

splitting fields

Let  $k$  be a field and  $f \in k[X]$  be a non-constant polynomial.

### Definition

A splitting field  $L$  of  $f$  means a field extension  $L/k$  such that  $f$  splits into linear factors in  $L[X]$ , and that  $L$  is generated by the roots of  $f$  over  $k$ .

### Theorem

*Let  $L$  be a splitting field of a non-constant polynomial  $f$ . If  $E$  is another splitting field of  $f$ , then there exists an isomorphism  $E \simeq L$ . Moreover, if  $k^a$  is an algebraic closure of  $k$  and  $k \subset L \subset k^a$ , then any embedding*

$$E \rightarrow k^a$$

*over  $k$  induces an isomorphism  $E \simeq L$ .*

## proof

Suppose that  $E/k$  is another splitting field. Let  $L^a$  be an algebraic closure of  $L$ . Then, it is an algebraic closure of  $k$  as well. Then, there exists an embedding

$$\sigma: E \rightarrow L^a$$

over  $k$ . If  $\beta_1, \dots, \beta_r$  are the roots of  $f$  in  $E$  with multiplicity, then,  $\sigma(\beta_1), \dots, \sigma(\beta_r)$  are the roots of  $f$  in  $L^a$  with multiplicity. It follows that  $\sigma(E)$  is generated by the roots of  $f$ . Since  $L$  is a splitting field,  $\sigma(E) = L$  and  $\sigma$  induces  $E \simeq L$ .

More generally, a splitting field for a family  $(f_i)_{i \in I}$  of polynomials is an extension  $L/k$  such that each  $f_i$  splits into linear factors in  $L$  and that  $L$  is generated by all the roots of  $f_i$ . Here, the set  $I$  is allowed to be infinite.

## Question

Show that the theorem holds for splitting fields for a family  $(f_i)_{i \in I}$  of polynomials. Namely, if  $E, K$  are two splitting fields for the same family, then any embedding  $E \rightarrow K^a$  over  $k$  induces an isomorphism  $E \simeq K$ .