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# NEW EXAMPLES OF NONCOMMUTATIVE $\Lambda(p)$ SETS

WILLIAM D. BANKS AND ASMA HARCHARRAS

ABSTRACT. In this paper, we introduce a certain combinatorial property  $Z^{\star}(k)$ , which is defined for every integer  $k \geq 2$ , and show that every set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  with the property  $Z^{\star}(k)$  is necessarily a noncommutative  $\Lambda(2k)$  set. In particular, using number theoretic results about the number of solutions to so-called "S-unit equations," we show that for any finite set Q of prime numbers the set  $E_Q$  of natural numbers whose prime divisors all lie in the set Q is noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  for every real number 2 .

## 1. Introduction

For any finite set Q of prime numbers, let  $E_Q \subset \mathbb{N}$  denote the set of all natural numbers n such that every prime divisor of n lies in Q. If Q contains only a single prime q, then  $E_Q = \{q^j \mid j \geq 0\}$  is a Hadamard set and therefore also a Sidon set; consequently, for every real number 2 , the bound

$$\left\|f\right\|_{L^p} \le C \left\|f\right\|_{L^2}$$

holds for every function  $f \in L^p$  whose Fourier coefficients are supported on the set  $E_Q$ , where C > 0 is a constant depending only on p; in other words, the set  $E_Q$  is of type  $\Lambda(p)$ . When Q has cardinality  $\#Q \ge 2$ , the set  $E_Q$  is neither Hadamard nor Sidon; however, number theoretic results about solutions to so-called "S-unit equations" imply that  $E_Q$  is again a  $\Lambda(p)$  set for 2 .

In this paper, we show that for any finite set Q of prime numbers and any real number  $2 , the set <math>E_Q$  satisfies a much stronger analytic property, namely the noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  property; that is,  $E_Q$  is of type  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$ . More precisely, we show that the bound

$$\left\|f\right\|_{L^{p}(S^{p})} \leq C \max\left\{\left\|\left(\sum_{n} \widehat{f}(n)^{*} \widehat{f}(n)\right)^{1/2}\right\|_{S^{p}}, \left\|\left(\sum_{n} \widehat{f}(n) \widehat{f}(n)^{*}\right)^{1/2}\right\|_{S^{p}}\right\}$$

holds for every function  $f \in L^p(S^p)$  whose Fourier coefficients are supported on the set  $E_Q$ , where the constant C > 0 depends only on p and on the cardinality #Q of the set Q. Here  $S^p$  denotes the Schatten p-class over the

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Hilbert space  $\ell_2$ ; it is the Banach space of all compact operators  $x : \ell_2 \to \ell_2$ with a finite norm given by

$$||x||_{S^p} = \left(\operatorname{Tr}(x^*x)^{p/2}\right)^{1/p},$$

where  $\text{Tr}(\cdot)$  denotes the usual trace. The Banach space  $L^p(S^p)$  consists of all Bochner measurable  $S^p$ -valued functions defined on the unit circle, equipped with the norm

$$\|f\|_{L^p(S^p)} = \left(\frac{1}{2\pi} \int_0^{2\pi} \|f(t)\|_{S^p}^p dt\right)^{1/p},$$

where dt is the Lebesgue measure.

To establish our results, we introduce a certain combinatorial property  $Z^{\star}(k)$ , defined for every integer  $k \geq 2$ , and show that every set E with the property  $Z^{\star}(k)$  is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ . In particular, we observe that for any finite set Q of primes, the set  $E_Q$  satisfies  $Z^{\star}(k)$  for every  $k \geq 2$ ; this follows from the number theoretic results mentioned earlier. Note that the sets  $E_Q$  with  $\#Q \geq 2$ , along with their translations, dilations, etc., provide the only currently known examples of sets that are of type  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  for every 2 but are not Sidon sets.

The paper is organized as follows. Sections 2–7 are entirely expository in nature; there we review the definitions and results that are needed in the sequel. In Section 8, we show that the  $Z^*(k)$  property implies the  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  property. In Section 9, we observe that every set  $E_Q$  satisfies  $Z^*(k)$  for all  $k \geq 2$ , and that  $E_Q$  is not a Sidon set if  $\#Q \geq 2$ . In Section 10, we give some concluding remarks.

### 2. Khintchine inequalities

For every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , let  $\varepsilon_n : \{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}} \longrightarrow \{\pm 1\}$  denote the *n*-th coordinate projection, let  $\nu$  be the uniform probability measure on  $\{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}}$ , and let p be an arbitrary real number with 2 .

The classical *Khintchine inequalities* show that there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on p, such that for all  $m \ge 1$  and any sequence  $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_m$  in  $\mathbb{C}$ , one has

(2.1) 
$$\left\|\sum_{n=1}^{m}\varepsilon_{n}x_{n}\right\|_{L^{p}\left(\{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}},\nu,\mathbb{C}\right)} \leq C\left(\sum_{n=1}^{m}|x_{n}|^{2}\right)^{1/2};$$

see [6], for example, for a proof of Khintchine inequalities in the general case  $1 \leq p < \infty$ . The inequalities (2.1) were later generalized to the noncommutative setting by Lust-Piquard [7], who showed that there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on p, such that for all  $m \geq 1$  and any sequence of

operators  $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_m$  in  $S^p$ , the following inequality holds:

(2.2) 
$$\left\|\sum_{n=1}^{m} \varepsilon_{n} x_{n}\right\|_{L^{p}(\{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}}, \nu, S^{p})} \leq C \max\left\{\left\|\left(\sum_{n=1}^{m} x_{n}^{*} x_{n}\right)^{1/2}\right\|_{S^{p}}, \left\|\left(\sum_{n=1}^{m} x_{n} x_{n}^{*}\right)^{1/2}\right\|_{S^{p}}\right\};$$

see [7] for a proof of the noncommutative Khintchine inequalities in the more general case where 1 ; see also [8] for the case <math>p = 1.

3.  $\Lambda(p)$  sets

The notion of a  $\Lambda(p)$  set was first introduced by Zygmund [20] and studied extensively by Rudin [16] and many others. In this paper, we restrict ourselves to the case where  $2 , for simplicity. For any set <math>E \subset \mathbb{Z}$ , let

$$L_E^p = \left\{ f \in L^p \, \middle| \, \widehat{f} \text{ is supported on } E \right\},\$$

where  $\widehat{f}$  denotes the Fourier transform of f. Then E is said to be of type  $\Lambda(p)$ , or E has the  $\Lambda(p)$  property, if there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on p and E, such that for every function in  $L_E^p$ , the following bound holds:

$$\left\|f\right\|_{L^p} \le C \left(\sum_{n \in E} \left|\widehat{f}(n)\right|^2\right)^{1/2}$$

We denote by  $\lambda_p(E)$  the smallest constant C for which this inequality holds for all  $f \in L_E^p$ .

Using convexity, one sees that every  $\Lambda(p)$  set is also a  $\Lambda(q)$  set for any real number 2 < q < p.

We also recall that, as shown in [16], there is a natural size limitation for the intersection of any  $\Lambda(p)$  set with a fixed arithmetic progression. More precisely, if  $2 is fixed, and E is a <math>\Lambda(p)$  set, then

(3.1) 
$$\#(E \cap \{a+b, a+2b, \dots, a+Nb\}) \le 4 (\lambda_p(E))^2 N^{2/p}$$

for all integers a, b, N with  $N \ge 1$ . This result is optimal. Indeed, given  $2 , there is a subset <math>E_N$  of  $\{1, \ldots, N\}$  for each integer N, satisfying  $\#E_N \ge N^{2/p}$  and  $\lambda_p(E_N) \le C_p$ , where the constant  $C_p$  depends only on p. This result was first shown by Rudin for even integers (see [16]), then later by Bourgain for arbitrary real numbers (see [2], and also [19]). It follows that for every  $2 , there exists a <math>\Lambda(p)$  set that is not a  $\Lambda(q)$  set for any q > p.

In [16], a certain combinatorial property has been considered which is not only stronger but often easier to deal with than the analytic property  $\Lambda(2k)$ . Let  $k \geq 1$  be a fixed integer. A set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  is called a  $Z^+(k)$  set if there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on E, such that for all  $\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,

$$\#\{(n_1, n_2, \dots, n_k) \in E^k \mid n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_k = \gamma\} \le C.$$

It has been shown by Rudin [16] that every  $Z^+(k)$  set is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)$ . In particular, for any finite set Q of primes, the set  $E_Q$  satisfies  $Z^+(k)$  for all  $k \geq 1$  (see Section 9); hence it follows that  $E_Q$  is of type  $\Lambda(p)$  for every 2 .

## 4. Noncommutative $\Lambda(p)$ sets

The notion of noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  sets was first introduced and studied in [5]. For  $2 and <math>E \subset \mathbb{Z}$ , let

$$L^p_E(S^p) = \left\{ f \in L^p(S^p) \, \middle| \, \widehat{f} \text{ is supported on } E \right\}.$$

The set E is called a noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  set (or simply, a  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  set) if there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on p and E, such that for every function f in  $L^p_E(S^p)$ , the bound

$$(4.1) \|f\|_{L^p(S^p)} \le C \left\| f \right\|_p$$

holds, where the triple norm  $\|\cdot\|_p$  is defined by

$$\left\| f \right\|_{p} = \max\left\{ \left\| \left( \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} \widehat{f}(n)^{*} \widehat{f}(n) \right)^{1/2} \right\|_{S^{p}}, \left\| \left( \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} \widehat{f}(n) \widehat{f}(n)^{*} \right)^{1/2} \right\|_{S^{p}} \right\}.$$

We denote by  $\lambda_p^{cb}(E)$  the smallest constant C for which the inequality (4.1) holds for all  $f \in L^p_E(S^p)$ . Note that, by convexity, the opposite inequality

(4.2) 
$$|||f|||_p \le ||f||_{L^p(S^p)}$$

always holds for every  $f \in L^p(S^p)$ . We remark that the notation cb is an abbreviation for the words "completely bounded." Harcharras [5] showed that a given set E has the  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  property if and only if every bounded sequence  $(a_n)_{n \in E}$  can be extended to a completely bounded Fourier multiplier on the operator space  $L^p$  when the latter is endowed with its canonical operator space structure as defined by Pisier [13].

It is clear from the definition that every  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  set is necessarily a  $\Lambda(p)$  set; therefore the size restriction (3.1) applies. On the other hand, it has been shown in [5] that there exist sets with the  $\Lambda(p)$  property for every p which do not have the  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  property for any p; thus, the  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  property is much stronger than the  $\Lambda(p)$  property in general.

Note that, by convexity, a  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  set is also a  $\Lambda(q)_{cb}$  set if  $2 < q < p < \infty$ . Building on the work of Rudin [16], it has been shown in [5] that for every even integer p = 2k > 2, there exists a  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  set that does not have the  $\Lambda(q)$ property for any q > p; the general case is still open.

In [5], a combinatorial property has been considered which is stronger and easier to deal with than the analytic property  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ . Let  $k \geq 1$  be a fixed

integer. A set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  is called a Z(k) set if there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on k and E, such that for all  $\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,

$$\#\left\{(n_1, n_2, \dots, n_k) \in E^k \mid n_i \neq n_j \text{ if } i \neq j, \text{ and } \sum_{j=1}^k (-1)^{j+1} n_j = \gamma\right\} \le C.$$

It has been shown in [5] that an arbitrary  $Z^+(k)$  set need not possess the  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  property even though it is a  $\Lambda(2k)$  set as mentioned earlier. However, any set with the Z(k) property is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ .

Our review of the combinatorial property Z(k) has been intended primarily to motivate our consideration of the new property  $Z^*(k)$  introduced in Section 8. In many situations, it is useful to have combinatorial criteria like Z(k) and  $Z^*(k)$  which imply the (albeit weaker) analytic property  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ . For the purposes of this paper, the Z(k) property alone is insufficient, since for an arbitrary finite set Q of primes, the set  $E_Q$  need not be of type Z(k). For example, taking  $Q = \{2, 3\}$ , the relation

$$2^{i+3}3^j - 2^i 3^{j+2} + 2^i 3^j = 0, \qquad \forall \, i, j \ge 0,$$

implies that  $E_Q$  is not of type Z(3) even though it is of type  $Z^*(k)$  for all  $k \ge 2$  and therefore of type  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  for every 2 (see Section 9).

# 5. Sidon sets

A set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  is called a Sidon set if there exists a constant C > 0, depending only on E, such that for all functions  $f \in L_E^{\infty}$ , the following bound holds:

(5.1) 
$$\sum_{n \in E} \left| \widehat{f}(n) \right| \le C \left\| f \right\|_{L^{\infty}}.$$

We denote by  $\lambda_{\infty}(E)$  the smallest constant C for which this inequality holds for all  $f \in L_E^{\infty}$ .

It is well known that a Sidon set is a  $\Lambda(p)$  set for every 2 . In fact, $it is a <math>\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  set for every 2 as shown in [5]. On the other hand,there is a natural size limitation for the intersections of any Sidon set with afixed arithmetic progression. It has been shown in [16] that there exists anabsolute constant <math>C > 0 such that for every Sidon set E,

$$#(E \cap \{a+b, a+2b, \dots, a+Nb\}) \le C(\lambda_{\infty}(E))^2 \log N$$

for all integers a, b, N with  $N \ge 1$ .

# 6. Pisier's Rademacherization principle

In this section, we describe a result of [14] that can be used to determine nontrivial upper bounds for the norm of certain sums of products of operators in which various repetitions of the indices occur.

Given two partitions  $\mathcal{P} = \{\mathcal{P}_j\}$  and  $\mathcal{Q} = \{\mathcal{Q}_i\}$  of the set  $\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ , write  $\mathcal{P} \leq \mathcal{Q}$  if for every  $j, \mathcal{P}_j \subset \mathcal{Q}_i$  for some i, and write  $\mathcal{P} < \mathcal{Q}$  whenever  $\mathcal{P} \leq \mathcal{Q}$  and  $\mathcal{P} \neq \mathcal{Q}$ . It is easily verified that the relation  $\leq$  provides a partial order on the set of all partitions of  $\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ ; the unique minimal element with respect to  $\leq$  is the partition  $\mathcal{P}_{\min} = \{\{1\}, \{2\}, \ldots, \{k\}\}$ , while  $\mathcal{P}_{\max} = \{\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}\}$  is the unique maximal element.

Given a k-tuple  $n = (n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_k) \in E^k$ , where E is an arbitrary set, let  $\mathcal{P}_n = \{\mathcal{P}_{n,j}\}$  denote the canonical partition attached to n; that is, for all  $1 \leq i, \ell \leq k$ , both i and  $\ell$  belong to the same set  $\mathcal{P}_{n,j}$  if and only if  $n_i = n_\ell$ .

PROPOSITION 1. Let  $(\Omega, \Sigma, \mathbb{P})$  be a probability space and  $\{\varepsilon_n\}_{n \in E}$  a family of independent random variables with

$$\mathbb{P}(\{\varepsilon_n = 1\}) = \mathbb{P}(\{\varepsilon_n = -1\}) = 1/2, \qquad \forall n \in E.$$

Let  $k \ge 2$  be an arbitrary integer. For  $1 \le j \le k$ , let  $X_j$  be a Banach space, and  $f_j : E \longrightarrow X_j$  a finitely supported function. Let

$$\varphi: X_1 \times X_2 \times \cdots \times X_k \longrightarrow X$$

be a k-linear map of norm at most 1, where X is a given Banach space. Finally, for any partition  $\mathcal{P}$  of the set  $\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ , put

$$A_{\mathcal{P}} = \{ j \in \{1, 2, \dots, k\} \mid \{j\} \in \mathcal{P} \}.$$

Then the following inequality holds:

$$\left\|\sum_{\substack{n=(n_1,\dots,n_k)\in E^k\\\mathcal{P}_n\geq\mathcal{P}}}\varphi\big(f_1(n_1),\dots,f_k(n_k)\big)\right\|_X$$
  
$$\leq \prod_{j\in A_\mathcal{P}}\left\|\sum_{n\in E}f_j(n)\right\|_{X_j}\prod_{\substack{1\leq j\leq k\\j\notin A_\mathcal{P}}}\left(\int_{\Omega}\left\|\sum_{n\in E}\varepsilon_nf_j(n)\right\|_{X_j}^k d\mathbb{P}\right)^{1/k}.$$

#### 7. Some operator norm inequalities

PROPOSITION 2. Let  $1 \le p \le \infty$ , a, b > 1 with  $a^{-1} + b^{-1} = 1$ , y a positive operator in  $S^{ap}$ , and  $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_m$  a sequence of operators, each in  $S^{2bp}$ . Then the following inequality holds:

$$\left\|\sum_{n=1}^{m} x_{n}^{*} y x_{n}\right\|_{S^{p}} \leq \left\|y\right\|_{S^{ap}} \max\left\{\left\|\sum_{n=1}^{m} x_{n}^{*} x_{n}\right\|_{S^{bp}}, \left\|\sum_{n=1}^{m} x_{n} x_{n}^{*}\right\|_{S^{bp}}\right\}.$$

This proposition first appears in [7] when  $x_1, x_2, \ldots x_n$  is a sequence of selfadjoint operators. The general case requires only the three line lemma and can be found in [15].

The following corollary follows from Proposition 2 by a simple inductive argument.

COROLLARY 3. Let  $1 \leq p \leq \infty$  and  $k \geq 1$  be fixed. For each  $1 \leq j \leq k$ , let  $E_j$  be a finite set of indices, let  $a_j > 1$ , and let  $\{x_{j,n}\}_{n \in E_j}$  be a family of operators in  $S^{2a_jp}$ . Finally, suppose that  $\sum_{j=1}^k a_j^{-1} = 1$ . Then the following inequality holds:

$$\left\| \sum_{n_{j} \in E_{j}, 1 \leq j \leq k} x_{k,n_{k}}^{*} \dots x_{2,n_{2}}^{*} x_{1,n_{1}}^{*} x_{1,n_{1}} x_{2,n_{2}} \dots x_{k,n_{k}} \right\|_{S^{p}}$$
$$\leq \prod_{j=1}^{k} \max\left\{ \left\| \sum_{n \in E_{j}} x_{j,n}^{*} x_{j,n} \right\|_{S^{a_{j}p}}, \left\| \sum_{n \in E_{j}} x_{j,n} x_{j,n}^{*} \right\|_{S^{a_{j}p}} \right\}.$$

## 8. Main results

Throughout this section, let k be a fixed integer with  $k \geq 2$ . Here we introduce a new combinatorial property for sets  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$ , similar to the Z(k) property described in Section 4.

We say that a set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  has the property  $Z^*(k)$  if there is a constant C > 0, depending only on E and k, such that:

(i) For every nonzero  $\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}$ , the conditions

(8.1) 
$$n_1 - n_2 + \dots + (-1)^{k+1} n_k = \gamma$$

and

(8.2) 
$$\sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}} (-1)^{j+1} n_j \neq 0 \quad \text{for all } \emptyset \neq \mathcal{J} \subsetneq \{1, \dots, k\}$$

are satisfied for at most C elements  $(n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_k) \in E^k$ .

(ii) For every  $\emptyset \neq \mathcal{J} \subset \{1, \ldots, k\}$ , there are at most C vectors  $\mathbf{v}_{\ell} \in \mathbb{Q}^{\#\mathcal{J}}$ such that if the vector  $n = (n_j)_{j \in \mathcal{J}} \in E^{\#\mathcal{J}}$  satisfies the conditions

(8.3) 
$$\sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}} (-1)^{j+1} n_j = 0$$

and

(8.4) 
$$\sum_{j \in \mathcal{J}'} (-1)^{j+1} n_j \neq 0 \quad \text{for all } \emptyset \neq \mathcal{J}' \subsetneq \mathcal{J},$$

then  $n = \eta v_{\ell}$  for some  $\eta \in E$  and some  $1 \leq \ell \leq C$ .

THEOREM 4. If a set  $E \subset \mathbb{Z}$  has the property  $Z^*(k)$ , then E is a  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  set.

*Proof.* Without loss of generality, one can assume that  $E \subset \mathbb{N}$ . Throughout the proof, the letter C is used to denote any positive constant that occurs and depends only on k and or E; its precise meaning might change from line to line.

For every  $n = (n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_k) \in E^k$ , let  $R_n$  denote the collection of all subsets  $\emptyset \neq \mathcal{J} \subsetneq \{1, \ldots, k\}$  such that (8.3) and (8.4) hold, and let  $\mathcal{R}$  be the set of all collections obtained in this way; that is,

$$\mathcal{R} = \{ R \mid R = R_n \text{ for some } n \in E^k \}.$$

For  $R, R' \in \mathcal{R}$ , write R' < R or R > R' whenever  $\emptyset \neq R' \subsetneq R$ . Then the relation < defines a partial order on  $\mathcal{R}$ . We also put

$$d_0 = \max\{\#R \,|\, R \in \mathcal{R}\},\$$

and for  $0 \leq d \leq d_0$ , let

$$\mathcal{R}(d) = \{ R \in \mathcal{R} \, | \, \#R = d \}$$

Then  $\mathcal{R}$  is the disjoint union  $\mathcal{R} = \bigcup_{d=0}^{d_0} \mathcal{R}(d)$ . Now let  $f = \sum_{n \in E} x_n e^{int}$  be fixed; note that  $x_n = \widehat{f}(n) \in S^{2k}$  for every  $n \in E$ . For simplicity, we assume that the Fourier transform  $\hat{f}$  is finitely supported.

For every k-tuple  $n = (n_1, n_2, \ldots, n_k) \in E^k$ , let

$$\widetilde{x}_n = x_{n_1}^{\mu_1} x_{n_2}^{\mu_2} \dots x_{n_k}^{\mu_k} \in S^2,$$

where  $\mu_j = 1$  if j is odd, and  $\mu_j = *$  if j is even. Then

$$\left\|f\right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} = \left\|f^{\mu_1}f^{\mu_2}\dots f^{\mu_k}\right\|_{L^2(S^2)}^2 = \left\|\sum_{\gamma\in\mathbb{Z}}e^{i\gamma t}\sum_{n\in E^k(\gamma)}\widetilde{x}_n\right\|_{L^2(S^2)}^2,$$

where for each  $\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}$ ,

$$E^{k}(\gamma) = \{n = (n_1, n_2, \dots, n_k) \in E^{k} \mid n_1 - n_2 + \dots + (-1)^{k+1} n_k = \gamma\}$$

It follows that

$$\begin{split} \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} &= \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\|\sum_{n \in E^{k}(\gamma)} \widetilde{x}_{n}\right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} = \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\|\sum_{\substack{0 \le d \le d_{0} \\ R \in \mathcal{R}(d)}} \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} = R}} \widetilde{x}_{n}\right\|_{S^{2}}^{2}, \\ \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} &\leq C \sum_{\substack{0 \le d \le d_{0} \\ R \in \mathcal{R}(d)}} \sum_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}}} \left\|\sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} = R}} \widetilde{x}_{n}\right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} = C \sum_{\substack{0 \le d \le d_{0} \\ R \in \mathcal{R}(d)}} \mathcal{S}(R), \end{split}$$

where we have set

$$\mathcal{S}(R) = \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^k(\gamma) \\ R_n = R}} \widetilde{x}_n \right\|_{S^2}^2.$$

For each collection R with  $0 < \# R < d_0$ , one has

$$\begin{split} \mathcal{S}(R) &\leq 2 \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} \geq R}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} + 2 \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} > R}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \\ &\leq 2 \, \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) + C \sum_{\substack{d < d' \leq d_{0} \\ R' \in \mathcal{R}(d')}} \mathcal{S}(R'), \end{split}$$

where we have set

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) = \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^k(\gamma) \\ R_n \ge R}} \widetilde{x}_n \right\|_{S^2}^2;$$

when #R = 0 or  $\#R = d_0$ , it is clear that  $\mathcal{S}(R) = \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R)$ . Consequently,

(8.5) 
$$\left\|f\right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} \le C \sum_{\substack{0 \le d \le d_0\\ R \in \mathcal{R}(d)}} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R).$$

Step 1. We start by showing that the inequality  $\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(\emptyset) \leq C |||f|||_{2k}^{2k}$  holds for some constant C > 0. Indeed,

(8.6) 
$$\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(\emptyset) = \mathcal{S}(\emptyset) = \sum_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z} \\ \gamma \neq 0}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^k(\gamma) \\ R_n = \emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_n \right\|_{S^2}^2 + \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^k(0) \\ R_n = \emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_n \right\|_{S^2}^2.$$

Since E has the property  $Z^*(k)$ , for every  $\gamma \neq 0$  the equation (8.1) has at most C solutions  $n \in E^k$  such that (8.2) also holds. Thus,

$$\begin{split} \sum_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z} \\ \gamma \neq 0}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} = \emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} &\leq C \sum_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z} \\ \gamma \neq 0}} \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} = \emptyset}} \left\| \widetilde{x}_{n}^{*} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{1}} \\ &\leq C \sum_{n \in E^{k}} \left\| \widetilde{x}_{n}^{*} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{1}} = C \left\| \sum_{n \in E^{k}} \widetilde{x}_{n}^{*} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{1}} \\ &= C \left\| \sum_{n_{1}, n_{2}, \dots, n_{k} \in E} (x_{n_{k}}^{\mu_{k}})^{*} \dots (x_{n_{2}}^{\mu_{2}})^{*} (x_{n_{1}}^{\mu_{1}})^{*} x_{n_{1}}^{\mu_{1}} x_{n_{2}}^{\mu_{2}} \dots x_{n_{k}}^{\mu_{k}} \right\|_{S^{1}} \\ &\leq C \prod_{j=1}^{k} \max \Big\{ \left\| \sum_{n_{j} \in E} x_{n_{j}}^{*} x_{n_{j}} \right\|_{S^{k}}, \left\| \sum_{n_{j} \in E} x_{n_{j}} x_{n_{j}}^{*} \right\|_{S^{k}} \Big\}, \end{split}$$

where for the last inequality, we have applied Corollary 3. It follows that

$$\sum_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z} \\ \gamma \neq 0}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^k(\gamma) \\ R_n = \emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_n \right\|_{S^2}^2 \le C \left\| \|f\| \right\|_{2k}^{2k}.$$

For every *n* occurring in the second term of (8.6), since  $\gamma = 0$ , we see that the equation (8.3) holds with  $\mathcal{J} = \{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ ; since  $R_n = \emptyset$ , the condition (8.4) also applies. Hence, since *E* has the property  $Z^*(k)$ , there are at most *C* vectors  $\mathbf{v}_{\ell} \in \mathbb{Q}^k$  such that for each *n* occurring in the second term of (8.6),  $n = \eta \mathbf{v}_{\ell}$  for some  $\eta \in E$  and  $1 \leq \ell \leq C$ . Using Cauchy-Schwarz's inequality, we see that

$$\left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(0) \\ R_{n} = \emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \leq C \sum_{1 \leq \ell \leq C} \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_{1}} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_{2}} \dots x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_{k}} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2}.$$

Note that here and elsewhere in the proof, we write  $x_z = 0$  if  $z \in \mathbb{Q}, z \notin E$ .

At this point, fix  $1 \leq \ell \leq C$ . We apply Proposition 1 with the following choices:  $\Omega$  is  $\{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}}$  equipped with the counting probability;  $\{\varepsilon_{\eta}\}_{\eta \in E}$  is a family of coordinate projections, where  $\varepsilon_{\eta}$  is the  $m_{\eta}$ -th projection on  $\Omega$ , for some enumeration  $\{m_{\eta} \mid \eta \in E\}$  of the set  $\mathbb{N}$ ;  $\mathcal{P}$  is the maximal partition  $\mathcal{P}_{\max}$ ;  $\varphi$  is the k-linear contractive map that is simply the k-fold product from  $S^{2k} \times S^{2k} \times \cdots \times S^{2k}$  into  $S^2$ ; the functions  $f_j : E \longrightarrow S^{2k}$  are defined by mapping  $\eta \in E$  to  $f_j(\eta) = x_{\eta_{\mathcal{V}_{\ell,j}}}^{\mu_j}$  in  $S^{2k}$ , for each  $1 \leq j \leq k$ . By the proposition, it follows that

$$\left\|\sum_{\eta\in E} x_{\eta\mathsf{v}_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_1} x_{\eta\mathsf{v}_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_2} \dots x_{\eta\mathsf{v}_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_k}\right\|_{S^2} \leq \prod_{j=1}^k \left(\int_\Omega \left\|\sum_{\eta\in E} \varepsilon_\eta \, x_{\eta\mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}}\right\|_{S^{2k}}^k d\,\mathbb{P}\right)^{1/k}$$

Now, apply Jensen's inequality followed by the noncommutative version of the Khintchine inequalities (2.2) as follows:

$$\left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_1} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_2} \dots x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_k} \right\|_{S^2} \leq \prod_{j=1}^k \left( \int_{\Omega} \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} \varepsilon_\eta \, x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}} \right\|_{S^{2k}}^{2k} \, d\, \mathbb{P} \right)^{1/(2k)} \\ \leq C \prod_{j=1}^k \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}} e^{\mathrm{i}\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}} t \right\|_{2k} \leq C \, \left\| f \right\|_{2k}^k.$$

since for each  $1 \leq j \leq C$ ,

$$\left\|\left\|\sum_{\eta\in E} x_{\eta\mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}} e^{\mathrm{i}\eta\mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}\,t}\right\|\right\|_{2k} \leq \left\|\left|f\right|\right\|_{2k}$$

It follows that

$$\left\|\sum_{\substack{n\in E^k(0)\\R_n=\emptyset}} \widetilde{x}_n\right\|_{S^2}^2 \le C \|\|f\|\|_{2k}^{2k},$$

which completes Step 1.

Step 2. Next, we show that the inequality  $\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) \leq C \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k-2} \|\|f\|_{2k}^{2k}$ holds for every  $1 \leq d \leq d_0$  and every  $R \in \mathcal{R}(d)$ .

For this aim, fix  $1 \leq d \leq d_0$  and  $R \in \mathcal{R}(d)$ . There is a canonical equivalence relation  $\mathcal{P}_R$  induced by the collection R on the set  $\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ , defined as follows. Write  $j \equiv \ell \pmod{\mathcal{P}_R}$  if and only if there exists a positive integer  $t = t(j, \ell)$  and sets  $\mathcal{J}_1, \ldots, \mathcal{J}_t$  in the collection R such that:

- (i)  $j \in \mathcal{J}_1$  and  $\ell \in \mathcal{J}_t$ .
- (ii)  $\mathcal{J}_j \cap \mathcal{J}_{j+1} \neq \emptyset$  for  $1 \leq j < t$ .

Let  $\mathcal{P}_R$  also denote the corresponding partition of  $\{1, 2, \ldots, k\}$ , and let  $a_R$  denote the number of singleton sets in  $\mathcal{P}_R$ . Below we show the following more precise inequality:

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) = \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} \ge R}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \le C \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2a_{R}} \|f\|_{2k}^{2k-2a_{R}}.$$

Combining (ii) in property  $Z^*(k)$  with condition (ii) in our definition of the equivalence relation  $\mathcal{P}_R$  above, it is not hard to see that there are at most C vectors  $\mathbf{v}_{\ell} = (\mathbf{v}_{\ell,j})_{j=1}^k \in \mathbb{Q}^k$  with the following properties:

- (i)  $\mathbf{v}_{\ell,j} = 1$  if  $\{j\} \in \mathcal{P}_R$ .
- (ii) For every  $n = (n_1, n_2, ..., n_k) \in E^k$ , the inequality  $R_n \ge R$  holds if and only if for some  $1 \le \ell \le C$  and some  $\eta = (\eta_1, \eta_2, ..., \eta_k) \in E^k$ with  $\eta_i = \eta_\ell$  whenever  $i \equiv \ell \pmod{\mathcal{P}_R}$ ,  $n_j = \eta_j \mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}$  for all  $1 \le j \le k$ .

Consequently,

$$\begin{split} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) &= \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} \ge R}} \widetilde{x}_{n} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} = \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{n = (n_{1}, \dots, n_{k}) \in E^{k}(\gamma) \\ R_{n} \ge R}} x_{n_{1}}^{\mu_{1}} x_{n_{2}}^{\mu_{2}} \dots x_{n_{k}}^{\mu_{k}} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \\ &= \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{1 \le \ell \le C \\ \eta_{1} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,1} - \eta_{2} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,2} + \dots + (-1)^{k+1} \eta_{k} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,k} = \gamma}} x_{\eta_{1} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_{1}} x_{\eta_{2} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_{2}} \dots x_{\eta_{k} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_{k}} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \\ &\le C \sum_{1 \le \ell \le C} \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} \left\| \sum_{\substack{\eta = (\eta_{1}, \dots, \eta_{k}) \in E^{k}, \ \mathcal{P}_{\eta} \ge \mathcal{P}_{R} \\ \eta_{1} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,1} - \eta_{2} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,2} + \dots + (-1)^{k+1} \eta_{k} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,k} = \gamma}} x_{\eta_{1} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_{1}} x_{\eta_{2} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_{2}} \dots x_{\eta_{k} \mathbf{v}_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_{k}} \right\|_{S^{2}}^{2} \end{split}$$

$$= C \sum_{1 \le \ell \le C} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{\ell}(R).$$

where  $\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{\ell}(R)$  denotes the inner summation for each  $\ell$ .

Let  $1 \leq \ell \leq C$  be fixed; then we can estimate  $\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{\ell}(R)$  as follows:

$$\begin{split} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{\ell}(R) &= \left\| \sum_{\gamma \in \mathbb{Z}} e^{i\gamma t} \sum_{\substack{\eta = (\eta_1, \dots, \eta_k) \in E^k, \ \mathcal{P}_{\eta} \ge \mathcal{P}_R \\ \eta_1 v_{\ell,1} - \eta_2 v_{\ell,2} + \dots + (-1)^{k+1} \eta_k v_{\ell,k} = \gamma}} x_{\eta_1 v_{\ell,1}}^{\mu_1} x_{\eta_2 v_{\ell,2}}^{\mu_2} \dots x_{\eta_k v_{\ell,k}}^{\mu_k} \right\|_{L^2(S^2)}^2 \\ &= \left\| \sum_{\substack{\eta = (\eta_1, \dots, \eta_k) \in E^k \\ \mathcal{P}_{\eta} \ge \mathcal{P}_R}} \left( x_{\eta_1 v_{\ell,1}} e^{i\eta_1 v_{\ell,1}} \right)^{\mu_1} \dots \left( x_{\eta_k v_{\ell,k}} e^{i\eta_k v_{\ell,k}} \right)^{\mu_k} \right\|_{L^2(S^2)}^2. \end{split}$$

We apply Proposition 1 with the following choices:  $\Omega$  is  $\{\pm 1\}^{\mathbb{N}}$  equipped with the counting probability;  $\{\varepsilon_{\eta}\}_{\eta\in E}$  is a family of coordinate projections, where  $\varepsilon_{\eta}$  is the  $m_{\eta}$ -th projection on  $\Omega$ , for some enumeration  $\{m_{\eta} \mid \eta \in E\}$  of the set  $\mathbb{N}$ ;  $\mathcal{P}$  is the partition  $\mathcal{P}_{R}$ ;  $\varphi$  is the k-linear contractive map that is simply the k-fold product from  $L^{2k}(S^{2k}) \times L^{2k}(S^{2k}) \times \cdots \times L^{2k}(S^{2k})$  into  $L^{2}(S^{2})$ ; the functions  $f_{j}: E \longrightarrow L^{2k}(S^{2k})$  are defined by mapping  $\eta \in E$  to

$$f_j(\eta): t \mapsto \left(x_{\eta \mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}} e^{\mathrm{i}\eta \mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}t}\right)^{\mu_j}$$

for each  $1 \leq j \leq k$ . Note that each  $f_j \in L^{2k}(S^{2k})$ . By the proposition, it follows that

$$\begin{split} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{\ell}(R)^{1/2} \\ &\leq \prod_{\substack{1 \leq j \leq k \\ \{j\} \in \mathcal{P}_{R}}} \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} f_{j}(\eta) \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})} \prod_{\substack{1 \leq j \leq k \\ \{j\} \notin \mathcal{P}_{R}}} \left( \int_{\Omega} \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} \varepsilon_{\eta} f_{j}(\eta) \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{k} d\mathbb{P} \right)^{1/k} \\ &= \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta} e^{i\eta t} \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{a_{R}} \prod_{\substack{1 \leq j \leq k \\ \{j\} \notin \mathcal{P}_{R}}} \left( \int_{\Omega} \left\| \sum_{\eta \in E} \varepsilon_{\eta} x_{\eta \mathbf{v}_{\ell,j}} e^{i\eta \mathbf{v}_{\ell,j} t} \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} d\mathbb{P} \right)^{1/2k} \\ &\leq C \left\| f \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{a_{R}} \prod_{\substack{1 \leq j \leq k \\ \{j\} \notin \mathcal{P}_{R}}} \widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{j}, \end{split}$$

where for the second inequality, we have used Jensen's inequality, and for the third one, we have used Fubini's Theorem followed by (2.2), and where

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}_{j} = \max\left\{ \left\| \left( \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}}^{*} \right)^{1/2} \right\|_{S^{2k}}, \left( \sum_{\eta \in E} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}}^{*} x_{\eta \mathsf{v}_{\ell,j}} \right)^{1/2} \right\|_{S^{2k}} \right\} \le \left\| \|f\| \right\|_{2k}$$

for every  $1 \leq j \leq k$  with  $\{j\} \notin \mathcal{P}_R$ . Therefore, we have shown that for each  $1 \leq \ell \leq C$ ,

$$\widetilde{S}_{\ell}(R) \le C \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2a_R} \|f\|_{2k}^{2k-2a_R}$$

It follows that

$$\widetilde{\mathcal{S}}(R) \le C \left\| f \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2a_R} \left\| f \right\|_{2k}^{2k-2a_R} \le C \left\| f \right\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k-2} \left\| f \right\|_{2k}^2$$

where for the second inequality, we have used (4.2). This completes Step 2.

Step 3. Combining our estimates from Steps 1 and 2, we have by (8.5):

$$\|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k} \le C\left(\left\|\|f\|\right\|_{2k}^{2k} + \|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})}^{2k-2} \|\|f\|_{2k}^{2}\right),$$

which clearly implies that

$$\|f\|_{L^{2k}(S^{2k})} \le C \|\|f\|\|_{2k}.$$

This completes the proof.

# 9. S-unit equations

In this section, we use some known number theoretic results to show that for an arbitrary finite set Q of primes, the set  $E_O$  is of type  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  for 2 .

Let K be an algebraic number field of degree d; that is, K is a finite extension of the rationals  $\mathbb{Q}$ , with  $d = [K : \mathbb{Q}]$ . Let S be a finite collection of places of K containing all of the archimedean places, and let  $\mathcal{U}_S$  be the group of S-units inside the integral closure  $\mathcal{O}_K$  of  $\mathbb{Z}$  in K. Given nonzero elements  $a_1, \ldots, a_k \in K$ , one is interested in counting the number of nondegenerate solutions to the S-unit equation

$$(9.1) a_1 x_1 + a_2 x_2 + \dots + a_k x_k = 1, x_1, x_2, \dots, x_k \in \mathcal{U}_S,$$

i.e., those where no proper subsum  $a_{j_1}x_{j_1} + \cdots + a_{j_\ell}x_{j_\ell}$  vanishes.

Mahler [9] proved that for k = 2 and  $K = \mathbb{Q}$ , (9.1) has only finitely many solutions. Van der Poorten and Schlickewei [12] and Evertse [3] independently proved that for all  $k \ge 2$  and every number field K, (9.1) has only finitely many solutions. This result was later extended by Evertse and Győry [4], who showed that the number of solutions is bounded by a constant which is independent of the coefficients  $a_1, \ldots, a_k$ . Later, Schlickewei showed that the constant depends only on k, on the cardinality #S of the set S, and on the degree d (see [17] for the case  $K = \mathbb{Q}$ , and [18] for the general case).

In particular, when  $K = \mathbb{Q}$ , for any finite set Q of primes, one can apply the results of [17] mentioned above with  $S = Q \cup \{\infty\}$  to deduce that  $E_Q$ satisfies both properties  $Z^+(k)$  and  $Z^*(k)$  for all  $k \ge 2$ , where the constant C > 0 depends only on k and on the cardinality #Q of the set Q. In fact, our definition of property  $Z^*(k)$  was chosen with precisely these sets in mind. Applying now Theorem 4 together with our remarks from Section 4, we obtain the following: THEOREM 5. Let Q be a nonempty finite set of prime numbers. Then the set  $E_Q$  is of type  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  for every real number 2 .

We conclude this section by observing that  $E_Q$  is not a Sidon set whenever  $\#Q \ge 2$ . Indeed, let s = #Q, and let  $q_1 < q_2 < \cdots < q_s$  be the primes in Q. Then for all nonnegative integers  $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \ldots, \alpha_s \le (\log N)/(s \log q_s)$ , the integer  $n = q_1^{\alpha_1} q_2^{\alpha_2} \ldots q_s^{\alpha_s}$  lies in  $E_Q$  and in [1, N]. Thus, if N is sufficiently large,

$$#(E_Q \cap [1, N]) \ge C (\log N)^s,$$

where the constant C > 0 depends only on Q. This contradicts (5.1) (with a = 0 and b = 1) whenever  $s = \#Q \ge 2$ .

### 10. Remarks

The notions of  $\Lambda(p)$  and  $\Lambda(p)_{cb}$  sets and the properties  $Z^+(k)$  and Z(k) can be naturally defined for an arbitrary discrete group G. In this more general context, it has been shown that any subset of G with the  $Z^+(k)$  property is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)$ . The argument is identical to that given by Rudin in the special case  $G = \mathbb{Z}$ ; see [16]. It is also known that any subset of Gwith the Z(k) property is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  by the results of [5]. It would be interesting to find a suitable generalization of the property  $Z^*(k)$ for an arbitrary discrete group G and to show that any subset of G with the  $Z^*(k)$  property is necessarily of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ . It would also be of interest to obtain explicit examples of  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  sets in G that are similar to the sets  $E_Q$ considered here.

Let G be any discrete group and  $k \geq 2$  a fixed integer. If a set  $E \subset G$  has the Z(k) property, then it is of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$  as we have just mentioned. Consequently, the union of any finite number of sets with the Z(k) property is also of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ . It is natural to ask whether the converse statement is also true; this question was originally raised by Pisier when  $G = \mathbb{Z}$  and is still open.

QUESTION 1. Let G be a discrete group, and let  $E \subset G$  be a set of type  $\Lambda(2k)_{cb}$ , where k > 2 is a fixed integer. Does there exist a finite collection  $E_1, E_2, \ldots, E_c$  of subsets of G such that each  $E_j$  has the Z(k) property and such that E is the union of the  $E_j$ ?

Using Mihăilescu's recent proof of the Catalan conjecture (see [10], and also [1]), one can show that every set  $E_Q$  with #Q = 2 can be decomposed into (at most) four sets, each with the Z(3) property. In particular, this shows that  $E_Q$  is of type  $\Lambda(6)_{cb}$  without using our Theorem 4. However, we do not see how to generalize this to an arbitrary set  $E_Q$  and an arbitrary integer  $k \geq 2$ , since the appropriate analogue to Mihăilescu's result is missing.

Finally, it has been shown in [5] that any noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  set cannot contain the sum A + A for any infinite set A. Neuwirth [11] later noticed that the arguments in [5] can be slightly modified to show that a noncommutative  $\Lambda(p)$  set cannot contain the sum A + B for any infinite sets A and B. By Theorem 4, this can therefore be applied to any set E with the property  $Z^*(k)$ . For the special sets  $E_Q$ , stronger results are known:  $E_Q$  cannot contain the sum A + B for any infinite set A and any set B with at least two elements. This follows, for example, from a fairly deep result due to Mahler: for any finite set of primes Q, the gaps between consecutive integers free of primes outside of Q tend to infinity. The authors wish to thank Carl Pomerance for bringing this to our attention.

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DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI, COLUMBIA, MO 65211, USA *E-mail address*, William D. Banks: bbanks@math.missouri.edu *E-mail address*, Asma Harcharras: harchars@math.missouri.edu