Braid groups

Summer Graduate School
MSRI-CMO: Geometric Group Theory
FECHA

Briseida Trejo
Ernesto Vázquez

Instituto de Matemáticas, UNAM

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Braids

Definition

An *n-braid* is a collection of n disjoint strings.

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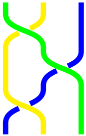
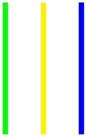
Examples



3-braid



id

Braid groups

The n-strand braid group B_n has the presentation:

$$B_n = \langle \sigma_1, \ldots, \sigma_{n-1} \mid \sigma_i\sigma_j = \sigma_j\sigma_i \text{ for } |i-j| \geq 2, \sigma_i\sigma_{i+1}\sigma_i = \sigma_{i+1}\sigma_i\sigma_{i+1} \rangle.$$

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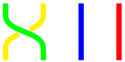
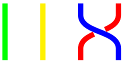
Generators of B_4



σ_1

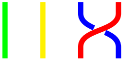
σ_2



σ_3

σ_1^{-1}

σ_2^{-1}



σ_3^{-1}

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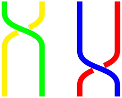
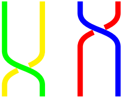
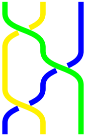
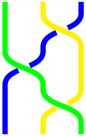
Relations

 $=$ 

$\sigma_1\sigma_3$ $\qquad$ $\sigma_3\sigma_1$

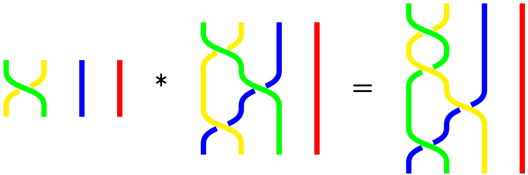
$\sigma_i\sigma_j = \sigma_j\sigma_i$
if $|i-j| \geq 2$

 $=$ 

$\sigma_1\sigma_2\sigma_1$ $\qquad$ $\sigma_2\sigma_1\sigma_2$

$\sigma_i\sigma_{i+1}\sigma_i = \sigma_{i+1}\sigma_i\sigma_{i+1}$

Multiplication (Concatenation)



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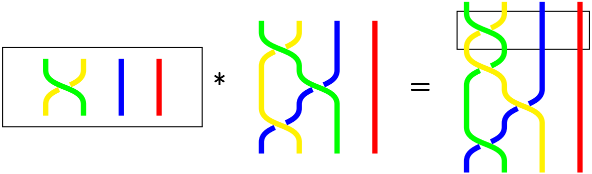

The word problem

Two words $\beta_1, \beta_2 \in B_n$ represent the same braid $\Leftrightarrow \beta_1 \beta_2^{-1} = 1$.

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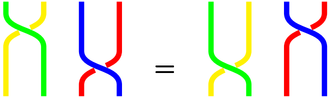

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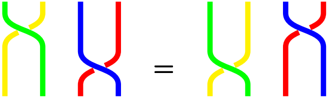

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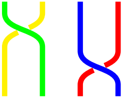
$\Leftrightarrow$



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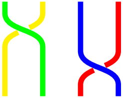
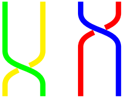


$=$



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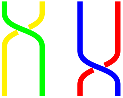
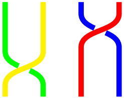
$\Leftrightarrow$



$*$



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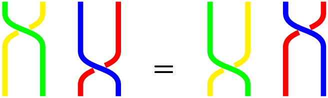

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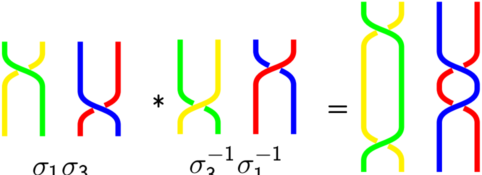
$$\Leftrightarrow$$



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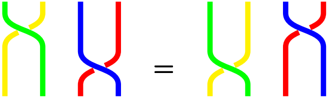

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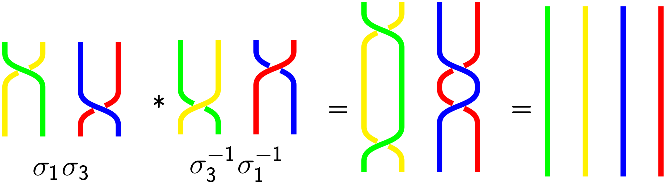
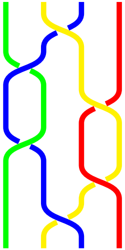


$\sigma_1 \sigma_3$ $\qquad$ $\sigma_3^{-1} \sigma_1^{-1}$ $\qquad$ $\sigma_1 \sigma_3 \sigma_3^{-1} \sigma_1^{-1}$ $\qquad$ id

Pure braids



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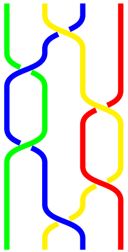

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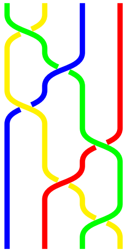
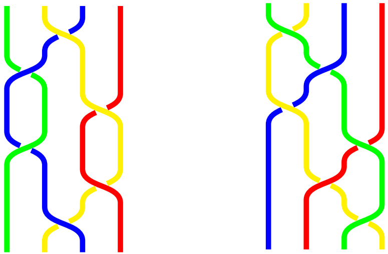


Not pure

Pure braids



Pure braid Not pure

Theorem

The pure braid group P_n is biorderable for all $n \geq 1$.

Mapping class groups

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Proposition

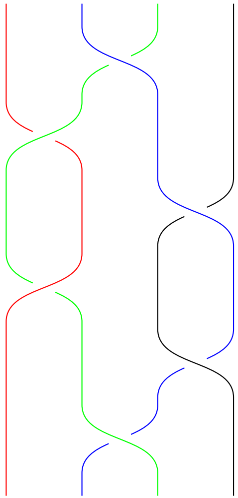
There is an isomorphism $B_n \cong \mathcal{MCG}(D_n)$, where D_n is the disk D^2 with n regularly spaced points.

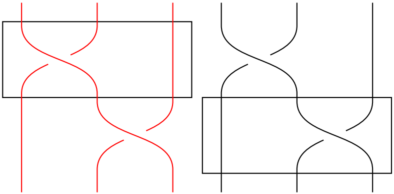
Order in B_n

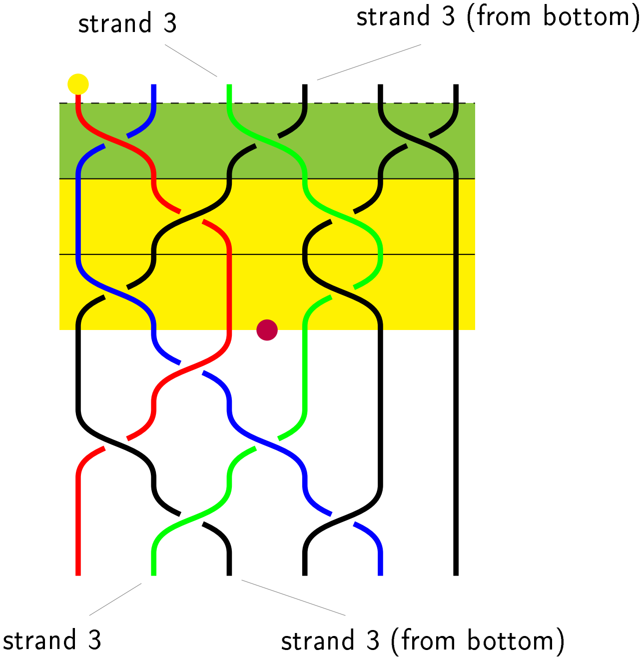
σ-positive

subword property

Proposition






strand 3
strand 3 (from bottom)
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Thanks.