_1^{r_1} \cdots \phi_m^{r_m}$ for $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m$. Note that $\phi^{\bar{0}}$ is the identity map on X (and also the identity element of Θ) and that $\phi^{\hat{e}_{i,m}} = \phi_i$ for $i = 1, \dots, m$. For $\theta \in \Theta$, we let $\theta(A) := \{\theta a : a \in A\}$, and for $\Theta_0 \subseteq \Theta$, we let

$$\Theta_0(A) := \bigcup_{\theta \in \Theta_0} \theta(A).$$

Recall from the introduction that Φ is a **triangular system** for (X, cl) if

$$a \in \text{cl}(B) \implies \phi_i a \in \text{cl}(\phi_1 B \cdots \phi_i B)$$

for each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$. If Φ is a triangular system for (X, cl) and $A \subseteq X$ is closed under each map ϕ_i , then one can easily verify that Φ is a triangular system for the localization (X, cl_A) . The following lemma on triangular systems will be used in the proof of the main theorem.

Lemma 1.1. *Φ is a triangular system if and only if for each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, we have*

$$\text{rk}(\phi_i(A) | \phi_1(AB) \cdots \phi_{i-1}(AB) \phi_i(B)) \leq \text{rk}(A|B).$$

Proof. Suppose that Φ is a triangular system. Let A_0 be a cl -basis for A over B , so $A \subseteq \text{cl}(A_0B)$. Since Φ is a triangular system, we have

$$\phi_i(A) \subseteq \text{cl}(\phi_1(A_0B) \cdots \phi_i(A_0B)) \subseteq \text{cl}(\phi_1(AB) \cdots \phi_{i-1}(AB) \phi_i(A_0B)).$$

This gives

$$\text{rk}(\phi_i(A) | \phi_1(AB) \cdots \phi_{i-1}(AB) \phi_i(B)) \leq |\phi_i(A_0)| \leq |A_0| = \text{rk}(A|B).$$

For the converse, let $a \in \text{cl}(B)$. Then,

$$\text{rk}(\phi_i(a) | \phi_1(aB) \cdots \phi_{i-1}(aB) \phi_i(B)) \leq \text{rk}(a|B) = 0.$$

By induction on $i = 1, \dots, m$, we conclude that $\phi_i a \in \text{cl}(\phi_1 B \cdots \phi_{i-1} B \phi_i B)$. □

For the remainder of the paper, we let (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) be the partition of Φ given in the introduction. For each $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$, let $(\Phi_i)_* := (\text{id}, \phi_{m_i+1}, \phi_{m_i+2}, \dots, \phi_{m_i+d_i})$, where $\text{id}: X \rightarrow X$ is the identity map. Then $((\Phi_1)_*, (\Phi_2)_*, \dots, (\Phi_k)_*)$ is a partition of the augmented system

$$\Phi_* := (\text{id}, \phi_{m_1+1}, \dots, \phi_{m_1+d_1}; \dots; \text{id}, \phi_{m_k+1}, \dots, \phi_{m_k+d_k}).$$

For each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ and each $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m$ with $\|\bar{r}\| \preceq \bar{s}$, the map $\phi^{\bar{r}} \in \Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}$ acts the same way on X as the map $\text{id}^{\bar{s}-|\bar{r}|} \phi^{\bar{r}} \in \Phi_*^{\preceq(\bar{s})}$, so we may identify $\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}$ and $\Phi_*^{\preceq(\bar{s})}$. For each i , if Φ_i is quasi-triangular, then $(\Phi_i)_*$ is triangular, so many of our results on quasi-triangular systems will follow from the corresponding result on triangular systems, applied with Φ_* in place of Φ .

The main examples of (quasi)-triangular systems studied in this paper are tuples of (quasi)-endomorphisms. Let $\psi: X \rightarrow X$ be a map. We say that ψ is an **endomorphism of (X, cl)** if

$$a \in \text{cl}(B) \implies \psi a \in \text{cl}(\psi B).$$

We say that ψ is a **quasi-endomorphism of (X, cl)** if

$$a \in \text{cl}(B) \implies \psi a \in \text{cl}(B\psi B).$$

If Φ is a (quasi)-triangular system, then ϕ_1 is necessarily a (quasi)-endomorphism, and if ϕ_1, \dots, ϕ_m are (quasi)-endomorphisms, then Φ is (quasi)-triangular. Quasi-endomorphisms were first considered in [6, Section 3.1].

1.3. Generating functions. Let $\bar{Y} = (Y_1, \dots, Y_k)$ be a tuple of variables. Given $\bar{r} = (r_1, \dots, r_k) \in \mathbb{N}^k$, we write $\bar{Y}^{\bar{r}}$ for the monomial $Y_1^{r_1} \cdots Y_k^{r_k}$. A polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ is said to have **degree at most \bar{r}** if P has degree at most r_i in each variable Y_i , that is, if

$$P(\bar{Y}) = a\bar{Y}^{\bar{r}} + \text{lower degree terms}$$

for some $a \in \mathbb{Q}$.

Let $f: \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ be a function. The **generating function of f** is the multivariate power series

$$G_f(\bar{Y}) = \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^k} f(\bar{r})\bar{Y}^{\bar{r}} \in \mathbb{Z}[[\bar{Y}]].$$

The following is well-known; see [9, Lemma 2.1] for a short proof.

Fact 1.2. *Suppose that G_f is a rational function with denominator $(1 - Y_1)^{d_1} \cdots (1 - Y_k)^{d_k}$. Then there is $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ and of degree at most $(d_1 - 1, \dots, d_k - 1)$ such that $f(\bar{s}) = P(\bar{s})$ whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.*

Remark 1.3. Let G_f and P be as in Fact 1.2 and let R be the numerator of G_f , so

$$G_f(\bar{Y}) = \frac{R(\bar{Y})}{(1 - Y_1)^{d_1} \cdots (1 - Y_k)^{d_k}}.$$

From the proof given in [9], we see that

$$P(\bar{Y}) = \frac{R(1, \dots, 1)}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)!} Y_1^{d_1-1} \cdots Y_k^{d_k-1} + \text{lower degree terms}.$$

The proof also tells us that if R has degree at most \bar{r} , then $f(\bar{s}) = P(\bar{s})$ for all $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\bar{s} \succcurlyeq \bar{r}$.

The function f is said to be **decreasing** if $f(\bar{r}) \leq f(\bar{s})$ whenever $\bar{r} \succcurlyeq \bar{s}$. Suppose that f is decreasing. For $n \in \mathbb{N}$, set

$$S_n(f) := \{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k : f(\bar{s}) \leq n\},$$

so each $S_n(f)$ is a \preceq -upward closed subset of \mathbb{N}^k and $S_n(f) = \mathbb{N}^k$ for $n \geq f(\bar{0}_k)$. Let $M_n(f)$ be the set of \preceq -minimal elements of $S_n(f)$, so each $M_n(f)$ is finite by Dickson's lemma. Set $M(f) := \bigcup_{n \in \mathbb{N}} M_n(f)$, and let $\bar{m}(f)$ be the \preceq -least upper bound of $M(f)$.

Proposition 1.4. *If f is decreasing, then G_f is a rational function with numerator of degree at most $\bar{m}(f)$ and denominator $(1 - Y_1) \cdots (1 - Y_k)$.*

Proof. Suppose that f is decreasing, set $H := (1 - Y_1) \cdots (1 - Y_k) G_f$, and let $\bar{m}(f) = (m_1, \dots, m_k)$. We need to show for each $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$ and each $\bar{s} = (s_1, \dots, s_k) \in \mathbb{N}^k$ that if $s_i > m_i$, then the coefficient of $\bar{Y}^{\bar{s}}$ in H is zero. By symmetry, it suffices to consider the case $i = k$. Take power series H_0, H_1, H_2, \dots in the variables (Y_1, \dots, Y_{k-1}) such that

$$H = H_0 + H_1 Y_k + H_2 Y_k^2 + \dots.$$

We fix $t > m_k$, and we will show that $H_t = 0$. Distributing $(1 - Y_k)$ through the series G_f , we see that

$$H_t(Y_1, \dots, Y_{k-1}) = (1 - Y_1) \cdots (1 - Y_{k-1}) \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}} (f(\bar{r}, t) - f(\bar{r}, t-1)) Y_1^{r_1} \cdots Y_{k-1}^{r_{k-1}},$$

so it suffices to show that $f(\bar{r}, t) = f(\bar{r}, t-1)$ for each $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}$. Let \bar{r} be given and let $n = f(\bar{r}, t)$. Take $\bar{s} \in M_n(f)$ with $\bar{s} \preccurlyeq (\bar{r}, t)$. Since $s_k \leq m_k < t$, we see that $(\bar{r}, t-1) \succcurlyeq \bar{s}$ as well, so $f(\bar{r}, t-1) \leq n$. Since f is decreasing, we conclude that $f(\bar{r}, t-1) = n = f(\bar{r}, t)$. \square

Remark 1.5. We have another proof of Proposition 1.4, using that the partial order on decreasing functions $\mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ given by $f \leq g \iff f(\bar{s}) \leq g(\bar{s})$ for all $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ is well-founded. The proof is as follows: let $f: \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ be decreasing and assume that Proposition 1.4 holds for all decreasing functions $\mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ less than f , as well as all decreasing functions $\mathbb{N}^{k-1} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ (both base cases hold trivially). Let $g: \mathbb{N}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ be the function $(\bar{r}, t) \mapsto f(\bar{r}, t+1)$, so $g \leq f$, and let $h: \mathbb{N}^{k-1} \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$ be the function $\bar{r} \mapsto f(\bar{r}, 0)$. First, consider the case that $g = f$. Then $f(\bar{r}, t) = f(\bar{r}, 0) = h(\bar{r})$ for all $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}$ and all $t \in \mathbb{N}$ and so $\bar{m}(f) = (\bar{m}(h), 0)$. We have

$$G_f(\bar{Y}) = \sum_{t \in \mathbb{N}} \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}} f(\bar{r}, 0) \bar{Y}^{(\bar{r}, t)} = (1 - Y_k)^{-1} \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}} h(\bar{r}) Y_1^{r_1} \cdots Y_{k-1}^{r_{k-1}} = \frac{G_h(Y_1, \dots, Y_{k-1})}{(1 - Y_k)},$$

so Proposition 1.4 holds for f by our induction hypothesis. Now, consider the case that $g < f$. In this case, $\bar{m}(f)$ is the \preccurlyeq -least upper bound of $(\bar{m}(h), 0)$ and $\bar{m}(g) + \hat{e}_{k,k}$. We have

$$G_f(\bar{Y}) = \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}} f(\bar{r}, 0) \bar{Y}^{(\bar{r}, 0)} + \sum_{t \in \mathbb{N}} \sum_{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^{k-1}} f(\bar{r}, t+1) \bar{Y}^{(\bar{r}, t+1)} = G_h(Y_1, \dots, Y_{k-1}) + Y_k G_g(\bar{Y}),$$

and we again conclude that Proposition 1.4 holds for f by our induction hypothesis.

2. THE HILBERT AND KOLCHIN POLYNOMIALS

In this section, we prove Theorem A and Corollary A. For the remainder of this section, let $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite.

2.1. The Hilbert polynomial. In this subsection, we prove Theorem A, and we sketch a slight generalization in Remark 2.3 below. We assume for the remainder of the subsection that each part of the partition Φ_i is a triangular system. For $\bar{u} \in \mathbb{N}^m$, set

$$\Theta_{\bar{u}} := \{\phi^{\bar{r}} : \|\bar{r}\| = \|\bar{u}\| \text{ and } \bar{r} <_{\text{lex}} \bar{u}\}, \quad f_{A|B}^{\Phi}(\bar{u}) := \text{rk}(\phi^{\bar{u}}(A) | \Theta_{\bar{u}}(A) \Phi^{(\|\bar{u}\|)}(B)).$$

Then $f_{A|B}^{\Phi}$ is bounded above by $|A|$, and $\sum_{\|\bar{u}\|=\bar{s}} f_{A|B}^{\Phi}(\bar{u}) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A) | \Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))$ for each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$.

Lemma 2.1. *The function $f_{A|B}^{\Phi}$ is decreasing.*

Proof. Let $\bar{u}' \succcurlyeq \bar{u}$ be given. We may assume that

$$\bar{u}' = \bar{u} + \hat{e}_{m_i+d, m}$$

for some $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$ and some $d \in \{1, \dots, d_i\}$. Since $\Phi_i = (\phi_{m_i+1}, \dots, \phi_{m_i+d_i})$ is a triangular system, Lemma 1.1 tells us that

$$\text{rk}(\phi_{m_i+d} \phi^{\bar{u}}(A) | \{\phi_{m_i+j} \phi^{\bar{u}}(A) : 0 < j < d\} \cup \{\phi_{m_i+j}(\Theta_{\bar{u}}(A) \Phi^{(\|\bar{u}\|)}(B)) : 0 < j \leq d\}) \leq f_{A|B}^{\Phi}(\bar{u}).$$

For $j \in \{1, \dots, d-1\}$, we have $\|\hat{e}_{m_i+j, m}\| = \|\hat{e}_{m_i+d, m}\|$ and $\hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} <_{\text{lex}} \hat{e}_{m_i+d, m}$, so

$$\|\hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{u}\| = \|\hat{e}_{m_i+d, m} + \bar{u}\| = \|\bar{u}'\|, \quad \hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{u} <_{\text{lex}} \hat{e}_{m_i+d, m} + \bar{u} = \bar{u}'.$$

It follows that $\phi_{m_i+j} \phi^{\bar{u}} \in \Theta_{\bar{u}'}$ for $j \in \{1, \dots, d-1\}$. Likewise, for $\phi^{\bar{r}} \in \Theta_{\bar{u}}$ and $j \in \{1, \dots, d\}$, we have

$$\|\hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{r}\| = \|\hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{u}\| = \|\bar{u}'\|, \quad \hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{r} <_{\text{lex}} \hat{e}_{m_i+j, m} + \bar{u} \leq_{\text{lex}} \bar{u}',$$

so $\phi_{m_i+j}\Theta_{\bar{u}} \subseteq \Theta_{\bar{u}'}$. Finally, we have $\phi_{m_i+j}(\Phi^{(\|\bar{u}\|)}) \subseteq \Phi^{(\|\bar{u}+\hat{e}_{m_i+j,m}\|)} = \Phi^{(\|\bar{u}'\|)}$ for $j \in \{1, \dots, d\}$, so

$$f_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}') \leq \text{rk}(\phi_{m_i+d}\phi^{\bar{u}}(A) | \{\phi_{m_i+j}\phi^{\bar{u}}(A) : 0 < j < d\} \cup \{\phi_{m_i+j}(\Theta_{\bar{u}}(A)\Phi^{(\|\bar{u}\|)}(B)) : 0 < j \leq d\}). \quad \square$$

Proof of Theorem A. Let $G_{A|B}^\Phi$ be the generating function of the function $\bar{s} \mapsto \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))$. We have

$$G_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{Y}) = \sum_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k} \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))\bar{Y}^{\bar{s}} = \sum_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k} \sum_{\|\bar{u}\|=\bar{s}} f_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{u})\bar{Y}^{\bar{s}} = \sum_{\bar{u} \in \mathbb{N}^m} f_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{u})\bar{Y}^{\|\bar{u}\|}.$$

The rightmost sum above is just the generating function of $f_{A|B}^\Phi$ with Y_1 substituted for the first d_1 variables, Y_2 substituted for the next d_2 variables, and so on. By Proposition 1.4 and Lemma 2.1, we have that $G_{A|B}^\Phi$ is a rational function with denominator $(1 - Y_1)^{d_1} \dots (1 - Y_k)^{d_k}$. The theorem follows from Fact 1.2. \square

Remark 2.2. Proposition 1.4 and the proof of Theorem A above tell us that the numerator of $G_{A|B}^\Phi$ has degree at most $\|\bar{m}(f_{A|B}^\Phi)\|$. By Remark 1.3, we conclude that

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = P_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s})$$

for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\bar{s} \succ \|\bar{m}(f_{A|B}^\Phi)\|$.

Remark 2.3. Let $\Psi = (\psi_1, \dots, \psi_n)$ be another tuple of commuting maps $X \rightarrow X$, and let (Ψ_1, \dots, Ψ_k) be a partition of Ψ . Suppose that for each $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$, the tuple Φ_i is a subtuple of Ψ_i . One can prove the following generalization of Theorem A:

There is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ of degree at most $d_i - 1$ in each variable Y_i such that

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Psi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = P(\bar{s})$$

for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\min(\bar{s})$ sufficiently large.

To prove this generalization, replace the function $f_{A|B}^\Phi$ in the above proof with a function $f_{A|B}^{\Phi, \Psi}$, where

$$f_{A|B}^{\Phi, \Psi}(\bar{u}) := \text{rk}(\phi^{\bar{u}}(A) | \Theta_{\bar{u}}(A)\Psi^{(\|\bar{u}\|)}(B))$$

for $\bar{u} \in \mathbb{N}^m$. With the obvious changes, the proof of Lemma 2.1 shows that $f_{A|B}^{\Phi, \Psi}$ is decreasing.

2.2. The Kolchin polynomial. In this subsection, we prove Corollary A. We also investigate the dominant terms of the Kolchin polynomial. We assume for the remainder of the subsection that each part of the partition Φ_i is a quasi-triangular system.

Proof of Corollary A. We recall the augmented system Φ_* with partition $((\Phi_1)_*, (\Phi_2)_*, \dots, (\Phi_k)_*)$, where $(\Phi_i)_* = (\text{id}, \phi_{m_i+1}, \phi_{m_i+2}, \dots, \phi_{m_i+d_i})$ for each $i \in \{1, \dots, k\}$. Applying Theorem A with Φ_* in place of Φ , we get a polynomial $P_{A|B}^{\Phi_*}(\bar{Y}) \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ of degree at most d_i in each variable Y_i such that

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{\prec(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{\prec(\bar{s})}(B)) = \text{rk}(\Phi_*^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi_*^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = P_{A|B}^{\Phi_*}(\bar{s})$$

for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\min(\bar{s})$ sufficiently large. Take $Q_{A|B}^\Phi := P_{A|B}^{\Phi_*}$. \square

Now we turn to the dominant terms. Given a permutation σ of $\{1, \dots, k\}$, we define a total order \leq_σ on \mathbb{N}^k by setting

$$\bar{d} \leq_\sigma \bar{e} \iff (d_{\sigma(1)}, \dots, d_{\sigma(k)}) \leq_{\text{lex}} (e_{\sigma(1)}, \dots, e_{\sigma(k)}).$$

Given a polynomial

$$Q(\bar{Y}) = \sum_{\bar{e} \in \mathbb{N}^k} a_{\bar{e}} \bar{Y}^{\bar{e}} \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}],$$

we define the **dominant terms of Q** to be the terms $a_{\bar{d}} \bar{Y}^{\bar{d}}$ such that \bar{d} is the \leq_σ -maximal element of the set $\{\bar{e} : a_{\bar{e}} \neq 0\}$ for some permutation σ of $\{1, \dots, k\}$. One can show by induction on k that $a_{\bar{d}} \bar{Y}^{\bar{d}}$ is a dominant term for Q , as witnessed by the permutation σ , if and only if

$$\lim_{s_{\sigma(1)} \rightarrow \infty} \left(\lim_{s_{\sigma(2)} \rightarrow \infty} \left(\dots \lim_{s_{\sigma(k)} \rightarrow \infty} \left(\frac{Q(\bar{s})}{a_{\bar{d}} s_1^{d_1} \dots s_k^{d_k}} \right) \dots \right) \right) = 1. \quad (2.1)$$

In the case that $B = \Theta(B)$, the dominant terms of $Q_{A|B}^\Phi$ only depend on $\text{cl}(\Theta(A)B)$:

Proposition 2.4. *Let A, A' be finite subsets of X , let $B \subseteq X$ with $\Theta(B) = B$, and suppose that $\text{cl}(\Theta(A)B) = \text{cl}(\Theta(A')B)$. Then $Q_{A|B}^\Phi$ and $Q_{A'|B}^\Phi$ have the same dominant terms.*

Proof. Take \bar{s}_0 with

$$A' \subseteq \text{cl}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0)}(A)B), \quad A \subseteq \text{cl}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0)}(A')B).$$

Since each Φ_i is quasi-triangular, a routine induction on $|\bar{s}|$ gives

$$\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A') \subseteq \text{cl}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0+\bar{s})}(A)B), \quad \Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A) \subseteq \text{cl}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0+\bar{s})}(A')B),$$

for all $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$. It follows that

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A')|B) \leq \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0+\bar{s})}(A)|B), \quad \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A)|B) \leq \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0+\bar{s})}(A')|B)$$

for each \bar{s} . Taking $\min(\bar{s})$ to be sufficiently large, we get

$$Q_{A'|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}) \leq Q_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}_0 + \bar{s}), \quad Q_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}) \leq Q_{A'|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}_0 + \bar{s}).$$

The proposition follows easily, using that the limits (2.1) agree for $Q_{A|B}^\Phi$ and $Q_{A'|B}^\Phi$. \square

3. THE Φ -CLOSURE AND Φ_* -CLOSURE OPERATORS

As in the previous section, we fix subsets $A, B \subseteq X$ with A finite. Recall that the Φ -closure operator is given by

$$a \in \text{cl}^\Phi(B) \iff \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}| \text{ for some } \bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k.$$

The Φ_* -closure operator is defined identically, but with Φ_* in place of Φ , so

$$a \in \text{cl}^{\Phi_*}(B) \iff \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}| \text{ for some } \bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k.$$

In this section, we prove Theorem B. We also examine whether the rank associated to these operators depends on our choice of partition, and we discuss an extension of the Φ_* -closure operator to more general monoid actions by matroid endomorphisms. In order to prove Theorem B, we need the following lemma.

Lemma 3.1. *Suppose that each Φ_i is a triangular system. Then for $a \in X$, we have*

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } a \in \text{cl}^\Phi(B) \\ 1 & \text{if } a \notin \text{cl}^\Phi(B). \end{cases}$$

Proof. If $a \notin \text{cl}^\Phi(B)$, then $\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) = |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|$ for all $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, so

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|} = 1.$$

Suppose a belongs to $\text{cl}^\Phi(B)$, as witnessed by $\bar{s}_0 \in \mathbb{N}^k$. Then we have

$$\sum_{\|\bar{u}\|=\bar{s}_0} f_{a|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0)}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0)}(B)) < |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}_0)}|.$$

It follows that $f_{a|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}_0) = 0$ for some $\bar{u}_0 \in \mathbb{N}^m$ with $\|\bar{u}_0\| = \bar{s}_0$. By Lemma 2.1, we have $f_{a|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}) = 0$ whenever $\bar{u} \succ \bar{u}_0$. Let $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\bar{s} \succ \bar{s}_0$. Then

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) = \sum_{\|\bar{u}\|=\bar{s}} f_{a|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}) = \sum_{\substack{\|\bar{u}\|=\bar{s} \\ \bar{u} \neq \bar{u}_0}} f_{a|B}^\Phi(\bar{u}) \leq |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}| - |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}-\bar{s}_0)}|.$$

Since $\frac{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s}-\bar{s}_0)}|}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|}$ approaches 1 as $\min(\bar{s})$ grows, we have

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|} = 0. \quad \square$$

Proof of Theorem B. Let us first assume that each Φ_i is a triangular system. We need to show that (X, \mathcal{C}^Φ) is a finitary matroid. Monotonicity and finite character are both clear. For idempotence, let $a \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(\mathcal{C}^\Phi(B))$ and, using finite character, take elements $b_1, \dots, b_n \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(B)$ with $a \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(b_1, \dots, b_n)$. We have

$$\begin{aligned} \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) &\leq \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_1, \dots, b_n)) + \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_1, \dots, b_n)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) \\ &\leq \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_1, \dots, b_n)) + \sum_{i=1}^n \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_i)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)). \end{aligned}$$

It follows that

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|} \leq \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_1, \dots, b_n)) + \sum_{i=1}^n \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b_i)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|}.$$

We conclude by Lemma 3.1 that $a \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(B)$. Finally, for exchange, suppose that $a \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(Bb) \setminus \mathcal{C}^\Phi(B)$. Since \mathcal{C}^Φ has finite character, we may assume that B is finite. Idempotence tells us that $b \notin \mathcal{C}^\Phi(B)$, so

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = |\Phi^{(\bar{s})}| = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))$$

for all \bar{s} . It follows that

$$\begin{aligned} \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Ba)) &= \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Bab)) - \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Ba)) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Bab)) - \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) - \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) \\ &= \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Bab)) - \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(b)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) - \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Bb)). \end{aligned}$$

Since $a \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(Bb)$, we see that $b \in \mathcal{C}^\Phi(Ba)$.

Now we turn to the properties of the rank function rk^Φ associated to the matroid (X, \mathcal{C}^Φ) . Let us show that

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|} = \text{rk}^\Phi(A|B). \quad (3.1)$$

We prove this by induction on $|A|$, with the case $A = \emptyset$ holding trivially. Suppose that this holds for a given A , and let $a \in X \setminus A$. We have

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(Aa)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|} = \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) + \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(AB))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|},$$

and our induction hypothesis and Lemma 3.1 gives

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)) + \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(AB))}{|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|} = \text{rk}^\Phi(A|B) + \text{rk}^\Phi(a|AB) = \text{rk}^\Phi(Aa|B).$$

Finally, we will show that

$$P_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{Y}) = \frac{\text{rk}^\Phi(A|B)}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)!} Y_1^{d_1 - 1} \cdots Y_k^{d_k - 1} + \text{lower degree terms}.$$

As $\min(\bar{s})$ grows, we have

$$P_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B)), \quad |\Phi^{(\bar{s})}| = \frac{s_1^{d_1 - 1} \cdots s_k^{d_k - 1}}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)!} + o(s_1^{d_1 - 1} \cdots s_k^{d_k - 1}),$$

so the leading coefficient of $P_{A|B}^\Phi$ is equal to the limit

$$\lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{P_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s})}{s_1^{d_1 - 1} \cdots s_k^{d_k - 1}} = \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)|\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(B))}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)! |\Phi^{(\bar{s})}|} = \frac{\text{rk}^\Phi(A|B)}{(d_1 - 1)! \cdots (d_k - 1)!},$$

where the last equality follows from (3.1).

The second part of Theorem B, involving quasi-triangular systems and the Φ_* -closure, follows from the first part with Φ_* in place of Φ . \square

Remark 3.2. By Theorem B and Remark 1.3, the Φ -rank $\text{rk}^\Phi(A|B)$ coincides with the numerator of $G_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{Y})$, evaluated at the tuple $(1, \dots, 1)$.

3.1. Dependence on our choice of partition. The Φ -closure operator is dependent on our partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) , as the following example illustrates:

Example 3.3. let (X, cl) be the set \mathbb{Z} with the trivial closure operator, so the rank of any subset of \mathbb{Z} is its cardinality. Let $a \in \mathbb{Z}$, let ϕ_1 be the map $x \mapsto x + 1$, let $\phi_2 = \phi_1$, and let $\Phi = (\phi_1, \phi_2)$. First, suppose Φ is partitioned trivially (so $k = 1$). Then $\Phi^{(t)}(a) = \{a + t\}$ for any $t \in \mathbb{N}$, so $\text{rk}(\Phi^{(t)}(a)) = 1 < |\Phi^{(t)}|$ for $t > 0$ and $\text{rk}^\Phi(a) = 0$. Now, suppose Φ is given the partition (Φ_1, Φ_2) , where $\Phi_1 = (\phi_1)$ and $\Phi_2 = (\phi_2)$. Then $\Phi^{(s_1, s_2)}(a) = \{a + s_1 + s_2\}$ for $s_1, s_2 \in \mathbb{N}$, so $\text{rk}(\Phi^{(s_1, s_2)}(a)) = 1 = |\Phi^{(s_1, s_2)}|$ and $\text{rk}^\Phi(a) = 1$.

On the other hand, the Φ_* -closure operator is more robust, as it does not depend on our partition:

Proposition 3.4. For $a \in X$, we have $a \in \text{cl}^{\Phi_*}(B)$ if and only if $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta}$ is not cl -independent over $\Theta(B)$.

Proof. Clearly, if $a \in \text{cl}^{\Phi_*}(B)$, then $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta}$ is not cl -independent over $\Theta(B)$. Suppose that $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta}$ is not cl -independent over $\Theta(B)$, and take a finite subset $\Theta_0 \subseteq \Theta$ with $\text{rk}(\Theta_0(a)|\Theta(B)) < |\Theta_0|$. Since cl has finite character, we can take $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$ with $\Theta_0 \subseteq \Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}$ such that $\text{rk}(\Theta_0(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Theta_0|$. Set $\Theta_1 := \Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})} \setminus \Theta_0$, so

$$\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) \leq \text{rk}(\Theta_0(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) + \text{rk}(\Theta_1(a)|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(B)) < |\Theta_0| + |\Theta_1| = |\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|.$$

We conclude that $a \in \text{cl}^{\Phi_*}(B)$. \square

Corollary 3.5. Suppose that each Φ_i is a quasi-triangular system. Then $\text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B)$ is the maximal size of a subset $A_0 \subseteq \text{cl}(\Theta(AB))$ such that $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta, a \in A_0}$ is cl -independent over $\Theta(B)$.

Proof. Proposition 3.4 tells us that $\text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B)$ is the maximal size of a subset $A_0 \subseteq A$ such that $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta, a \in A_0}$ is cl -independent over B . Let A' be a finite subset of $\text{cl}(\Theta(AB))$ such that $(\theta a)_{\theta \in \Theta, a \in A'}$ is cl -independent over B . We will show that $|A'| \leq \text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B)$. Again using Proposition 3.4, we may assume that $B = \Theta(B)$. Arguing as in Proposition 2.4, we find $\bar{s}_0 \in \mathbb{N}^k$ such that $Q_{A'|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}) \leq Q_{A|B}^\Phi(\bar{s}_0 + \bar{s})$ for all \bar{s} with $\min(\bar{s})$ sufficiently large. Then $\text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A'|B) \leq \text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A|B)$ by Theorem B, and it remains to note that $|A'| = \text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A'|B)$. \square

3.2. Monoid actions by endomorphisms. Suppose that each ϕ_i is an endomorphism, that is, suppose

$$a \in \text{cl}(B) \implies \phi_i a \in \text{cl}(\phi_i B)$$

for each i . Then $\phi^{\bar{r}}$ is an endomorphism for each $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m$, so $(\bar{r}, a) \mapsto \phi^{\bar{r}}(a)$ gives us a monoid action $\mathbb{N}^m \curvearrowright (X, \text{cl})$ by endomorphisms. In this case, each Φ_i is a triangular system, so (X, cl^{Φ_*}) is also a finitary matroid and

$$\text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A) = \lim_{\min(\bar{s}) \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{rk}(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(A))}{|\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}|}$$

by Theorem B. Thus, we can view $\text{rk}^{\Phi_*}(A)$ as an average of $\text{rk}(A)$ over the action $\mathbb{N}^m \curvearrowright (X, \text{cl})$, where this averaging is taken with respect to the net $(\{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m : \|\bar{r}\| \preceq \bar{s}\})_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k}$ of subsets of \mathbb{N}^m .

While our result on polynomial growth seems limited to the context of \mathbb{N}^m acting on (X, cl) , one can make sense of this ‘‘averaging’’ for the right action of any cancellative left-amenable monoid, using the main theorem from [3]. Let M be a cancellative left-amenable semigroup and let $\alpha: X \times M \rightarrow X$ be a right action $(X, \text{cl}) \curvearrowright M$ by endomorphisms. Given finite subsets $A \subseteq X$ and $S \subseteq M$, we put $r_A(S) := \text{rk}(\alpha(A, S))$, where $\alpha(A, S) = \bigcup_{(a, s) \in A \times S} \alpha(a, s)$. It is routine to check that r_A , as a map from finite subsets of M to \mathbb{N} , satisfies the three conditions in the statement of [3, Theorem 1.1]; for the second condition, one needs to use that s is a matroid endomorphism and that our action is on the *right*. It follows that there is a number $\text{rk}^M(A)$, depending only on M and A , such that

$$\lim_i \frac{\text{rk}(\alpha(A, F_i))}{|F_i|} = \lim_i \frac{r_A(F_i)}{|F_i|} = \text{rk}^M(A)$$

for any left-Følner net $(F_i)_{i \in I}$ of M (such nets always exist). Then $\text{rk}^M(A)$ serves as this ‘‘averaged’’ rank.

4. APPLICATIONS I: SOME CLASSICAL RESULTS

In this section, we give a handful of applications in the case that each ϕ_i is an endomorphism of (X, cl) .

4.1. Polynomial growth of sumsets. Let G be a commutative semigroup. In [10], Khovanskii showed that for finite subsets $A, B \subseteq G$, the size of the sumset $A + tB$ is given by a polynomial in t for t sufficiently large (here, $A + tB$ is the set of all elements $a + b_1 + \cdots + b_t$, where $a \in A$ and each $b_i \in B$). Moreover, the degree of this polynomial is less than the size of B . Using Theorem A, we can recover a generalization of Khovanskii's theorem, originally proven by Nathanson [22].

Corollary 4.1 (Nathanson). *Let A, B_1, \dots, B_k be finite subsets of G . Then there is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$|A + s_1 B_1 + \cdots + s_k B_k| = P(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large. Moreover, the degree of P in each variable Y_i is less than $|B_i|$.

Proof. Let (X, cl) be the underlying set of the semigroup G with the trivial closure operator, so the rank of any subset of G is its cardinality. Let b_1, \dots, b_{m_1} be an enumeration of B_1 , let $b_{m_1+1}, \dots, b_{m_2}$ be an enumeration of B_2 , and so on. For each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, let $\phi_i: G \rightarrow G$ be the map $x \mapsto x + b_i$, so each ϕ_i is an endomorphism. Then

$$\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A) = A + s_1 B_1 + \cdots + s_k B_k$$

for each $\bar{s} = (s_1, \dots, s_k) \in \mathbb{N}^k$, and it remains to invoke Theorem A. \square

The set B in Theorem A makes no appearance in the argument above. This suggests a slight improvement:

Corollary 4.2. *Let A, B_1, \dots, B_k be finite subsets of G and let B be an arbitrary subset of G . Then there is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$|(A + s_1 B_1 + \cdots + s_k B_k) \setminus (B + s_1 B_1 + \cdots + s_k B_k)| = P(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.

Remark 4.3. Khovanskii and Nathanson proved their theorems by constructing appropriate graded modules and using the existence of the Hilbert polynomial (or a multivariate variant thereof). Nathanson later gave a more elementary proof of Corollary 4.1 with Ruzsa [23].

4.2. Counting elements in an ideal. In this next application, we make use of the fact that if ϕ is an endomorphism of (X, cl) and $\phi(C) \subseteq C$ for some $C \subseteq X$, then ϕ is also an endomorphism of (X, cl_C) .

Corollary 4.4. *Let I be an ideal of \mathbb{N}^m , that is, a \preceq -downward closed subset of \mathbb{N}^m . For each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, let $H_I(\bar{s})$ be the number of elements $\bar{r} \in I$ with $\|\bar{r}\| = \bar{s}$. Then there is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$H_I(\bar{s}) = P(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.

Proof. Let $C := \mathbb{N}^m \setminus I$, let (X, cl) be the set \mathbb{N}^m with the trivial closure operator, and let (X, cl_C) be the localization of (X, cl) at C . Then $\text{rk}_C(Y) = |Y \setminus C| = |Y \cap I|$ for any subset $Y \subseteq \mathbb{N}^m$. For each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, let $\phi_i: \mathbb{N}^m \rightarrow \mathbb{N}^m$ be the map $\bar{r} \mapsto \bar{r} + \hat{e}_{i,m}$, so

$$\text{rk}_C(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(\bar{0}_m)) = |\{\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m : \|\bar{r}\| = \bar{s}\} \cap I| = H_I(\bar{s}).$$

Since I is \preceq -downward closed, we have $\phi_i(C) \subseteq C$ for each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$. Thus, ϕ_1, \dots, ϕ_m are commuting endomorphisms of (X, cl_C) , and the corollary follows from Theorem A. \square

The following variant of Corollary 4.5 was established by Kondratieva, Levin, Mikhalev, and Pankratiev [14], with the $k = 1$ case first proven by Kolchin [13, Lemma 0.16]. This variant can be deduced in exactly the same way as Corollary 4.4; just use Corollary A in place of Theorem A:

Corollary 4.5 (Theorem 2.2.5 in [14]). *Let I be an ideal of \mathbb{N}^m , and for each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, let $H_I^*(\bar{s})$ be the number of elements $\bar{r} \in I$ with $\|\bar{r}\| \preceq \bar{s}$. Then there is a polynomial $Q \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$H_I^*(\bar{s}) = Q(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.

4.3. The Hilbert polynomial. Let K be a field and let $R := K[x_1, \dots, x_m]$, where x_1, \dots, x_m are indeterminants. Using our partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) , we associate to R an \mathbb{N}^k -grading $R = \bigoplus_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k} R_{\bar{s}}$ as follows: the graded part $R_{\bar{s}}$ is the K -vector space generated by monomials $x_1^{r_1} \cdots x_m^{r_m}$ with $\|\bar{r}\| = \bar{s}$. Let $M = \bigoplus_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{Z}^k} M_{\bar{s}}$ be a finitely generated graded R -module. Then each graded piece $M_{\bar{s}}$ is a finite-dimensional K -vector space. The **Hilbert function** of M , denoted $H_M: \mathbb{Z}^k \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$, is given by $H_M(\bar{s}) := \dim_K(M_{\bar{s}})$. The following result is classical:

Corollary 4.6. *There is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$H_M(\bar{s}) = P(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.

Proof. Let (X, cl) be the underlying set of our R -module M with the K -linear closure operator (that is, the closure of any subset of M is its K -linear span). For each $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$, let $\phi_i: M \rightarrow M$ be the map $a \mapsto x_i \cdot a$. Since M is finitely generated, we can find an index \bar{s}_0 and a finite set $A \subseteq M_{\bar{s}_0}$ such that the R -submodule $\bigoplus_{\bar{s} \succ \bar{s}_0} M_{\bar{s}}$ is generated by A . By reindexing, we may assume that $\bar{s}_0 = \bar{0}_k$. Then for each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, the graded part $M_{\bar{s}}$ is generated as a K -vector space by $\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)$, so

$$\dim_K(M_{\bar{s}}) = \text{rk}(M_{\bar{s}}) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)).$$

The corollary follows from Theorem A. □

4.4. Tropical ideals. Let $\bar{\mathbb{R}}$ be the tropical semiring $\mathbb{R} \cup \{\infty\}$ with operations $a \oplus b := \min(a, b)$ and $a \odot b = a + b$. Let $\bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}] = \bar{\mathbb{R}}[x_1, \dots, x_m]$ consist of the tropical polynomials $f(\bar{x}) = \bigoplus_{\bar{r}} f_{\bar{r}} \odot \bar{x}^{\bar{r}}$. Then $\bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]$ is a tropical semiring in its own right, where \oplus and \odot are extended to $\bar{\mathbb{R}}$ in the natural way. We associate to each tropical polynomial f the subset of monomials $\text{supp}(f) := \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} : f_{\bar{r}} \neq \infty\}$.

An **ideal** is a subset $I \subseteq \bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]$ which is closed under sums and multiplication by elements of $\bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]$. Following Maclagan and Rincón [20], we say that an ideal I is **tropical** if it satisfies the ‘monomial elimination axiom’: for any $f, g \in I$ and any $\bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m$ for which $f_{\bar{r}} = g_{\bar{r}} \neq \infty$, there is $h \in I$ such that $h_{\bar{r}} = \infty$ and $h_{\bar{u}} \geq f_{\bar{u}} \oplus g_{\bar{u}}$ for all $\bar{u} \in \mathbb{N}^m$, with equality whenever $f_{\bar{u}} \neq g_{\bar{u}}$. Using our partition (Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k) , we associate to $\bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]$ an \mathbb{N}^k -grading, where the graded part $\bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]_{\bar{s}}$ consists of all homogeneous tropical polynomials of degree \bar{s} . We call an ideal I **homogeneous** if it is homogeneous with respect to this grading.

Let I be a homogeneous tropical ideal. For $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, let $I_{\bar{s}} = I \cap \bar{\mathbb{R}}[\bar{x}]_{\bar{s}}$. Let $\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}} := \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} : \|\bar{r}\| = \bar{s}\}$ be the set of monomials of degree \bar{s} , and define the closure operator $\text{cl}_I: \mathcal{P}(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}})$ as follows: for $A \subseteq \text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$, let $\text{cl}_I(A)$ consist all elements of A along with all $\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$ such that $A_0 \cup \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}\} = \text{supp}(f)$ for some $A_0 \subseteq A$ and some $f \in I_{\bar{s}}$.

Lemma 4.7. *$(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}, \text{cl}_I)$ is a finite matroid.*

Proof. Monotonicity is clear. For idempotence, let $\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{cl}_I(\text{cl}_I(A))$, and take $f \in I_{\bar{s}}$ with $\text{supp}(f) = B \cup \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}\}$ for some $B \subseteq \text{cl}_I(A)$. We may assume that $|B \setminus A|$ is minimal, and we want to show that $|B \setminus A| = 0$. Suppose that this is not the case, let $\bar{x}^{\bar{u}} \in B \setminus A$, and take $g \in I_{\bar{s}}$ with $\text{supp}(g) = A_0 \cup \{\bar{x}^{\bar{u}}\}$ for some $A_0 \subseteq A$. By multiplying g with an appropriate element of $\bar{\mathbb{R}}$, we may arrange that $g_{\bar{u}} = f_{\bar{u}}$. By the monomial elimination axiom, there is $h \in I_{\bar{s}}$ such that $\text{supp}(h) = B^* \cup \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}\}$ for some $B^* \subseteq (B \cup A_0) \setminus \{\bar{x}^{\bar{u}}\}$. But then $|B^* \setminus A| < |B \setminus A|$, contradicting our choice of B . Finally, for exchange, let $\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}, \bar{x}^{\bar{u}} \in \text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$ and $A \subseteq \text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$ with $\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{cl}_I(\{\bar{x}^{\bar{u}}\} \cup A) \setminus \text{cl}_I(A)$. Take $f \in I_{\bar{s}}$ with $\text{supp}(f) = B \cup \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}\}$ for some $B \subseteq \{\bar{x}^{\bar{u}}\} \cup A$. If $B \subseteq A$, then we would have $\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{cl}_I(A)$, so B must contain $\bar{x}^{\bar{u}}$. Then $\bar{x}^{\bar{u}} \in \text{cl}_I(\{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}}\} \cup A)$, as witnessed by f . □

Corollary 4.8. *Let I be a homogeneous tropical ideal. There is a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$\text{rk}_I(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}) = P(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large, where rk_I is the rank associated to cl_I .

Proof. Let $\text{Mon} := \{\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} : \bar{r} \in \mathbb{N}^m\}$ be the collection of all monomials. We extend the closure operators on the sets $\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$ to a closure operator cl_I on Mon as follows:

$$\bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{cl}_I(A) \iff \bar{x}^{\bar{r}} \in \text{cl}_I(A \cap \text{Mon}_{\|\bar{r}\|}).$$

Then $(\text{Mon}, \text{cl}_I)$ is the disjoint union of the finite matroids $(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}, \text{cl}_I)$, so $(\text{Mon}, \text{cl}_I)$ is a finitary (infinite) matroid, as can be easily verified. It is also routine to check that the map $\bar{x}^{\bar{f}} \mapsto x_i \odot \bar{x}^{\bar{f}}$ is an endomorphism of $(\text{Mon}, \text{cl}_I)$. Note that

$$\text{rk}_I(\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}) = \text{rk}_I(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(\bar{x}^{\bar{0}_m})),$$

so the corollary follows from Theorem A. \square

Remark 4.9. Maclagan and Rincón established Corollary 4.8 in the case $k = 1$ [20]. In their definition of a tropical ideal, the underlying matroid is defined in terms of circuits (minimal dependent sets). The circuits are exactly the minimal nonempty elements of the set $\{\text{supp}(f) : f \in I_{\bar{s}}\}$, ordered by inclusion. In fact, Maclagan and Rincón equip the underlying sets $\text{Mon}_{\bar{s}}$ with the richer structure of a *valuative* matroid (though the Hilbert polynomial is defined in terms of the underlying classical matroid).

5. APPLICATIONS II: SIMPLICIAL COMPLEXES AND BETTI NUMBERS

Let \mathcal{K} be a simplicial complex. In this section, we consider commuting simplicial endomorphisms ϕ_1, \dots, ϕ_m of \mathcal{K} . We will use Theorem A to show that for a finite subcomplex $A \subseteq \mathcal{K}$, the Betti numbers $b_n(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A))$ are all eventually polynomial in \bar{s} .

Let $(C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet})$ be the chain complex associated to \mathcal{K} , so C_n is the free abelian group generated by the n -simplices in \mathcal{K} and $\partial_n : C_n \rightarrow C_{n-1}$ is the boundary map. For each n , we define two ranks on C_n as follows: given a finite subset $B \subseteq C_n$, we let $\text{rk}_n(B)$ be the rank of the group generated by B , and we let $\text{rk}_n^{\partial}(B)$ be the rank of the image of this group under ∂_n . Note that rk_0^{∂} is always zero.

Given a finite subcomplex A of \mathcal{K} , we have an associated chain subcomplex $(C_{\bullet}(A), \partial_{\bullet}) \subseteq (C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet})$. We write $\text{rk}_n(A)$ and $\text{rk}_n^{\partial}(A)$ in place of $\text{rk}_n(C_n(A))$ and $\text{rk}_n^{\partial}(C_n(A))$. Then $\text{rk}_n(A) - \text{rk}_n^{\partial}(A)$ is the rank of the kernel of $\partial_n : C_n(A) \rightarrow C_{n-1}(A)$, and $\text{rk}_{n+1}^{\partial}(A)$ is the rank of the image of $\partial_{n+1} : C_{n+1}(A) \rightarrow C_n(A)$. It follows that the n -th Betti number of A — that is, the rank of the n -th simplicial homology group $H_n(A)$ — is exactly $\text{rk}_n(A) - \text{rk}_n^{\partial}(A) - \text{rk}_{n+1}^{\partial}(A)$. It is routine to verify the following:

Lemma 5.1. *For each n , the functions rk_n and rk_n^{∂} both are rank functions of finitary matroids on C_n . That is, if we define the closure operators cl_n and cl_n^{∂} on C_n by putting*

$$\begin{aligned} a \in \text{cl}_n(B) &: \iff \text{rk}_n(B_0 \cup \{a\}) = \text{rk}_n(B_0) \text{ for some finite } B_0 \subseteq B \\ a \in \text{cl}_n^{\partial}(B) &: \iff \text{rk}_n^{\partial}(B_0 \cup \{a\}) = \text{rk}_n^{\partial}(B_0) \text{ for some finite } B_0 \subseteq B, \end{aligned}$$

then (C_n, cl_n) is a finitary matroid with corresponding rank function rk_n , and likewise for $(C_n, \text{cl}_n^{\partial})$.

Let $V(\mathcal{K})$ denote the vertex set of \mathcal{K} (that is, the set of zero-dimensional simplices). A **simplicial endomorphism** of \mathcal{K} is a map $f : V(\mathcal{K}) \rightarrow V(\mathcal{K})$ that maps every simplex in \mathcal{K} to a (possibly lower-dimensional) simplex in \mathcal{K} . Explicitly, if $\sigma \in \mathcal{K}$ is an n -simplex with vertex set $\{v_0, \dots, v_n\} \subseteq V(\mathcal{K})$, then we require that $\{f(v_0), \dots, f(v_n)\}$ be the vertex set of a simplex in \mathcal{K} , which we denote $f(\sigma)$. If A is a subcomplex of \mathcal{K} , then $f(A) := \{f(\sigma) : \sigma \in A\}$ is also subcomplex of \mathcal{K} . Any simplicial endomorphism of \mathcal{K} induces a chain endomorphism $f_{\bullet} : (C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet}) \rightarrow (C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet})$. Thus, we have the following:

Lemma 5.2. *Let f be a simplicial endomorphism of \mathcal{K} , and let $f_{\bullet} : (C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet}) \rightarrow (C_{\bullet}, \partial_{\bullet})$ be the chain endomorphism induced by f . Then f_n is an endomorphism of the finitary matroids (C_n, cl_n) and $(C_n, \text{cl}_n^{\partial})$ for each n .*

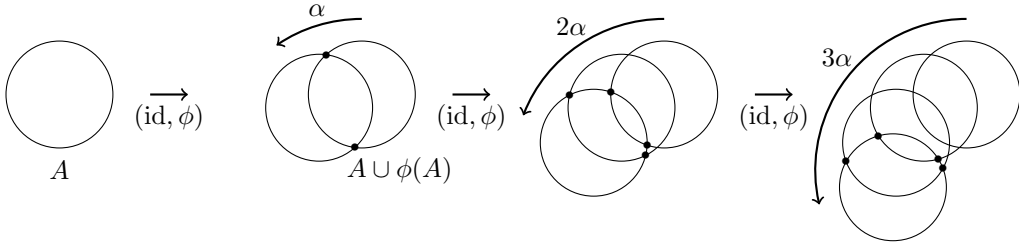
We can now state our result on the growth of Betti numbers:

Corollary 5.3. *Let A be a finite subcomplex of \mathcal{K} and suppose that each ϕ_i is a simplicial endomorphism of \mathcal{K} . Then for each n , the n -th Betti number $b_n(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A))$ is eventually polynomial in \bar{s} .*

Proof. For a fixed n , we have $b_n(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)) = \text{rk}_n(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)) - \text{rk}_n^{\partial}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A)) - \text{rk}_{n+1}^{\partial}(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A))$. These three ranks are eventually polynomial in \bar{s} by Theorem A, so $b_n(\Phi^{(\bar{s})}(A))$ is as well. \square

5.1. Topological dynamical systems. Let B be a topological space, let ϕ_1, \dots, ϕ_m be commuting continuous maps $B \rightarrow B$, and let A be a compact subspace of B . We say that the topological dynamical system $(B, A; \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is **triangulable** if there is a simplicial complex \mathcal{K} with underlying space $|\mathcal{K}|$, a finite subcomplex $\mathcal{K}_0 \subseteq \mathcal{K}$, simplicial maps $f_1, \dots, f_m: \mathcal{K} \rightarrow \mathcal{K}$, and a homeomorphism $\tau: |\mathcal{K}| \rightarrow B$ such that $\tau(|\mathcal{K}_0|) = A$ and such that $\tau \circ f_i = \phi_i \circ \tau$ for each i . If $(B, A; \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is triangulable, then n -th Betti number $b_n(\Phi^{\bar{s}}(A))$ is eventually polynomial in \bar{s} by Corollary 5.3.

This leads to the question: if $(B, A; \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is a non-triangulable topological dynamical system, can the Betti numbers $b_n(\Phi^{\bar{s}}(A))$ fail to grow eventually polynomially? The following example shows that even for relatively nice topological dynamical systems, this can fail. Let $A \subseteq \mathbb{R}^2$ be the circle of radius $\sqrt{2}/2$, centered at the point $(0, 1)$. Take $\alpha \in (0, \pi/2)$ such that α/π is irrational, and let $\phi: \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^2$ be counterclockwise rotation by α about the origin. We consider the (clearly non-triangulable) system $(\mathbb{R}^2, A; \text{id}, \phi)$, pictured below, where id is the identity map.



For each t , put $A_t := A \cup \dots \cup \phi^t(A)$. We apply Mayer-Vietoris to $A_{t+1} = A_t \cup \phi^{t+1}(A)$, using that $H_1(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A)) = 0$, to get an exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow H_1(A_t) \oplus H_1(A) \rightarrow H_1(A_{t+1}) \rightarrow H_0(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A)) \rightarrow H_0(A_t) \oplus H_0(A) \rightarrow H_0(A_{t+1}) \rightarrow 0.$$

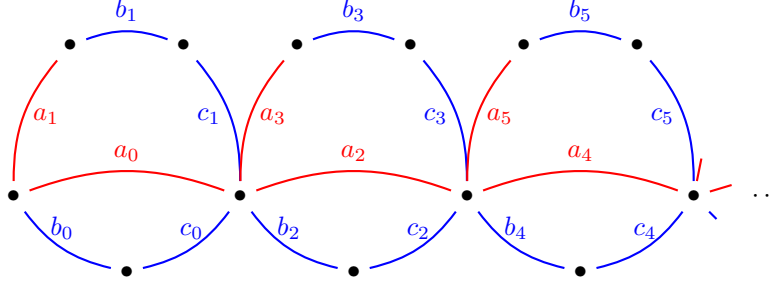
With the exception of $H_1(A_{t+1})$, $H_1(A_t)$, and $H_0(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A))$, all the homology groups above have rank 1, so we compute that

$$b_1(A_{t+1}) - b_1(A_t) = b_0(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A)). \quad (5.1)$$

The intersection $A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A)$ is indicated by dots in the picture above. To determine the number of connected components in this intersection (that is, zeroth Betti number), let us first compute the intersection of two circles $\phi^i(A)$ and $\phi^j(A)$. If the angle between these two circles is less than $\pi/2$ in absolute value, then $\phi^i(A)$ and $\phi^j(A)$ intersect in exactly two points. If the angle is larger than $\pi/2$, then $\phi^i(A)$ and $\phi^j(A)$ are disjoint. The case that $\phi^i(A)$ and $\phi^j(A)$ intersect in exactly one point never occurs, as α/π is irrational. It follows that for t large enough, the Betti number $b_0(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A))$ is an even number which is approximately equal to $t + 1$. In particular $b_0(A_t \cap \phi^{t+1}(A))$ is *not* eventually polynomial in t . Using (5.1), we see that $b_1(A_t)$ can not be eventually polynomial in t either.

5.2. The graphic matroid. Let \mathcal{G} be an undirected graph with vertex set $V(\mathcal{G})$ and edge set $E(\mathcal{G})$. Then \mathcal{G} is a simplicial complex with only zero and one-dimensional simplices. The rank rk_0 corresponds to the cardinality of a set of vertices, the rank rk_1 gives the cardinality of a set of edges, and rk_1^∂ is the rank with respect to the graphic matroid on $E(\mathcal{G})$. It follows from Corollary 5.3 that for a finite subgraph $A \subseteq \mathcal{G}$ and commuting graph endomorphisms ϕ_1, \dots, ϕ_m of \mathcal{G} , the first two Betti numbers $b_0(\Phi^{\bar{s}}(A))$ and $b_1(\Phi^{\bar{s}}(A))$ are eventually polynomial in \bar{s} .

Using the graphic matroid, we can construct an example which shows that our assumption in Theorem A that each Φ_i is triangular is, in some sense, necessary. Consider the following graph \mathcal{G} :



Let ϕ be the map sending a_i to a_{i+1} , sending b_i to b_{i+1} , and sending c_i to c_{i+1} for each i . Let cl be the closure operator associated to the graphic matroid on $E(\mathcal{G})$ (explicitly, an edge a is in the closure of a set of edges B if there are $b_1, \dots, b_n \in B$ which connect the endpoints of a), and let rk be the corresponding rank function. One can check that $\phi a \in \text{cl}(B\phi B)$ whenever $a \in \text{cl}(B)$, so ϕ is a quasi-endomorphism of the graphic matroid $E(\mathcal{G})$. We have

$$\text{rk}(\phi^t(a_0, b_0, c_0)) = \text{rk}(a_t, b_t, c_t) = \begin{cases} 2 & \text{if } t \text{ is even} \\ 3 & \text{if } t \text{ is odd,} \end{cases}$$

so the conclusion of Theorem A fails for the single map ϕ . Of course, since ϕ is a quasi-endomorphism, Corollary A tells us that $\text{rk}(\{a_i, b_i, c_i : i \leq t\})$ is eventually polynomial in t , as can easily be verified.

6. APPLICATIONS III: DIFFERENCE-DIFFERENTIAL FIELDS

In this final section, we examine the case that each ϕ_i is a quasi-endomorphism of (X, cl) . In this case, Φ_1, \dots, Φ_k are all quasi-triangular systems. Our main examples are endomorphisms of and derivations on (expansions of) fields. Recall that a **derivation** on a field K is a map $\delta : K \rightarrow K$ which satisfies the identities

$$\delta(a + b) = \delta a + \delta b, \quad \delta(ab) = a\delta b + b\delta a$$

for all $a, b \in K$.

6.1. Kolchin polynomials for difference-differential fields. Let K be a field of characteristic zero. We let acl be algebraic closure in K , so for $A \subseteq K$, the set $\text{acl}(A)$ consists of all $a \in K$ which are algebraic over the field $\mathbb{Q}(A)$. Then (K, acl) is a finitary matroid, and the rank of $A \subseteq K$ with respect to acl is equal to $\text{trdeg}_{\mathbb{Q}} \mathbb{Q}(A)$, the transcendence degree of $\mathbb{Q}(A)$ over \mathbb{Q} . Clearly, any field endomorphism $\sigma : K \rightarrow K$ is an endomorphism of (K, acl) .

Lemma 6.1. *Let δ be a derivation on K . Then δ is a quasi-endomorphism of (K, acl) .*

Proof. Let $a \in K$ and $B \subseteq K$ with $a \in \text{acl}(B)$. Then there is a tuple $\bar{b} = (b_1, \dots, b_n)$ from B and a polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{X}, Y]$ such that $P(\bar{b}, a) = 0$ but $\frac{\partial P}{\partial Y}(\bar{b}, a) \neq 0$. We have

$$\delta P(\bar{b}, a) = \frac{\partial P}{\partial X_1}(\bar{b}, a)\delta b_1 + \dots + \frac{\partial P}{\partial X_n}(\bar{b}, a)\delta b_n + \frac{\partial P}{\partial Y}(\bar{b}, a)\delta a.$$

Let $\delta \bar{b}$ denote the tuple $(\delta b_1, \dots, \delta b_n)$, and let $Q \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{b}, \delta \bar{b}, a][Y]$ be the polynomial

$$Q(Y) := \frac{\partial P}{\partial X_1}(\bar{b}, a)\delta b_1 + \dots + \frac{\partial P}{\partial X_n}(\bar{b}, a)\delta b_n + \frac{\partial P}{\partial Y}(\bar{b}, a)Y.$$

Then $Q(\delta a) = \delta P(\bar{b}, a) = 0$, but $\frac{\partial Q}{\partial Y}(\delta a) = \frac{\partial P}{\partial Y}(\bar{b}, a) \neq 0$, so δa is algebraic over $(\bar{b}, \delta \bar{b}, a)$. Since $a \in \text{acl}(\bar{b})$, this gives $\delta a \in \text{acl}(B\delta B)$, as desired. \square

Suppose now that $\Phi = (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is a collection of commuting maps $K \rightarrow K$, each of which is either a derivation or a field endomorphism (hence, a quasi-endomorphism of (K, acl) by Lemma 6.1). Then $(K, \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is called a **difference-differential field** (or a **d-field** for short). Let F be a d-subfield of K , that is, a subfield of K which is closed under each ϕ_i . Then each ϕ_i is a quasi-endomorphism of the localization (K, acl_F) of (K, acl) , and the rank of a subset $A \subseteq K$ with respect to acl_F coincides with $\text{trdeg}_F F(A)$. Applying Corollary A, Proposition 2.4, and Corollary 3.5 to (K, acl_F) , we get the following:

Corollary 6.2. *Let \bar{a} be a tuple from K . Then there is a polynomial $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi} \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$\text{trdeg}_F F(\Phi^{\preccurlyeq(\bar{s})}(\bar{a})) = Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large. Moreover:

- (i) *The dominant terms of $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ only depend on the algebraic closure of the d-field extension $F(\Theta(\bar{a}))$, that is, if $\bar{b} \in K$ and if $F(\Theta(\bar{a}))$ and $F(\Theta(\bar{b}))$ have the same algebraic closure in K , then $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ and $Q_{\bar{b}}^{\Phi}$ have the same dominant terms.*
- (ii) *The coefficient of $\bar{Y}^{\bar{d}}$ in $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ times $d_1! \cdots d_k!$ is equal to the maximal size of a subset $B \subseteq \text{acl}_F(\Theta(\bar{a}))$ such that the tuple $(\theta b)_{\theta \in \Theta, b \in B}$ is algebraically independent over F .*

The case when $k = 1$ and each ϕ_i is a derivation was established by Kolchin [12]. The multivariate differential case (each ϕ_i is a derivation but k is arbitrary) was shown by Levin [16]. The case where each ϕ_i is an endomorphism is also due to Levin [17], as is the most general case to date: where each ϕ_i may be either a derivation or an endomorphism, but each part of the partition Φ_i must consist of only derivations or endomorphisms; see [18]. Our Corollary 6.2 is slightly more general than the result in [18], since the parts of the partition can consist of both derivations and endomorphisms.

6.2. Modules over a difference-differential field. Let (K, Φ) be a difference-differential field, and let $K[\Phi]$ denote the ring of linear difference-differential operators over K , so $K[\Phi]$ consists of elements $\sum_{\bar{r}} \lambda_{\bar{r}} \phi^{\bar{r}}$. The multiplication on $K[\Phi]$ satisfies the identity

$$\phi_i \lambda = \begin{cases} \phi_i(\lambda) \phi_i & \text{if } \phi_i \text{ is an endomorphism of } K \\ \phi_i(\lambda) + \lambda \phi_i & \text{if } \phi_i \text{ is a derivation on } K, \end{cases}$$

for $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$ and $\lambda \in K$. Let V be a left $K[\Phi]$ -module. For each i and each $v \in V$, we let $\phi_i(v) := \phi_i \cdot v$, so each ϕ_i is a map $V \rightarrow V$.

Lemma 6.3. *Let cl denote the K -linear closure operator on V and let $i \in \{1, \dots, m\}$. If ϕ_i is an endomorphism of K , then the map $v \mapsto \phi_i(v)$ is an endomorphism of (V, cl) . If ϕ_i is a derivation on K , then the map $v \mapsto \phi_i(v)$ is a quasi-endomorphism of (V, cl) .*

Proof. Let $v_1, \dots, v_n \in V$ and suppose that v is in the K -linear span of v_1, \dots, v_n . Take scalars $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n \in K$ with $v = \sum_{j=1}^n \lambda_j \cdot v_j$. If ϕ_i is an endomorphism of K , then

$$\phi_i(v) = \sum_{j=1}^n \phi_i(\lambda_j \cdot v_j) = \sum_{j=1}^n \phi_i(\lambda_j) \cdot \phi_i(v_j),$$

so $\phi_i(v)$ is in the K -linear span of $\phi_i(v_1), \dots, \phi_i(v_n)$. If ϕ_i is a derivation on K , then

$$\phi_i(v) = \sum_{j=1}^n \phi_i(\lambda_j \cdot v_j) = \sum_{j=1}^n \phi_i(\lambda_j) \cdot v_j + \lambda_j \cdot \phi_i(v_j),$$

so $\phi_i(v)$ is in the K -linear span of $v_1, \dots, v_n, \phi_i(v_1), \dots, \phi_i(v_n)$. \square

We now associate to $K[\Phi]$ an \mathbb{N}^k -filtration as follows: for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, let $K[\Phi]_{\bar{s}}$ consist of the linear operators $\sum_{\|\bar{r}\| \preccurlyeq \bar{s}} \lambda_{\bar{r}} \phi_1^{r_1} \cdots \phi_m^{r_m}$. Let $V = \bigcup_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{Z}^k} V_{\bar{s}}$ be a filtered $K[\Phi]$ -module. Following Johnson [7], we say that the filtration $(V_{\bar{s}})_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{Z}^k}$ is **excellent** if each $V_{\bar{s}}$ is finite-dimensional as a K -vector space and if there is $\bar{s}_0 \in \mathbb{Z}^k$ such that

$$V_{\bar{s}} = \{D(v) : D \in K[\Phi]_{\bar{s}-\bar{s}_0} \text{ and } v \in V_{\bar{s}_0}\}$$

for all $\bar{s} \succcurlyeq \bar{s}_0$.

Corollary 6.4. *Let $V = \bigcup_{\bar{s} \in \mathbb{Z}^k} V_{\bar{s}}$ be an excellently filtered $K[\Phi]$ -module. There is a polynomial $Q \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$\dim_K(V_{\bar{s}}) = Q(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large.

Proof. Let $(X, c\ell)$ be the underlying set of V with the K -linear closure operator. Since V is excellent, we can find an index \bar{s}_0 and a finite set $A \subseteq V_{\bar{s}_0}$ such that the $K[\Phi]$ -module $\bigcup_{\bar{s} \succ \bar{s}_0} V_{\bar{s}}$ is generated by A . By reindexing, we may assume that $\bar{s}_0 = \bar{0}_k$. Then for each $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$, the graded part $V_{\bar{s}}$ is generated as a K -vector space by

$$\Phi^{\preccurlyeq(\bar{s})}(A) = \{\phi^{\bar{r}}(a) : \|\bar{r}\| \preccurlyeq \bar{s} \text{ and } a \in A\}.$$

Thus, $\dim_K(M_{\bar{s}}) = \text{rk}(\Phi^{\preccurlyeq(\bar{s})}(A))$ for $\bar{s} \in \mathbb{N}^k$. The corollary follows from Corollary A. \square

Remark 6.5. In the case that each ϕ_i is a derivation on K and $k = 1$, Corollary 6.4 is due to Johnson [7], who used this result to establish the existence of the Kolchin polynomial. Variations of this result were later given by Levin; see [15] for the case where each ϕ_i is a field automorphism. The Hilbert polynomial for modules over rings of differential operators also appears in work of Bernshtein [2].

6.3. Kolchin polynomials for difference-differential exponential fields. Let K be a field of characteristic zero. An **exponential on K** is a group homomorphism $E: A(K) \rightarrow K^\times$, where $A(K)$ is a divisible subgroup of the additive group of K . If E is an exponential on K , then the pair (K, E) is called an **exponential field**. A subfield F of K is an **exponential subfield** if $E(a) \in F$ for all $a \in A(F) := A(K) \cap F$. The fields \mathbb{R} and \mathbb{C} with their usual exponential functions are exponential fields (where the domain of the exponential is the entire field). If p is a prime greater than 2, then the function $E_p: \mathbb{Z}_p \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}_p^\times$ given by

$$x \mapsto \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{i=0}^n (px)^i / i!$$

is an exponential on \mathbb{Q}_p ; see [21]. We may also define an exponential $E_2: \mathbb{Z}_2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}_2^\times$ by replacing p in the above definition by 4.

Let (K, E) be an exponential field. An **E -term** is a partial function given by arbitrary compositions of E and polynomials over \mathbb{Z} . Model theoretically speaking, an E -term is a term in the language $(+, \cdot, -, 0, 1, E)$; to avoid partially defined functions, one may take E to be identically zero away from $A(K)$. Let $B \subseteq K$. A tuple $\bar{a} = (a_1, \dots, a_n)$ is said to be a **regular solution to a Khovanskii system over B** if there is a tuple $\bar{b} = (b_1, \dots, b_m)$ from B and E -terms t_1, \dots, t_n in $n + m$ variables such that

$$t_1(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) = \dots = t_n(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) = 0, \quad \det \begin{pmatrix} \frac{\partial t_1}{\partial X_1}(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) & \dots & \frac{\partial t_1}{\partial X_n}(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ \frac{\partial t_n}{\partial X_1}(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) & \dots & \frac{\partial t_n}{\partial X_n}(\bar{a}, \bar{b}) \end{pmatrix} \neq 0.$$

The **exponential-algebraic closure of B** , written $\text{ecl}(B)$, consists of all components of any regular solution to a Khovanskii system over B . The exponential-algebraic closure was first defined by Macintyre [19], and Kirby later showed that (K, ecl) is always a finitary matroid [11, Theorem 1.1]. If F is an exponential subfield of K and A is a subset of K , then we let $F(A)^E$ denote the exponential subfield of K generated by F and A , and we define the **exponential transcendence degree of $F(A)^E$ over F** , denoted $\text{etrdeg}_F F(A)^E$, to be the rank $\text{rk}(F(A)^E|F) = \text{rk}(A|F)$ given by the matroid (K, ecl) .

An **exponential endomorphism of K** is a field endomorphism $\sigma: K \rightarrow K$ such that $\sigma E(a) = E(\sigma a)$ for all $a \in A(K)$. An **exponential derivation on K** is a derivation $\delta: K \rightarrow K$ which satisfies the identity $\delta E(a) = E(a)\delta a$ for all $a \in A(K)$.

Lemma 6.6. *Any exponential endomorphism of K is an endomorphism of (K, ecl) . Any exponential derivation on K is a quasi-endomorphism of (K, ecl) .*

Proof. Let σ be an exponential endomorphism of K , let δ be an exponential derivation on K , and let $B \subseteq K$. If $a \in K$ is a component of a regular solution to a Khovanskii system over B , then $\sigma(a)$ is a component to a regular solution to a Khovanskii system over $\sigma(B)$, namely, the same Khovanskii system but with the parameters from B replaced with the corresponding parameters from $\sigma(B)$. Thus, σ is an endomorphism of (K, ecl) .

To see that δ is a quasi-endomorphism of (K, ecl) , we use [11, Theorem 1.1], which states that $a \in K$ belongs to $\text{ecl}(B)$ if and only if every exponential derivation on K which vanishes on B also vanishes at a . Suppose $a \in \text{ecl}(B)$, and let ε be an exponential derivation on K which vanishes on $B \cup \delta(B)$. We need to

show that $\varepsilon\delta a = 0$. Consider the map $\varepsilon\delta - \delta\varepsilon: K \rightarrow K$, where $(\varepsilon\delta - \delta\varepsilon)(y) = \varepsilon\delta y - \delta\varepsilon y$. It is routine to show that $\varepsilon\delta - \delta\varepsilon$ is an exponential derivation. For $b \in B$, we have $\varepsilon\delta b - \delta\varepsilon b = 0$, since ε vanishes on $B \cup \delta(B)$. Thus, $\varepsilon\delta - \delta\varepsilon$ vanishes on B , so it also vanishes at a . Since ε also vanishes at a , we see that

$$0 = \varepsilon\delta a - \delta\varepsilon a = \varepsilon\delta a. \quad \square$$

Suppose now that $\Phi = (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is a collection of commuting maps $K \rightarrow K$, each of which is either an exponential derivation or an exponential endomorphism. The structure $(K, E, \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is called a **difference-differential exponential field** (or a **d-exponential field** for short). Let F be a d-exponential subfield of K , that is, an exponential subfield of K which is closed under each ϕ_i . Applying Corollary A, Proposition 2.4, and Corollary 3.5 to the localized matroid (K, ecl_F) gives us the following:

Corollary 6.7. *Let \bar{a} be a tuple from K . Then there is a polynomial $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi} \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$\text{etrdeg}_F F(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(\bar{a}))^E = Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large. Moreover:

- (i) *The dominant terms of $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ only depend on the exponential-algebraic closure of the d-field extension $F(\Theta(\bar{a}))$.*
- (ii) *The coefficient of $\bar{Y}^{\bar{d}}$ in $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ times $d_1! \cdots d_k!$ is equal to the maximal size of a subset $B \subseteq \text{ecl}_F(\Theta(\bar{a}))$ such that the tuple $(\theta b)_{\theta \in \Theta, b \in B}$ is exponential-algebraically independent over F .*

Remark 6.8. With the obvious changes, Corollary 6.7 may be applied to j -fields. These fields, introduced in [5], are equipped with partially defined functions which behave like the modular j -function. The relevant closure operator in this setting is the $j\text{cl}$ -closure, defined in [5], and the tuple Φ should consist of commuting j -field endomorphisms and j -derivations, also defined in [5]. See [1] for more on the j -closure operator. Thanks to Vincenzo Mantova for bringing this to our attention.

6.4. Derivations on o-minimal fields. Let T be an o-minimal theory extending the theory of real closed ordered fields, and let K be a model of T ; see [4] for definitions and background. The **definable closure operator** on K , denoted dcl , is given by

$$a \in \text{dcl}(B) \iff a = f(\bar{b}) \text{ for some tuple } \bar{b} \text{ from } B \text{ and some } \emptyset\text{-definable function } f.$$

It is well-known that (K, dcl) is a finitary matroid, and we denote the corresponding rank function by rk_T . Given an elementary substructure F of K and a set $A \subseteq K$, we let $F\langle A \rangle$ denote the definable closure of $F \cup A$ in K . Then $F\langle A \rangle$ is also a model of T , and $\text{rk}_T(F\langle A \rangle|F) = \text{rk}_T(A|F)$.

A **T -derivation on K** is a map $\delta: K \rightarrow K$ such that for each tuple $\bar{a} = (a_1, \dots, a_n) \in K^n$ and each \emptyset -definable function f which is \mathcal{C}^1 in a neighborhood of \bar{a} , we have

$$\delta f(\bar{a}) = \frac{\partial f}{\partial Y_1}(\bar{a})\delta a_1 + \cdots + \frac{\partial f}{\partial Y_n}(\bar{a})\delta a_n. \quad (6.1)$$

The study of T -derivations was initiated by the authors in [6] and was expanded on by the second author [8]. The following fact can be proven along the lines of Lemma 6.1, using (6.1) above:

Fact 6.9. *Any T -derivation on K is a quasi-endomorphism of (K, dcl) .*

Now suppose that $\Phi = (\phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is a collection of commuting T -derivations on K . Then $(K, \phi_1, \dots, \phi_m)$ is called a **T -differential field**. Let F be a T -differential subfield of K , that is, an elementary substructure of K which is closed under each ϕ_i . Then each ϕ_i is a quasi-endomorphism of the localization (K, dcl_F) .

Corollary 6.10. *Let \bar{a} be a tuple from K . Then there is a polynomial $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi} \in \mathbb{Q}[\bar{Y}]$ such that*

$$\text{rk}_T(\Phi^{\preceq(\bar{s})}(\bar{a})|F) = Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}(\bar{s})$$

whenever $\min(\bar{s})$ is sufficiently large. Moreover:

- (1) *The dominant terms of $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ only depend on the T -differential field extension $F\langle\Theta(\bar{a})\rangle$.*
- (2) *The coefficient of $\bar{Y}^{\bar{d}}$ in $Q_{\bar{a}}^{\Phi}$ times $d_1! \cdots d_k!$ is equal to the maximal size of a subset $B \subseteq F\langle\Theta(\bar{a})\rangle$ such that the tuple $(\theta b)_{\theta \in \Theta, b \in B}$ is dcl -independent over F .*

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