

# TRI-RESTRICTED NUMBERS AND POWERS OF PERMUTATION REPRESENTATIONS

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ABSTRACT. Let  $G$  be a transitive permutation group on a set  $Q$ . The orbit decompositions of the actions of  $G$  on the sets of ordered  $n$ -tuples with elements repeated at most three times are studied. The decompositions involve Stirling numbers and a new class of related numbers, the so-called tri-restricted numbers. The paper presents exponential generating functions for the numbers of orbits, and examines relationships between various powers of the  $G$ -set involving Stirling numbers, the tri-restricted numbers, and the coefficients of Bessel polynomials.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Let  $G$  be a finite group. A  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$  or *permutation representation* of the group  $G$  consists of a set  $Q$ , together with a (right) action of  $G$  on  $Q$  via a homomorphism

$$(1.1) \quad G \rightarrow Q! ; g \mapsto (q \mapsto qg)$$

from  $G$  into the group  $Q!$  of all permutations of the set  $Q$ . A  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$  may be construed as an algebra of unary operations on the set  $Q$ . For a positive integer  $n$ , the direct power  $(Q, G)^n$  of this algebra is the  $G$ -set  $Q^n$  with *diagonal action*

$$(1.2) \quad g : (q_1, \dots, q_n) \mapsto (q_1g, \dots, q_ng)$$

of the elements  $g$  of  $G$ .

The subset  $Q^{[n]}$  of  $Q^n$  consisting of all  $n$ -tuples of distinct elements of  $Q$ , equipped with the restriction of the diagonal action of  $G$ , is called the  $n$ -th *irredundant power* of the  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$ , and denoted by  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$ . The subset  $Q^{[[n]]}$  of  $Q^n$  consisting of all  $n$ -tuples in which no element is repeated

more than once, equipped with the restriction of the diagonal action of  $G$ , is called the  $n$ -th *bi-restricted power* of the  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$ , and denoted by  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$ .

The exponential generating functions for the numbers of orbits in the various direct powers, irredundant powers and bi-restricted powers are respectively

$$(1.3) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} e^{t\pi(g)}, \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} (1+t)^{\pi(g)} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left(1+t + \frac{t^2}{2!}\right)^{\pi(g)},$$

where  $\pi(g)$  is the number of points of  $Q$  fixed by an element  $g$  of  $G$  (5.1[7], Th.6.4 & Th.7.7[3]). The two latter generating functions may be considered as drastic truncations of the exponential generating function for the numbers of orbits in the direct power  $G$ -sets, since

$$(1.4) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} e^{t\pi(g)} = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left(1+t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!} \dots\right)^{\pi(g)}.$$

In this paper, we consider a slightly less drastic truncation,

$$(1.5) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left(1+t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!}\right)^{\pi(g)},$$

and define an appropriate  $G$ -subset of  $(Q^n, G)$  so that (1.5) become the exponential generating function for the number of orbits in it. The numbers  $T_1(n, k)$  related to (1.5), the so-called *tri-restricted numbers of the first kind*, are defined in Definition 5.1 and investigated in Section 5.

The  $G$ -subset  $Q^{\{[n]\}}$  of  $Q^n$  consisting of all  $n$ -tuples in which no element appears more than three times is called the *tri-restricted power  $G$ -set*  $(Q, G)^{\{[n]\}}$ . Then orbit decompositions of the tri-restricted powers  $(Q, G)^{\{[n]\}}$  are related to the orbit decompositions of the irredundant powers  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$  via the tri-restricted numbers of the first kind. The tri-restricted powers are also related to the other powers, the direct powers and the bi-restricted powers, via Stirling numbers and the coefficients in Bessel polynomials.

The *tri-restricted number of the second kind*  $T_2(n, k)$  is defined to be the  $(n, k)$ -entry of the inverse of the matrix whose  $(m, j)$ -entry for each  $m, j$  is the tri-restricted number of the first kind  $T_1(m, j)$ . This provides an inverse relation between the tri-restricted powers and the irredundant powers. Theorem 5.12 presents (1.5) as the exponential generating function for the numbers of orbits in the tri-restricted power  $G$ -sets.

Introductory sections briefly cover Stirling numbers and Bessel polynomials (Section 2), the duality between direct powers and irredundant powers (Section 3), and the bi-restricted powers (Section 4).

## 2. STIRLING NUMBERS AND BESSEL NUMBERS

For each positive integer  $n$ , the product  $X(X - 1)(X - 2) \dots (X - n + 1)$  in the integral polynomial ring  $\mathbb{Z}[X]$  over an indeterminate  $X$  is denoted by  $[X]_n$ . Since  $\{X^n \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$  and  $\{[X]_n \mid n \in \mathbb{N}\}$  are free generating sets for  $\mathbb{Z}[X]$  as a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -module, each can be uniquely expressed as a linear combination of the others.

**Definition 2.1.** The *Stirling numbers of the first kind*  $S_1(n, k)$  and the *Stirling numbers of the second kind*  $S_2(n, k)$  are given by

$$(2.1) \quad X^n = \sum_{k=0}^n S_2(n, k)[X]_k \quad \text{and} \quad [X]_n = \sum_{k=0}^n S_1(n, k)X^k. \quad \square$$

**Proposition 2.2.** (Cf. 3.14 [1].) *The Stirling number of the second kind  $S_2(n, k)$  is the number of partitions of an  $n$ -set into exactly  $k$  nonempty subsets.* □

For each natural number  $n$ , the *Bessel polynomial*  $y_n(x)$  is defined to be the (unique) polynomial of degree  $n$  with unit constant term

$$(2.2) \quad y_n(x) = \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(n+k)!}{(n-k)!k!} \left(\frac{x}{2}\right)^k$$

which satisfies the differential equation  $x^2y'' + (2x+2)y' = n(n+1)y$  [2, 4, 6]. Then for each positive integer  $n$ , the  $n$ -th Bessel polynomial may be written in the form

$$(2.3) \quad P_n(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} B(n, k)x^{n-k},$$

where the *Bessel number*  $B(n, k)$  is given by

$$(2.4) \quad B(n, k) = \begin{cases} \text{if } n < k & \text{then } 0 \\ \text{else} & \frac{(2n-k)!}{2^{n-k}(k)!(n-k)!} \end{cases}$$

**Proposition 2.3.** *The Bessel numbers satisfy the recursion*

$$(2.5) \quad B(n, k) = (2n - k + 1) \cdot B(n - 1, k) + B(n - 1, k - 1)$$

for  $n \geq k$ . □

The combinatorial significance of the Bessel numbers is given by the following.

**Theorem 2.4.** (Th.7.1 [3]) For an indeterminate  $X$ , let

$$f(t) = \left(1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!}\right)^X.$$

Then

$$(2.6) \quad f^{(n)}(0) = \sum_{k=1}^n B(k, 2k - n)[X]_k,$$

where  $f^{(n)}(0)$  is the  $n$ -th derivative of  $f$  with respect to  $t$  at  $t = 0$ . □

**Corollary 2.5.** (Co.7.2 [3]) For any positive integers  $n$  and  $k$ , the Bessel number  $B(n, k)$  is the number of partitions of a  $(2n-k)$ -set of type  $1^k 2^{n-k} 3^0 4^0 \dots n^0$ . □

### 3. DIRECT POWERS AND IRREDUNDANT POWERS

For a finite group  $G$ , let  $\underline{G}$  be the variety of  $G$ -sets, construed as a category with homomorphisms ( $G$ -equivariant maps) as morphisms. For an object  $Q$  of  $\underline{G}$ , let  $[Q]$  denote the isomorphism class of  $Q$  in  $\underline{G}$ . Let

$A^+(G)$  be the set of isomorphism classes of finite  $G$ -sets. This set becomes a commutative, unital semiring  $(A^+(G), +, \cdot, 0, 1)$  under  $[P] + [Q] = [P + Q]$ ,  $[P] \cdot [Q] = [P \times Q]$ ,  $0 = [\emptyset]$ , and  $1 = [1]$ . It embeds canonically into a commutative ring, the *integral Burnside algebra* of the group  $G$  (§1.2 [8]).

For each positive integer  $n$ , the *irredundant power  $G$ -set*  $Q^{[n]}$  is defined to be the complement in the direct power  $Q^n$  of the subset consisting of all  $n$ -tuples comprising at most  $n - 1$  distinct elements of  $Q$  (cf. II.1.10 [5]).

The following proposition shows that the irredundant power  $G$ -sets  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$  are dual to the direct power  $G$ -sets  $(Q, G)^n$  via the Stirling numbers of the first and second kinds.

**Proposition 3.1.** (Prop.5.1 [3])

$$(3.1) \quad [Q^{[n]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n S_1(n, k)[Q^k] \quad \text{and} \quad [Q^n] = \sum_{k=1}^n S_2(n, k)[Q^{[k]}]. \quad \square$$

For a  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$ , let  $\pi(g)$  be the number of points of  $Q$  fixed by an element  $g$  of  $G$ . By Burnside's Lemma (V.20.4 [5]), the average number of fixed points

$$(3.2) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \pi(g)^n$$

is the number of orbits of  $G$  on the  $n$ -th direct power  $Q^n$ . By Proposition 3.1,

$$(3.3) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} [\pi(g)]_n$$

is the number of orbits of  $G$  on the  $n$ -th irredundant power  $Q^{[n]}$  (Lem.6.3 [3]). Recall that the exponential generating function for a sequence  $(a_n)_{n=0}^\infty$  is  $\sum_{n=0}^\infty a_n \frac{t^n}{n!}$ .

**Theorem 3.2.** (5.1, Th.6.4 [7]) The exponential generating functions for the numbers of orbits on the direct power  $G$ -sets  $(Q, G)^n$  and the irredundant power  $G$ -sets  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$  are respectively

$$(3.4) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} (e^t)^{\pi(g)} \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} (1+t)^{\pi(g)},$$

where  $\pi(g)$  is the number of points of  $Q$  fixed by an element  $g$  of  $G$ .  $\square$

#### 4. BI-RESTRICTED POWERS

Consider the  $n$ -th direct power  $Q^n$  as the set of functions to  $Q$  from the  $n$ -set  $\{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$ . Then the  $n$ -th irredundant power  $Q^{[n]}$  is the subset consisting of injective functions from the  $n$ -set into  $Q$ . For each positive integer  $n$ , the  $n$ -th *bi-restricted power set* of the set  $Q$  is defined to be

$$(4.1) \quad Q^{[[n]]} = \{f : \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\} \rightarrow Q \mid \forall q \in Q, |f^{-1}\{q\}| \leq 2\}.$$

Thus  $Q^{[[n]]}$  is an intermediate set, included in  $Q^n$  and including  $Q^{[n]}$ . For a  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$ , the restriction of the direct power action of  $G$  on  $Q^n$  to  $Q^{[[n]]}$  is called the  $n$ -th *bi-restricted power* of  $(Q, G)$ , and denoted by  $(Q, G)^{[[n]]}$ .

The following proposition shows how the Bessel numbers yield a dual relation between the bi-restricted powers and the irredundant powers.

**Proposition 4.1.** (Props.7.5, 6 [3])

1.  $[Q^{[[n]]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n B(k, 2k - n)[Q^{[k]}]$ .
2.  $[Q^{[n]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n (-1)^{n-k} B(n - 1, k - 1)[Q^{[[k]]}]$ .  $\square$

Bringing in the Stirling numbers, one can obtain a dual relation between the bi-restricted powers and the direct powers.

**Proposition 4.2.** (Rmk.7.8 [3])

1.  $[Q^{[[n]]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n (\sum_{m=k}^n B(m, 2m - n) \cdot S_1(m, k)) [Q^{[k]}]$ .
2.  $[Q^{[n]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n (\sum_{m=k}^n (-1)^{m-k} \cdot S_2(n, m) \cdot B(m - 1, k - 1)) [Q^{[[k]]}]$ .  $\square$

The following theorem shows that the exponential generating function for the number of orbits on the bi-restricted powers is an intermediate function between the exponential generating functions in (3.4).

**Theorem 4.3.** (Th.7.7 [3]) The exponential generating function for the number of orbits on the bi-restricted powers  $(Q, G)^{[n]}$  is

$$(4.2) \quad f(t) = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left( 1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!} \right)^{\pi(g)},$$

where  $\pi(g)$  is the number of points of  $Q$  fixed by an element  $g$  of  $G$ .  $\square$

## 5. TRI-RESTRICTED NUMBERS AND POWERS

By analogy with Theorem 4.3, we now want to build a new  $G$ -subset of  $Q^n$  such that the truncation

$$(5.1) \quad \frac{1}{|G|} \sum (1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!})^{\pi(g)}$$

of  $e^{t\pi(g)}$  is the exponential generating function for the number of orbits in the  $G$ -subset. The first task is to introduce the coefficients that will play the role of the Bessel numbers in Proposition 4.1.

**Definition 5.1.** For an indeterminate  $X$ , let

$$f(t) = \left( 1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!} \right)^X.$$

The *tri-restricted numbers of the first kind*  $T_1(n, k)$  are defined by

$$(5.2) \quad f^{(n)}(0) = \sum_{k=1}^n T_1(n, k)[X]_k,$$

where  $f^{(n)}(0)$  is the  $n$ -th derivative of  $f$  with respect to  $t$  at  $t = 0$ .  $\square$

An explicit form for the tri-restricted numbers of the first kind is given by the following proposition.

**Proposition 5.2.** For any positive integers  $n$  and  $k$ ,  $T_1(n, k) =$

$$\text{if } \left\lceil \frac{n}{3} \right\rceil \leq k \leq n$$

$$\text{then } \sum_{t=t_1}^{\lfloor \frac{3k-n}{2} \rfloor} \frac{n!}{(2!)^{3k-n-2t} (3!)^{n-2k+t} t! (3k-n-2t)! (n-2k+t)!}$$

$$\text{else } 0,$$

where  $\lfloor x \rfloor$  is the greatest integer less than or equal to  $x$ ,  $\lceil x \rceil$  is the least integer greater than or equal to  $x$ , and

$$t_1 = \text{if } \left\lceil \frac{n}{2} \right\rceil \leq k \leq n \text{ then } 2k - n \text{ else } 0.$$

*Proof.* Let  $g(t) = 1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!}$ . Then  $f(t) = (g(t))^X$ , and the terms of the  $n$ -th derivative  $f^{(n)}(t)$  of  $f(t)$  have the form

$$(5.3) \quad [X]_k (g(t))^{X-k} (g'(t))^t (g''(t))^{3k-n-2t} (g^{(3)}(t))^{n-2k+t}$$

for all non-negative integers  $t$ ,  $3k-n-2t$  and  $n-2k+t$ . For all non-negative integers  $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_n$  such that  $\lambda_1 + \lambda_2 + \dots + \lambda_n = k$  and  $\lambda_1 + 2\lambda_2 + \dots + n\lambda_n = n$ , the number of  $k$ -partitions of an  $n$ -set of type  $1^{\lambda_1} 2^{\lambda_2} \dots n^{\lambda_n}$  is

$$(5.4) \quad \frac{n!}{(1!)^{\lambda_1} (2!)^{\lambda_2} \dots (n!)^{\lambda_n} (\lambda_1)! (\lambda_2)! \dots (\lambda_n)!}$$

Since  $t + (3k-n-2t) + (n-2k+t) = k$  and  $t + 2(3k-n-2t) + 3(n-2k+t) = n$ , there are

$$(5.5) \quad \frac{n!}{(1!)^t (2!)^{3k-n-2t} (3!)^{n-2k+t} t! (3k-n-2t)! (n-2k+t)!}$$

many terms  $[X]_k (g(t))^{X-k} (g'(t))^t (g''(t))^{3k-n-2t} (g^{(3)}(t))^{n-2k+t}$  in  $f^{(n)}(t)$ .

Since  $g(0) = g'(0) = g''(0) = g^{(3)}(0) = 1$ , one obtains the expression

$$(5.6) \quad \sum_{k=1}^n \left( \sum_{\substack{t \geq 0 \\ 3k-n-2t \geq 0 \\ n-2k+t \geq 0}} \frac{n!}{(1!)^t (2!)^{3k-n-2t} (3!)^{n-2k+t} t! (3k-n-2t)! (n-2k+t)!} \right) [X]_k$$

for  $f^{(n)}(0)$ . It is clear that  $T_1(n, k) = 0$  for all  $k > n$ , since  $f^{(n)}(t)$  cannot have any term containing  $[X]_k$  for any  $k > n$ . If  $k < \lceil \frac{n}{3} \rceil$ , one has  $3k < n$



and  $3k - n - 2t < n - n - 2t \leq -2t$ , which violates the constraints  $t \geq 0$  and  $3k - n - 2t \geq 0$ . Therefore  $T_1(n, k) = 0$  for all  $k < \lceil \frac{n}{3} \rceil$ . Solving  $n - 2k + t \geq 0$  and  $3k - n - 2t \geq 0$  for  $t$ , one obtains

$$t \geq 2k - n \quad \text{and} \quad t \leq \frac{3k - n}{2}.$$

Together with  $t \geq 0$  and the fact that  $t$  is an integer, this gives

$$(5.7) \quad \max\{0, 2k - n\} \leq t \leq \lfloor \frac{3k - n}{2} \rfloor.$$

If  $\lceil \frac{n}{3} \rceil \leq k < \lfloor \frac{n}{2} \rfloor$ , one has  $2k < n$ , and if  $\lfloor \frac{n}{2} \rfloor \leq k \leq n$ , one has  $n \leq 2k$ . Then

$$(5.8) \quad \max\{0, 2k - n\} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } \lceil \frac{n}{3} \rceil \leq k < \lfloor \frac{n}{2} \rfloor \\ 2k - n & \text{if } \lfloor \frac{n}{2} \rfloor \leq k \leq n. \end{cases}$$

The required form for  $T_1(n, k)$  is furnished by (5.6), (5.7) and (5.8).  $\square$

As an immediate corollary, one obtains the following combinatorial interpretation of the tri-restricted numbers of the first kind.

**Corollary 5.3.** *For each positive integer  $n$ ,  $T_1(n, k)$  is the total number of  $k$ -partitions of an  $n$ -set of type  $1^t 2^{3k-n-2t} 3^{n-2k+t} 4^0 \dots n^0$ .*  $\square$

The following table shows the first few tri-restricted numbers of the first kind. The empty cells are to be filled with 0's.

| 8 | 7  | 6   | 5   | 4    | 3   | 2  | 1 = k | $T_1(n, k)$ |
|---|----|-----|-----|------|-----|----|-------|-------------|
|   |    |     |     |      |     |    | 1     | $n = 1$     |
|   |    |     |     |      |     | 1  | 1     | 2           |
|   |    |     |     |      | 1   | 3  | 1     | 3           |
|   |    |     |     | 1    | 6   | 7  |       | 4           |
|   |    |     | 1   | 10   | 25  | 10 |       | 5           |
|   |    | 1   | 15  | 65   | 75  | 10 |       | 6           |
|   | 1  | 21  | 140 | 315  | 175 |    |       | 7           |
| 1 | 28 | 266 | 980 | 1225 | 280 |    |       | 8           |

**The tri-restricted numbers of the first kind**

By analogy with (4.1), one may now define the desired subset of  $Q^n$ .

**Definition 5.4.** The  $n$ -th *tri-restricted power* of a set  $Q$  is

$$(5.9) \quad Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket} = \{f : \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\} \rightarrow Q \mid \forall q \in Q, |f^{-1}\{q\}| \leq 3\}.$$

For a  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$ , the restriction of the diagonal action of  $G$  on  $Q^n$  to  $Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}$  is called the  $n$ -th *tri-restricted power* of  $(Q, G)$ , and denoted by  $(Q, G)^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 5.5.**  $Q^{[n]} \subseteq Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket} \subseteq Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket} \subseteq Q^n$ .  $\square$

Tri-restricted powers are related to irredundant powers via the tri-restricted numbers of the first kind.

**Theorem 5.6.**

$$(5.10) \quad [Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}] = \sum_{k=1}^n T_1(n, k)[Q^{[k]}].$$

*Proof.* Let  $A_k^n = \{f \in Q^n \mid k = |\text{Im}(f)| \text{ and } \forall q \in Q, |f^{-1}\{q\}| \leq 3\}$  and  $Q_k^n = \{f \in Q^n \mid k = |\text{Im}(f)|\}$ . Then  $A_k^n = Q_k^n \cap Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}$ , and  $Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}$  is the disjoint union of the  $A_k^n$ . For any partition  $\pi$  of the  $n$ -set  $\{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$  of type  $1^t 2^{3k-n-2t} 3^{n-2k+t} 4^0 \dots n^0$ , let  $Q_\pi = \{f \in Q^n \mid \pi = \ker(f)\}$ . Then  $Q_\pi$  is in  $A_k^n$ , and is  $G$ -isomorphic to  $Q^{[k]}$ . Since there are  $T_1(n, k)$  partitions of an  $n$ -set of the type  $1^t 2^{3k-n-2t} 3^{n-2k+t} 4^0 \dots n^0$ , the  $G$ -set  $A_k^n$  is  $G$ -isomorphic to  $T_1(n, k)$  copies of  $Q^{[k]}$ . Therefore

$$(5.11) \quad Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket} = \bigcup A_k^n \cong \bigcup T_1(n, k)Q^{[k]}.$$

Considering the isomorphism classes from (5.11), one obtains (5.10).  $\square$

By Proposition 3.1 and Proposition 4.1(2) taken together with Theorem 5.6, the tri-restricted powers can be expressed in terms of the direct powers or the bi-restricted powers as follows;

**Corollary 5.7.**

1.  $[Q^{\llbracket [n] \rrbracket}] = \sum_{k=1}^n (\sum_{m=k}^n T_1(n, m) \cdot S_1(m, k)) [Q^k]$

$$2. [Q^{[[[n]]]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n \left( \sum_{m=k}^n (-1)^{m-k} T_1(n, m) \cdot B(m-1, k-1) \right) [Q^{[[k]]}] \quad \square$$

Now consider the matrix  $T_1$  whose  $(n, k)$ -th entry is  $T_1(n, k)$  for each  $n, k$ . Since  $T_1$  is a lower triangular matrix whose diagonal elements are all 1, we can consider the inverse matrix of  $T_1$ .

**Definition 5.8.** The *tri-restricted number of the second kind*  $T_2(n, k)$  is defined to be the  $(n, k)$ -entry of the inverse matrix of  $T_1$ .  $\square$

The following table shows the first few tri-restricted numbers of the second kind. The empty cells are to be filled with 0's.

| 8 | 7   | 6   | 5     | 4    | 3     | 2     | 1 = k | $T_2(n, k)$ |
|---|-----|-----|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
|   |     |     |       |      |       |       | 1     | $n = 1$     |
|   |     |     |       |      | 1     | -3    | -1    | 2           |
|   |     |     |       | 1    | -6    | 11    | 2     | 3           |
|   |     |     | 1     | -10  | 35    | -45   | -5    | 4           |
|   |     | 1   | -15   | 85   | -210  | 175   | 10    | 5           |
|   | 1   | -21 | 175   | -700 | 1225  | -315  | 35    | 6           |
| 1 | -28 | 322 | -1890 | 5565 | -5670 | -6265 | -910  | 7           |
|   |     |     |       |      |       |       | 11935 | 8           |

**The tri-restricted numbers of the second kind**

*Remark 5.9.* Unlike the Stirling numbers of the second kind, the tri-restricted numbers of the second kind  $T_2(n, k)$  do not take alternating signs. The sum of the last three numbers in each row of the above table becomes 0, i.e. for all positive integers  $n \leq 8$ , one has

$$(5.12) \quad T_2(n, 3) + T_2(n, 2) + T_2(n, 1) = 0.$$

In fact, the relationship (5.12) holds for all positive integers, since  $T_1(1, 1) = T_1(2, 1) = T_1(3, 1) = 1$ . This might be the reason for the non-alternating signs of  $T_2(n, k)$ , but to be sure one would need to find a formula or a combinatorial interpretation for the  $T_2(n, k)$ .  $\square$

One may now provide an inverse to the formula of Theorem 5.6 as follows.

**Proposition 5.10.**

$$(5.13) \quad [Q^{[n]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n T_2(n, k) [Q^{[[[k]]}]]. \quad \square$$

Applying Proposition 3.1 and Proposition 5.10 with Proposition 4.1(1), the direct powers and the bi-restricted powers can be expressed in terms of the tri-restricted powers as follows.

**Corollary 5.11.**

1.  $[Q^n] = \sum_{k=1}^n (\sum_{m=k}^n S_2(n, m) \cdot T_2(m, k)) [Q^{[[[k]]}]$
2.  $[Q^{[[n]]}] = \sum_{k=1}^n (\sum_{m=k}^n B(m, 2m - n) \cdot T_2(m, k)) [Q^{[[[k]]}] \quad \square$

Finally, we conclude that (5.1) generates the numbers of orbits in the tri-restricted powers of a  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)$  with permutation character  $\pi$ .

**Theorem 5.12.** *The exponential generating function for the number of orbits on the  $n$ -th tri-restricted power  $G$ -set  $(Q, G)^{[[[n]]}]$  is*

$$(5.14) \quad f(t) = \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left( 1 + t + \frac{t^2}{2!} + \frac{t^3}{3!} \right)^{\pi(g)},$$

where  $\pi(g)$  is the number of points of  $Q$  fixed by an element  $g$  of  $G$ .

*Proof.* By Definition 5.1, the  $n$ -th derivative of  $f$  with respect to  $t$  at  $t = 0$  is

$$(5.15) \quad \begin{aligned} f^{(n)}(0) &= \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} \left( \sum_{k=1}^n T_1(n, k) [\pi(g)]_k \right) \\ &= \sum_{k=1}^n T_1(n, k) \left( \frac{1}{|G|} \sum_{g \in G} [\pi(g)]_k \right). \end{aligned}$$

By (3.3) and Theorem 5.6, it is easy to see that  $f^{(n)}(0)$  is the number of orbits of  $G$  on the  $n$ -th tri-restricted power  $Q^{[[[n]]}]$ .  $\square$

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