

Course 9 - Homological aspects of elimination.

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1. Resultant ideal and annihilators.

- Given a commutative ring A and polynomials $f_1, \dots, f_r \in A[x_1, \dots, x_n]$ homogeneous of degree $d_i \geq 1$, one considers the elimination ideal

$$\mathcal{Q} := (\mathcal{I} : \mathfrak{m}^\infty)_0 = (\mathcal{I} : \mathfrak{m}^0) \cap A \\ = \{ a \in A \text{ such that } \exists m \in \mathbb{N} \text{ a } x_i^m \in \mathcal{I} \forall i \}$$

with the notation $\mathcal{I} = (f_1, \dots, f_r)$ and $\mathfrak{m} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$.

This ideal provides necessary and sufficient condition(s) for the existence of a common root of the f_i 's under specialization.

- Set $\mathcal{B} := A[x_1, \dots, x_n]_{\mathcal{I}}$. It is a graded ring. We define

$$H_{\mathfrak{m}}^0(\mathcal{B}) := \{ b \in \mathcal{B} \text{ such that } \exists k \in \mathbb{N} \mathfrak{m}^k \cdot b = \underline{\mathcal{B}}_0 \}$$

This is a homogeneous ideal of \mathcal{B} ; we clearly have the

isomorphism $(\mathcal{I} : \mathfrak{m}^\infty)_{\mathcal{I}} \cong H_{\mathfrak{m}}^0(\mathcal{B})$.

In particular, $(\mathcal{I} : \mathfrak{m}^\infty)_0 = H_{\mathfrak{m}}^0(\mathcal{B})_0 = \mathcal{Q}$ (we assume $A \cap \mathcal{I} = 0$).

- Link with annihilators.

For any couple $(\nu, t) \in \mathbb{N}^2$ we define the A -linear map

$$\mathcal{D}_{\nu, t} : \mathcal{B}_\nu \longrightarrow \text{Hom}_A(\mathcal{B}_t, \mathcal{B}_{\nu+t}) \\ b \longmapsto \begin{cases} \mathcal{B}_t \rightarrow \mathcal{B}_{\nu+t} \\ c \mapsto b \cdot c \end{cases}$$

By definition of $H_m^0(\mathcal{B})$, for all $\nu \in \mathbb{N}$ we have

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$$H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_\nu = \bigcup_{t \in \mathbb{N}} \text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t}).$$

Moreover, $\forall (\nu, t) \in \mathbb{N}^2$, we have

$$\text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t}) \subset \text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t+1})$$

because the multiplication $\mathcal{B}_\nu \otimes \mathcal{B}_t \rightarrow \mathcal{B}_{\nu+t}$ is surjective, so if $b \in \text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t})$ then $b \cdot c = 0$ for all $c \in \mathcal{B}_{t+1}$.

ms) $H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_\nu$ is a union of kernels that form an increasing sequence.

Now, recall that $\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_t) = \text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{0,t}) \forall t$. Thus, setting $\nu=0$

we get

$$\mathcal{Q} = H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_0 = \bigcup_{t \geq 0} \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_t)$$

with $(0) = \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_0) \subset \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_1) \subset \dots \subset \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_t) \subset \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_{t+1}) \subset \dots$

Proposition: Let $\nu \in \mathbb{N}$ such that $H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_\nu = 0$, then

$$\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu) = \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_{\nu+t}) = H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_0 = \mathcal{Q} \quad \forall t \geq 0.$$

Proof: We know that $\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu) \subset \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_{\nu+t}) \forall t \geq 0$.

Let $a \in \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_{\nu+t})$, i.e. $a \cdot \mathcal{B}_{\nu+t} = 0$. By def. of $\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t}$ we see that $a \cdot \mathcal{B}_\nu \subset \text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t})$. Therefore, if $\text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t}) = 0$ then $a \in \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu)$ and hence $\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu) = \text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_{\nu+t})$.

But the assumption $H_m^0(\mathcal{B})_\nu = 0$ implies that $\text{Ker}(\mathcal{D}_{\nu,t}) = 0 \forall t \geq 0$ and the result is proved. \square

ms) \mathcal{Q} is the annihilator of a graded component of \mathcal{B} ; we need to control \mathcal{B} and $H_m^0(\mathcal{B})$.

2. Tools from homological algebra

• Exact sequences

- A sequence $X_{-1} \xrightarrow{f} X_0 \xrightarrow{g} Z$ of commutative groups is exact if

$$\text{ker } g = \text{Im } f$$

- A sequence $X_{n+1} \xrightarrow{f_{n+1}} X_n \xrightarrow{f_n} \dots$ is exact if $\text{ker } f_n = \text{Im } f_{n+1} \forall n$

- A short exact sequence is an exact sequence of the form

$$0 \rightarrow X \xrightarrow{f} Y \xrightarrow{g} Z \rightarrow 0$$

- A morphism of long exact sequences is a family of morphisms $(h_n: X_n \rightarrow Y_n)_n$ such that $h_n \circ f_{n+1} = g_{n+1} \circ h_{n+1} \forall n$

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} \dots & X_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{f_{n+1}} & X_n & \xrightarrow{f_n} & X_{n-1} & \rightarrow \dots \\ & \downarrow h_{n+1} & \circlearrowleft & \downarrow h_n & \circlearrowleft & \downarrow h_{n-1} & \dots \\ \dots & Y_{n+1} & \rightarrow & Y_n & \rightarrow & Y_{n-1} & \rightarrow \dots \end{array}$$

Five lemma:

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc} X_{n+2} & \xrightarrow{f_{n+2}} & X_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{f_{n+1}} & X_n & \xrightarrow{f_n} & X_{n-1} \rightarrow X_{n-2} & \text{(exact)} \\ h_{n+2} \downarrow & & h_{n+1} \downarrow & & h_n \downarrow & & h_{n-1} \downarrow & \leftarrow \text{morphism of exact seq.} \\ Y_{n+2} & \xrightarrow{g_{n+2}} & Y_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{g_{n+1}} & Y_n & \xrightarrow{g_n} & Y_{n-1} \rightarrow Y_{n-2} & \text{(exact)} \end{array}$$

If $h_{n+2}, h_{n+1}, h_{n-1}$ and h_{n-2} are isomorphisms, then h_n is

an isomorphism.

Proof: (chasing diagram) we prove injectivity and leave surjectivity as an exercise.

- Let $x \in \text{ker}(h_n)$, then $g_n \circ h_n(x) = h_{n-1} \circ f_n(x) = 0$.

Since h_{n-1} is an isomorphism then $f_n(x) = 0$. By exactness at X_n , this implies that $\exists y \in X_{n+1}$ such that $x = f_{n+1}(y)$

- Now $g_{n+1} \circ h_{n+1}(y) = 0$ so by exactness at Y_{n+1}

$h_{n+1}(y) \in \text{Im } g_{n+2} = \exists z \in Y_{n+2}$ such that $g_{n+2}(z) = h_{n+1}(y)$. (4)

It follows that $y = h_{n+1}^{-1} \circ g_{n+2}(z) = f_{n+2} \circ h_{n+2}^{-1}(z)$

and hence $y \in \text{Im}(f_{n+2}) = \text{Ker}(f_{n+1})$. Consequently, $\alpha = 0$ \square .

• Chain complexes.

- A chain complex is a sequence of morphisms

$$\dots \rightarrow X_{n+1} \xrightarrow{d_{n+1}} X_n \xrightarrow{d_n} X_{n-1} \rightarrow \dots$$

such that $d_n \circ d_{n+1} = 0 \quad \forall n$ ($\text{Im}(d_{n+1}) \subset \text{Ker}(d_n)$).

The maps " d_n " are called the differentials.

Rk: a long exact sequence is a particular chain complex.

- Let (X_0, d_0) a chain complex. We set

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} Z_n = Z_n(X_0) = \text{Ker}(d_n) & \text{cycles} \\ B_n = B_n(X_0) = \text{Im}(d_{n+1}) & \text{boundaries} \\ H_n = H_n(X_0) = Z_n / B_n & \text{homology groups} \end{array} \right.$$

Rk: $H_n(X_0) = 0 \quad \forall n \Leftrightarrow (X_0, d_0)$ is a long exact sequence

Ex: $0 \rightarrow M \xrightarrow{f} N \rightarrow 0$ then $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} H_0 = \frac{N}{\text{Im}(f)} = \text{coker } f \\ H_1 = \text{Ker}(f) \end{array} \right.$

- Morphism of complexes.

Let (X_0, d_0) and (Y_0, d'_0) be two complexes.

A morphism between them is given as a family $(f_n = X_n \rightarrow Y_n)_n$ such that we have commutative diagrams

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 X_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{d_{n+1}} & X_n \\
 \downarrow f_{n+1} & \circlearrowright & \downarrow f_n \\
 Y_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{d'_{n+1}} & Y_n
 \end{array} \quad \forall n.$$

The maps f_n send $Z_n(X_0)$ to $Z_n(Y_0)$ and $B_n(X_0)$ to $B_n(Y_0)$. Thus (f_0) induce morphisms

$$H_n(f_0) : H_n(X_0) \rightarrow H_n(Y_0) \quad \forall n.$$

Similarly, concepts of sub-groups, kernel, image, etc... from group theory extends to similar concepts for chain complexes.

For instance $\text{Ker}(f_0 : X_0 \rightarrow Y_0)$ is a chain complex.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 \text{Ker}(f_{n+1}) & \xrightarrow{d_{n+1}} & \text{Ker}(f_n) & & \\
 \downarrow & & \downarrow & & \\
 X_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{d_{n+1}} & X_n & \rightarrow & X_{n-1} \\
 \downarrow f_{n+1} & & \downarrow f_n & & \\
 Y_{n+1} & \xrightarrow{d'_{n+1}} & Y_n & \rightarrow & Y_{n-1}
 \end{array} \quad d_{n+1}(\text{Ker}(f_{n+1})) \subset \text{Ker}(f_n).$$

• Long exact sequence of homology.

Suppose given a short exact sequence of complexes

$$X_0 \xrightarrow{f_0} Y_0 \xrightarrow{g_0} Z_0$$

(f_0 injective, g_0 surjective, $\text{Ker } g_0 = \text{Im } f_0$), then we have a long exact sequence of the form

$$\dots H_{n+1}(Z_0) \xrightarrow{\delta_{n+1}} H_n(X_0) \xrightarrow{H_n(f)} H_n(Y_0) \xrightarrow{H_n(g)} H_n(Z_0) \xrightarrow{\delta_n} H_{n-1}(X_0) \xrightarrow{\dots} \textcircled{6}$$

where the morphisms $(\delta_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ are called "connecting morphisms".

Proof: It is technical and can be found in many books; we skip it \square .

3. The Koszul complex.

• Let A be a commutative ring. For all $x \in A$ we define the complex

$$K_0(x; A): \quad 0 \rightarrow K_1 = A \xrightarrow{x} K_0 = A \rightarrow 0$$

More generally given a sequence of elements in A $(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \underline{x}$ we define the Koszul complex as follows:

$$K_i(\underline{x}; A) = \wedge^i(A^n) \quad (\text{exterior algebra})$$

If $A^n = \bigoplus_{i=1}^n A e_i$ (canonical basis), we have $K_0 = A$ and for all $p \geq 1$

$$K_p = \bigoplus_{1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_p \leq n} A e_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge e_{i_p}$$

The differentials are given by

$$d_p: K_p \rightarrow K_{p-1}$$

$$e_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge e_{i_p} \rightarrow \sum_{k=1}^p (-1)^{k+1} x_{i_k} e_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge \hat{e}_{i_k} \wedge \dots \wedge e_{i_p}$$

Lemma: $d_{p-1} \circ d_p = 0$

Proof: (exercise).

Example: $K_1(\underline{x}; A) \rightarrow K_0(\underline{x}; A)$ is the map

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \bigoplus_{i=1}^n A & \rightarrow & A \\ (y_1, \dots, y_n) & \mapsto & \sum x_i y_i \end{array} \quad (\text{this should remind you something...})$$

Remark: If A is a graded ring then $K_*(\underline{x}; A)$ is also graded providing x_1, \dots, x_n are homogeneous elements.

Let $\deg(x_i) = d_i$; then $K_0 = A$, $K_1 = \bigoplus_{i=1}^n A(-d_i)$ and

$$K_p = \bigoplus_{1 \leq i_1 < \dots < i_p \leq n} A(-d_{i_1} - \dots - d_{i_p})$$

Finally, given a A -module M , we define $K_*(\underline{x}; M)$ as $K_*(\underline{x}; A) \otimes_A M$.

• Homology of the Koszul complex

Two easy remarks:

i) $H_p(\underline{x}; M)$ is a sub-quotient of a direct sum of copies of M , hence $\text{ann}_A(M)$ annihilates $H_p(\underline{x}; M) \forall p$.

ii) $H_0(\underline{x}; M) = M / (\underline{x}) \cdot M$; it is annihilated by (\underline{x}) .

Proposition: (i) The ideals $\text{ann}_A(M)$ and (\underline{x}) of A annihilate the homology of $K_*(\underline{x}; M)$.

(ii) If \underline{x} is a M -regular sequence then $H_p(\underline{x}; M) = 0 \forall p \geq 1$.

Proof: i) we define $G_p^j: K_p \rightarrow K_{p+1}$ (of degree d_j). ⑧

$$e_{i_1, \dots, i_p} \wedge e_{i_p} \rightarrow e_{j_1} \wedge e_{i_1, \dots, i_p}$$

and one can check that for any $x \in K_p(x; M)$ we have (exercise)

$$d_{p+1}(G_p^j(x)) + G_{p-1}^j(d_p(x)) = x_{j_1} \cdot x.$$

We deduce that (x) annihilate $H_p(x; M) \forall p$.

ii) We proceed by induction on n .

$$\underline{n=1}: H_1(x_1; M) = \text{Ker}(M \xrightarrow{x_1} M) = 0$$

Suppose the claimed property true for $n-1$.

Let $x' = (x_1, \dots, x_{n-1})$ and $x = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$.

We have an exact sequence of complexes

$$0 \rightarrow K_0(x'; M) \xrightarrow{i_0} K_0(x; M) \xrightarrow{\overleftarrow{\pi}_0} \overleftarrow{K}_0(x'; M) \rightarrow 0 \quad (*)$$

where $\overleftarrow{K}_0(x'; M)$ is the left shift: $\overleftarrow{K}_p = K_{p-1}$ and $\overleftarrow{d}_p = d_{p-1}$.

The map i_p are canonical injection and the map $\overleftarrow{\pi}_p$ is defined as

$$\overleftarrow{\pi}_p(e_{i_1, \dots, i_p}) = \begin{cases} e_{i_1, \dots, i_{p-1}} & \text{if } i_p = n \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Exactness by rows $0 \rightarrow K_p(x') \xrightarrow{i_p} K_p(x) \xrightarrow{\overleftarrow{\pi}_p} K_{p-1}(x') \rightarrow 0$ is essentially by definition. The fact that the differentials give commutative diagram is easy to check.

Now, from (*) we obtain a long exact sequence of homology:

$$\dots \rightarrow H_p(x'; M) \xrightarrow{\delta_{p+1}} H_p(x'; M) \xrightarrow{i_p} H_p(x; M) \xrightarrow{\pi_p} H_{p-1}(x'; M) \rightarrow \dots$$

The connecting morphism δ_0 is actually a multiplication by $(-1)^p x_n$; $\delta_{p+1}(y) = y \cdot (-1)^p x_n$. (to be checked).

Now, from our assumption we get that

$$H_p(x; M) = 0 \quad \forall p \geq 1.$$

Moreover, the end of this exact sequence is

$$\dots \rightarrow \underbrace{H_1(x'; M)}_{=0 \text{ by assumption}} \xrightarrow{i_1} H_1(x; M) \xrightarrow{\pi_1} \underbrace{H_0(x; M)}_{\cong \frac{M}{(x') \cdot M}} \xrightarrow{x x_n} \underbrace{H_0(x'; M)}_{\cong \frac{M}{(x') \cdot M}} \rightarrow \dots$$

only this map is useful here.

As x_n is not a zero divisor, the map on the right is injective and hence $H_1(x; M) = 0$. \square

• Application to the resultant.

$$A = \mathbb{Z}[U_i, x] \quad C = A[x_1, \dots, x_n] \quad f_i = \sum_{|a|=d_i \geq 1} U_{i,a} x^a \quad i=1, \dots, n$$

We have seen that (f_1, \dots, f_n) is a C -regular sequence so

$$\text{we deduce that } H_p(K_0(f_1, \dots, f_n; C)) = 0 \quad \forall p \geq 1.$$

$$\text{Moreover, } H_0(K_0(f_i; C)) = \frac{C}{(f_1, \dots, f_n)} = B \quad (\text{previous notation}).$$

Therefore, the Koszul complex is a free graded resolution of B :

$$0 \rightarrow C(-\sum d_i) \xrightarrow{\quad} \dots \rightarrow \bigoplus_{i=1}^n C(-d_i) \xrightarrow{\quad} C \xrightarrow{\quad} B \rightarrow 0$$

$\underbrace{\quad}_{K_n} \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \underbrace{\quad}_{K_1} \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \quad \underbrace{\quad}_{K_0}$

Taking a graded slice of this complex we obtain a free resolution of the free A -module of B_V , $V \in \mathbb{N}$. (10)

Example: $n=2$ $V=d_1+d_2-1$

$$0 \rightarrow C(-d_1-d_2) \rightarrow C(-d_1) \oplus C(-d_2) \rightarrow C^1 \rightarrow B \rightarrow 0$$

} graded slice

$$L \quad 0 \rightarrow C_{d_2-1} \oplus C_{d_1-1} \rightarrow C_{d_1+d_2-1} \rightarrow B_{d_1+d_2-1} \rightarrow 0$$

↑
syzygy matrix.

Now, two questions:

1) why did we choose d_1+d_2-1 in the above example?
How to control $H_m^0(B)_V$? m 's study of local cohomology

2) what is the link between $\text{ann}_A(B_V)$ and the determinant of the matrix in the above example?
 m 's Fitting ideals.

L

THM: With the above assumptions we have

$$H_m^0(B)_V = 0 \quad \text{for all } V \gg \sum_{i=1}^n (d_i - 1) + 1$$

Proof: requires Cech complex and spectral sequences... skip it for the moment. \square

Corollary: For any $V \gg \sum_{i=1}^n (d_i - 1) + 1$ we have

$$L \quad \text{ann}_A(B_V) = \mathfrak{Q} = (\text{Res}(f_1, \dots, f_n)) \subset A.$$

4. Fitting ideals

• Let F, G be two free A -modules of finite type and $\phi: F \rightarrow G$ a A -morphism. For all $v \leq \max(\text{rk}(F), \text{rk}(G))$ we set

$\det_v(\phi) :=$ ideal generated by the v -minors of a matrix of ϕ .

Rks: - These are ideals of A

- They are indep. of the choice of the matrix of ϕ

- $\det(\phi) = 1$

- $\det_{\ll}(\phi) = A = \dots = \underset{\det_0(\phi)}{A} \supseteq \det_1(\phi) \supseteq \dots \supseteq \det_{\max(\text{rk}(F), \text{rk}(G))}(\phi)$
 $\begin{matrix} 10 \\ 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{matrix}$

L

The important property of Fitting ideals is the following:

Proposition: Let M be a finitely generated A -module and suppose given two presentations

$$A^q \xrightarrow{(a_{ij})} A^p \xrightarrow{(x_1, \dots, x_p)} M \rightarrow 0$$

$$A^s \xrightarrow{(b_{ij})} A^r \xrightarrow{(y_1, \dots, y_r)} M \rightarrow 0$$

Then for all $v \geq 0$ we have $\det_{p-v}(a_{ij}) = \det_{r-v}(b_{ij})$.

Def: The v^{th} Fitting invariant of M is defined as

$$F_v(M) := \det_{p-v}(\phi) \quad v \geq 0.$$

(It is indep. of the choice of a presentation of M).

Proof: • First, one can assume that $p=r$ because:

write $y_j = \sum_{i=1}^p a_{ij} x_i, j=1 \dots r$, we have a presentation

$$A^q \oplus A^r \xrightarrow{\quad} A^p \oplus A^r \xrightarrow{(x_1 \dots x_p | y_1 \dots y_r)} M \rightarrow 0$$

$$\left(\begin{array}{c|c} a_{ij} & * \\ \hline 0 & 1 \dots 1 \end{array} \right)$$

and we see that $\det_{p-r}(a_{ij}) = \det_{p+r-r} \left(\begin{array}{c|c} a_{ij} & * \\ \hline 0 & 1 \dots 1 \end{array} \right) \forall r \geq 0$

With a similar argument,

$$\det_{r-s}(b_{ij}) = \det_{p+r-s} \left(\begin{array}{c|c} b_{ij} & *' \\ \hline 0 & 1 \dots 1 \end{array} \right).$$

• So, assume $p=r$.

If $q=s$ then (a_{ij}) and (b_{ij}) are matrices of the same map and hence the result follows.

If $q \neq s$, say $s \geq q$: $A^s = A^{s-q} \oplus A^q$ and acting on columns we can obtain

$$A^s \xrightarrow{\quad} A^{r=p} = A^{s-q} \oplus A^q \xrightarrow{0 \oplus \phi} A^p$$

where $\phi: A^q \rightarrow A^p$ □

We have the following properties:

Let M be a finitely generated A -mod.

- (i) We have an increasing sequence $F_0(M) \subseteq F_1(M) \subseteq \dots \subseteq A$
- (ii) If M is generated by q elt's then $F_q(M) = A (= F_t(M) \forall t \geq q)$
- (iii) $F_0(M) \subseteq \text{ann}_A(M)$

(iv) For all $\nu > 0$, $\text{ann}_A(M) \cdot \mathcal{F}_\nu(M) \subseteq \mathcal{F}_{\nu-1}(M)$

(v) If M is generated by q elements then

$$\text{ann}_A(M)^q \subseteq \mathcal{F}_0(M) \subseteq \text{ann}_A(M)$$

(vi) If $A \rightarrow R$ is a ring morphism, then

$$\mathcal{F}_\nu(M \otimes_A R) = \mathcal{F}_\nu(M) \cdot R$$

(stability under change of basis).

Proof: exercises - classical topic.

□.

Application to the resultant

We have seen that $\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu) = (R_\nu(f_1 - f_n)) \quad \forall \nu \geq \sum_{i=1}^n (d_i - 1) + 1$

Now, we have shown that $V(\text{ann}_A(\mathcal{B}_\nu)) = V(\mathcal{F}_0(\mathcal{B}_\nu)) \quad \forall \nu \geq 0$

Actually, one can show that

$$\left(\text{gcd minors of } \mathcal{F}_0(\mathcal{B}_\nu) \right) = (R_\nu(f_1 - f_n)) \quad \forall \nu \geq \sum_{i=1}^n (d_i - 1) + 1$$

This property can be seen indirectly by means of staircase matrices that are elements in $\mathcal{F}_0(\mathcal{B}_\nu)$.

In conclusion, the first map of the Koszul complex in degree $\nu \geq \sum_{i=1}^n (d_i - 1) + 1$ give a matrix-based representation of the resultant:

$R_\nu(f_1 - f_n) = 0 \iff$ the rank of this matrix drops.