Modular forms applied to the computational inverse Galois problem

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Abstract

For each of the groups $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$, $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$, $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{49})$, $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$, and $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{27})$, we display the first explicitly known polynomials over \mathbb{Q} having that group as Galois group. Each polynomial is related to a Galois representation associated to a modular form. We indicate how computations with modular Galois representations were used to obtain these polynomials. For each polynomial we also indicate how to use Serre's conjectures to determine the modular form giving rise to the related Galois representation.

1 Introduction

The inverse Galois problem dates from the 19th century and asks whether every finite group is isomorphic to the Galois group of a finite field extension of \mathbb{Q} . Though solving this problem in general seems currently out of reach, it can be an interesting and tractable task to solve it for certain specific types of groups. A further challenge is to actually *compute* polynomials in $\mathbb{Q}[x]$ having a prescribed permutation group as Galois group, rather than merely pointing out a formal proof of their existence. We speak about permutation groups here because the Galois group of a separable polynomial acts on the roots of the polynomial inside a splitting field.

A lot of pioneering work on the computational inverse Galois problem has been done by Jürgen Klüners and Gunter Malle. Their joint publication [15] gives a solution to this problem for all transitive permutation groups of degree up to 15. Gunter Malle has also published a method to compute polynomials for the groups $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)$ and $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)$ where p is a prime number satisfying $(\frac{n}{p}) = -1$ for at least one $n \in \{2,3,5,7\}$ (see [17]). In the present paper we will display polynomials for several groups of the type $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ and $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ with q a perfect prime power. This can be seen as an extension of a previous result for q = 16 (see [2]). Theoretical results stating that $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ appears as Galois group over $\mathbb Q$ for 'many' q can be found in [29] and [9].

The groups in question are $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$, $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$, $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{49})$, $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$, and $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{27})$. Polynomials with these groups as Galois groups are displayed at the end of the paper, in Section 5. In Section 2 we will indicate how modular forms can be used to compute these polynomials. However, the computations do not give an output that is guaranteed to be correct. Techniques for verifying the Galois groups are discussed in Section 3. In Section 4 we will discuss how to apply Serre's conjectures to find the modular forms whose Galois representations are attached to the polynomials.

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1.1 Notations and conventions

For each field k that is either a prime field or a completion of \mathbb{Q} , we fix an algebraic closure \overline{k} and we denote the absolute Galois group by G_k . Where this is useful or appropriate, we view algebraic extensions K of k as subfields of \overline{k} and we identify \overline{K} with \overline{k} . We also fix for each (possibly infinite) prime p an embedding $\overline{\mathbb{Q}} \hookrightarrow \overline{\mathbb{Q}}_p$ and use this embedding to view $G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}$ as a subgroup of $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$. The inertia subgroup of $G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}$ is denoted by I_p .

Representations of a group over a field are assumed to be continuous. Two representations are considered isomorphic if they are isomorphic over the algebraic closures of their fields of definition.

By abuse of notation, we identify an abelian character of $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ with the Dirichlet character that is attached to it by the Kronecker-Weber theorem.

2 Some remarks on the computations

Let N be a positive integer, let $f = \sum_{n \geq 1} a_n(f) q^n \in S_2(\Gamma_1(N))$ be a newform, and denote its nebentypus character by ε_f . Let ℓ be a prime number, let $\lambda \mid \ell$ be a prime of the coefficient field of f, and let \mathbb{F}_{λ} denote the residue field of λ . Then there exists a representation $\rho = \overline{\rho}_{f,\lambda} \colon G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{\lambda})$ such that for all primes $p \nmid N\ell$ we have

$$\operatorname{charpol}(\rho(\operatorname{Frob}_p)) \equiv x^2 - a_p(f)x + \varepsilon_f(p)p \bmod \lambda \tag{1}$$

for any Frobenius element in $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ attached to p. For the purposes of this paper, we will restrict our attention to cases where ρ is irreducible. Composing ρ with the canonical projection map $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_\lambda) \to \mathrm{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_\lambda)$, one obtains a projective representation $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \mathrm{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_\lambda)$. The fixed field inside $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ of $\ker(\tilde{\rho})$ has Galois group isomorphic to $\mathrm{im}(\tilde{\rho})$. Via Galois theory, the permutation action of $\mathrm{im}(\tilde{\rho})$ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_\lambda)$ can be described by giving a suitable polynomial $P_{f,\lambda} \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ of degree $\#\mathbb{F}_\lambda + 1$ that has $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}^{\ker(\tilde{\rho})}$ as splitting field. Such a $P_{f,\lambda}$ has Galois group isomorphic to $\mathrm{im}(\tilde{\rho})$, thus computing $P_{f,\lambda}$ would explicitly realize $\mathrm{im}(\tilde{\rho})$ as Galois group over \mathbb{Q} .

What would be useful here is a test that ensures $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) \supset \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{\lambda})$ beforehand. Define, for any field k, a function $\theta \colon \operatorname{PGL}_2(k) \to k$ as follows:

$$\theta = \theta_k \colon PGL_2(k) \to k, \quad \overline{\gamma} \mapsto \frac{\operatorname{tr}(\gamma)^2}{\det \gamma}$$
 (2)

Then we have the following proposition, which can be verified straightforwardly using Dickson's classification of the possible subgroups of $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_a)$ [28, Section III.6].

Proposition 1. Let $q \ge 4$ be a prime power, and let $\theta \colon \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q) \to \mathbb{F}_q$ be as in (2). Let G be a subgroup of $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$. Then we have $G = \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ if and only if $\theta(G)$ is the full set \mathbb{F}_q . \square

Coefficients and characters of modular forms can be computed (see [25]). For a given small prime $p \nmid N\ell$, we can thus use (1) to compute $\operatorname{tr}(\rho(\operatorname{Frob}_p^n))$ and $\operatorname{det}(\rho(\operatorname{Frob}_p^n))$ for any $n \geq 0$. If $\operatorname{det}(\rho(\operatorname{Frob}_p^n))$ happens to be a square in \mathbb{F}_{λ} , then we compute $\theta(\tilde{\rho}(\operatorname{Frob}_p^n)) \in \mathbb{F}_{\lambda}$, where θ is as in the above proposition. If, after having tried several small primes p, we have met every element of \mathbb{F}_{λ} , then we know that the projective image of ρ contains $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{\lambda})$. The character ε_f can now be used to decide between $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) = \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{\lambda})$ and $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) = \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{\lambda})$, as we have $\operatorname{det} \rho = \varepsilon_f \chi_\ell$, where χ_ℓ denotes the mod ℓ cyclotomic character of $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$.

Once we have found a modular form f giving rise to a desired Galois group, we let X be a modular curve over which the modular form f lives. Typically, X can be taken to be $X_1(N)$,

where N is the level of f, but sometimes a quotient of $X_1(N)$ of smaller genus may work as well. The representation ρ can be described as the action of $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ on a certain Hecke-invariant subspace $V_{f,\lambda}$ of $\mathrm{Jac}(X)(\overline{\mathbb{Q}})[\ell]$ (see for instance [21, Sections 3.2 and 3.3]).

Computing modular Galois representations is the subject of both [8] and [5]. In [3], which is part of [8], it is described in detail how a polynomial $P_{f,\lambda}$ can be computed in practice. We will give a very brief overview of those methods now. The general strategy is to first compute the points in $V_{f,\lambda}$ over $\mathbb C$ to a high precision (sometimes a few thousands of decimals are required) and to use this to compute a real approximation $P'_{f,\lambda}$ of $P_{f,\lambda}$. The next step is to approximate $P'_{f,\lambda}$ by a polynomial $P''_{f,\lambda} \in \mathbb Q[x]$ of relatively small height and to apply some heuristics to decide whether the used precision was high enough to make $P''_{f,\lambda} = P_{f,\lambda}$ likely to be true. If the heuristic tests are passed, we compute the maximal order $\mathcal O_K$ of the number field K defined by $P''_{f,\lambda}$ and search for elements $\alpha \in \mathcal O_K$ of small height with $\mathbb Q(\alpha) = K$, using the lattice structure that $\mathcal O_K$ gets using all complex embeddings $K \hookrightarrow \mathbb C$. The minimal polynomial $P''_{f,\lambda}$ of α will then have small coefficients. Let us emphasize that, because of the numerical nature of the calculations, correctness of the polynomials is not guaranteed at this stage of the computation, so verification methods as in Sections 3 and 4 are essential.

Several software packages were used to carry out the computations described there. A SAGE [26] implementation was used for the numerical approximation and the computation of initial candidate polynomials $P''_{f,\lambda}$. After this, a combination of computations in orders of number fields using MAGMA [1] and the function polredabs of PARI [20] was used to obtain polynomials $P'''_{f,\lambda}$ with coefficients of tractable size.

3 Verifying the Galois groups

Nowadays MAGMA can compute the Galois group of a square-free polynomial $P \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ of arbitrary degree, thanks to an implementation of Claus Fieker and Jürgen Klüners. It represents its output as a permutation group acting on the roots of P in a suitably chosen p-adic field. These roots are in turn represented by sufficiently accurate p-adic approximations. The polynomials displayed in Section 5 were fed to this implementation and indeed all their Galois groups could be rigorously computed without difficulties.

Let $P \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ be one of the polynomials from Section 5. We have computed Gal(P) as permutation group of degree deg(P). Let G be the group that in Section 5 is claimed to be isomorphic to Gal(P). In all cases, G is $PSL(\mathbb{F})$ or $PGL(\mathbb{F})$ acting on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F})$ for some finite field \mathbb{F} . We want to verify $Gal(P) \cong G$. Computing an explicit isomorphism between Gal(P) and G can be an extensive task in some of the cases and we can indeed do better.

For any field k the group $\mathrm{PSL}_2(k)$ is doubly transitive. It is easy to verify that $\mathrm{Gal}(P)$ too is doubly transitive and that it has order equal to #G. The doubly transitive permutation groups have been classified, see for instance [7, Theorem 5.3]. The cited reference sums up results using the classification of finite simple groups, though prior to this, Charles Sims had already performed an unpublished computation of the primitive permutation groups up to degree 50 that does not rely on this classification. Consulting the classification of doubly transitive groups, one can verify that $\mathrm{Gal}(P)$, given its degree q+1 and its order, contains $\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ as simple normal subgroup. We can already conclude from this information that each of the groups $\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$, $\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$, $\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{49})$, and $\mathrm{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{27})$ is the unique doubly transitive permutation group of its degree and order. In addition, of the 3 doubly transitive permutation groups of degree 26 and order 15600, $\mathrm{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$ is the only one with 27 conjugacy classes. These observations cover all cases occurring in Section 5. So we see that we can identify G easily

by computing some simple invariants that it has as a permutation group, without having to find explicit isomorphisms $G \cong Gal(P)$.

A reader who has no access to a computer running MAGMA may still wish to verify the Galois groups. Let us describe briefly how this can be done. Let $P \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ be one of the polynomials given in Section 5 and let $\Omega(P) \subset \overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ be the set of roots of P. The double transitivity of $\operatorname{Gal}(P)$ can be verified as follows. Compute the resolvent $Q(x) := \prod_{(\alpha,\beta) \in \Omega(P)^2} (x - a\alpha - b\beta) \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ for small integers a and b such that the roots of Q are distinct. Then $\operatorname{Gal}(P)$ is doubly transitive if and only if Q is irreducible. The polynomial Q can be computed symbolically, see [24, Chapter 3]. Using the classification given in [7, Theorem 5.3] one can determine the lattice of doubly transitive permutation groups of given degree. With this lattice at hand, one could apply [11, Algorithm 6.1] to determine the Galois group.

4 Further verifications

Serre's conjectures [23, (3.2.3) and (3.2.4)] state that each absolutely irreducible odd twodimensional representation of $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ over a finite field is associated to a cuspidal newform in a sense similar to (1). A Galois representation is called *odd* if the determinant of a complex conjugation equals -1. Serre's conjectures have been proved by subsequent work of many people, among whom Khare, Wintenberger, and Kisin did the final steps (see [12, Theorems 1.2 and 9.1] and [14, Theorem 0.1]). In the present section, we will point out how Serre's conjectures can be used to determine for each polynomial in Section 5 a modular form to which it is attached.

4.1 Number field attached to projective representation

Let q be a prime power, and let the permutation group G be either $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ or $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ acting on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$ in the standard way.

A projective representation $\rho: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to G \subset \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ makes $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ act transitively on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$. Via Galois theory this action corresponds to a number field K of degree q+1 over \mathbb{Q} such that the normal closure of K/\mathbb{Q} in $\overline{\mathbb{Q}}$ has Galois group G.

On the other hand, from Dickson's classification of the subgroups of $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ [28, Section III.6] one can derive that any subgroup of G of index q+1 is conjugate to the subgroup represented by the upper triangular matrices and therefore that any transitive permutation action of G on a set of size q+1 is isomorphic to the standard action on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$.

Let now K be a number field of degree q+1 over $\mathbb Q$ such that its normal closure L over $\mathbb Q$ has Galois group isomorphic to G. Choosing an isomorphism $\operatorname{Gal}(L/\mathbb Q) \cong G$ defines a projective representation $\tilde{\rho}_K \colon G_\mathbb Q \to \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb F_q)$ with image G. The number field K corresponds to the stabilizer of a point of $\mathbb P^1(\mathbb F_q)$. The automorphism group of G is $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb F_q) \rtimes \operatorname{Aut}(\mathbb F_q)$, where $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb F_q)$ acts by conjugation and $\operatorname{Aut}(\mathbb F_q)$ acts on matrix entries. The representation $\tilde{\rho}_K$ is unique up to an automorphism of G and is thus well defined up to a choice of coordinates of $\mathbb P^1(\mathbb F_q)$ and an automorphism of $\mathbb F_q$.

4.2 Level and weight

If ℓ is a prime number, then an irreducible representation $\rho: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{GL}_2(\overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell})$ has a *Serre level* and a *Serre weight*. The Serre level $N(\rho)$ is equal to the prime-to- ℓ part of the Artin conductor of ρ (see [23, Subsection 1.2]). If ρ is at most tamely ramified at a prime $p \neq \ell$, then $N(\rho) = 2 - \ell$

 $\dim V^{I_{\rho}}$, where V denotes the 2-dimensional $\overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell}$ -vector space with $G_{\mathbb{Q}}$ -action via ρ . The Serre weight $k(\rho)$ is described in terms of $\rho|_{I_{\ell}}$; for the definition, which depends on distinguishing several cases, we refer to [10, Section 4]. Serre's *strong* conjecture states that ρ , if it is odd, is associated to a newform of level $N(\rho)$ and weight at most $k(\rho)$. There's a small caveat to be made here: in case $\ell=2$ and $k(\rho)=1$, we may sometimes have to redefine $k(\rho)$ as 2 in order to make Serre's strong conjecture fully proven.

Let ℓ be a prime and let $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{PGL}_2(\overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell})$ be an irreducible projective representation. The various liftings of $\tilde{\rho}$ will have various Serre levels and Serre weights. In view of the following theorem by Tate there exists a lifting ρ of $\tilde{\rho}$ such that $k(\rho)$ and $v_p(N(\rho))$ for all p are minimized simultaneously.

Theorem 1 (Tate, see [22, Section 6]). Let k be an algebraically closed field, and let $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \mathrm{PGL}_2(k)$ be a projective representation. Then there exists a lifting $\rho: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \mathrm{GL}_2(k)$ of $\tilde{\rho}$. If, furthermore, for each prime p a lifting $\rho_p: G_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \to \mathrm{GL}_2(k)$ of $\tilde{\rho}|_{G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}}$ is given with all but finitely many ρ_p unramified, then a lifting ρ of $\tilde{\rho}$ exists with $\rho|_{I_p} \cong \rho_p|_{I_p}$ for each p.

Definition 1. Let ℓ be a prime and let $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \mathrm{PGL}_2(\overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell})$ be an irreducible projective representation. The *Serre level* $N(\tilde{\rho})$ and *Serre weight* $k(\tilde{\rho})$ of $\tilde{\rho}$ are defined to be minimum of the Serre levels, resp. weights, of all the liftings $\rho: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \mathrm{GL}_2(\overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell})$ of $\tilde{\rho}$.

From the definition of Serre weight given in [10, Section 4] one can immediately see that in general we have $1 \le k(\tilde{\rho}) \le \ell + 1$.

The following proposition shows how $N(\tilde{\rho})$ can be related to the ramification behaviour of the number field K attached to it in the case that $\tilde{\rho}$ is tamely ramified outside ℓ .

Proposition 2. Let ℓ be a prime number, and let $\mathbb{F} \subset \overline{\mathbb{F}}_{\ell}$ be a finite field. Let $\tilde{\rho} : G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F})$ be a projective representation with $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) \supset \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F})$, and let K be its attached number field, as described in Subsection 4.1. Let $p \neq \ell$ be a prime above which K/\mathbb{Q} is at most tamely ramified. Then the valuation $v_p(N(\tilde{\rho}))$ is at most 2 and can be expressed as follows:

$$v_p(N(\tilde{\rho})) = \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} 0 & \text{if K is unramified at p,} \\ 1 & \text{if K is ramified at p but also has an unramified prime above p,} \\ 2 & \text{if K has no unramified primes above p.} \end{array} \right.$$

Proof. The local representation $\tilde{\rho}_p := \tilde{\rho}|_{G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}}$ factors through the tame quotient G of $G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}$, which is topologically generated by two elements σ and τ , where τ generates the inertia group I_p and σ corresponds to a Frobenius. They satisfy the relation

$$\sigma \tau \sigma^{-1} = \tau^p. \tag{3}$$

Giving a tamely ramified lifting $\rho: G_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \to \operatorname{GL}_2(\overline{\mathbb{F}}_\ell)$ of $\tilde{\rho}$ is equivalent to giving liftings of $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ and $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ that are compatible with (3). The element $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ of $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F})$ can have four possible shapes: it can be trivial, the reduction of a non-trivial unipotent element of $\operatorname{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$, the reduction of a non-scalar split semi-simple element of $\operatorname{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$, or the reduction of a non-split semi-simple element of $\operatorname{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$.

If $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ is trivial, then K is unramified at p. We can choose an unramified lift ρ of $\tilde{\rho}$ by taking $\rho(\tau)$ to be trivial and $\rho(\sigma)$ any lifting of $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$. In that case we have $v_p(N(\rho)) = 0$.

If $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ is represented by a non-trivial unipotent matrix, then after conjugation we may assume that $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ is represented by $\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$. From (3) one can derive that $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ is represented by a matrix of the form $\begin{pmatrix} p & b \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$. Putting $\rho(\sigma) = \begin{pmatrix} p & b \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ and $\rho(\tau) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ gives a lifting of

conductor-exponent 1 at p, which is minimal as $\tilde{\rho}$ is ramified. The action of $\tilde{\rho}_p$ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F})$ has exactly 1 orbit of length 1. This corresponds to 1 unramified prime of degree 1 above p in K.

In the split semi-simple case, after conjugation, we assume that $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ is represented by $\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$. Using (3), one can readily verify that $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ is represented by a diagonal or anti-diagonal matrix. Taking any lifting of $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ and $\rho(\tau) = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ yields $v_p(N(\rho)) = 1$. The action of $\tilde{\rho}_p(\tau)$ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F})$ does have fixed points, which means that K has unramified primes above p.

We are left with the non-split semi-simple case. As a wildly ramified lifting of $\tilde{\rho}_p$ has conductor-exponent at least 2, we concentrate on searching for tamely ramified liftings. After a conjugation over $\overline{\mathbb{F}}_\ell$, we may suppose that $\tilde{\rho}(\tau)$ is represented by a matrix $M = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda & 0 \\ 0 & \lambda^p \end{pmatrix}$ with λ quadratic over \mathbb{F} . We assume $\operatorname{tr} M \neq 0$, as $\operatorname{tr} M = 0$ is included in the split semi-simple case. From (3) it now follows that $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ is represented by an anti-diagonal matrix. Hence, any lifting $\rho(\tau)$ has to be a diagonal matrix that is conjugate but not equal to its p-th power. This is only possible if $\rho(\tau)$ is in $\mathbb{F}^{\times}M$. Any choice of $\rho(\tau)$ in this set and any lifting of $\tilde{\rho}(\sigma)$ defines a tamely ramified lifting of $\tilde{\rho}_p$ of conductor-exponent 2. In this case, the inertia group has no fixed points in $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F})$ so K has no unramified primes above p.

Remark. It should certainly be possible to generalize the above proposition to representations that are wildly ramified at some place outside ℓ using, for instance, the results from [13, Subsections 5.1 and 5.2]. However, this may become somewhat elaborate and does not apply to the polynomials in Section 5, so we will not do this here.

For the Serre weight we have the following proposition:

Proposition 3. Let q be a power of a prime ℓ and let $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ be a projective representation with $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) \supset \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$. Let K be the number field attached to $\tilde{\rho}$, as described in Subsection 4.1. If m is a positive integer such that K has a prime of wild ramification index ℓ^m above ℓ , then we have

$$k(\tilde{\rho}) = 1 + \left\lceil \frac{(\ell-1)\ell^m}{(\ell^m-1)q} \cdot \left(v_{\ell}(\operatorname{Disc}(K/\mathbb{Q})) - q + 1 \right) \right\rceil.$$

Proof. For $q = \ell$, a similar formula can be found in [4, Corollary 7.2.8]; we will generalize the derivation given there.

Put $k=k(\tilde{\rho})$ and $d=\gcd(k-1,\ell-1)$, and consider a lifting ρ of $\tilde{\rho}$ of weight k. From the definition of weight it follows that $\rho|_{I_\ell}$ is isomorphic to a non-split representation of the form $\binom{\chi_\ell^{k-1}}{0}^*$. We see that $\ker(\tilde{\rho}|_{I_\ell})=\ker(\rho|_{I_\ell})$. Let $L/\mathbb{Q}_\ell^{\mathrm{unr}}$ be the fixed field of $\ker(\rho|_{I_\ell})$. Denote by $P<\mathbb{F}_q$ be the subgroup that is the image of the upper right entry. Then the action of I_ℓ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$ has orbits $\binom{1}{0}$, $\binom{x}{0}$: $x\in P$, and apart from these two, only orbits of full length $\frac{\ell-1}{d}\#P$. It follows that $\#P=\ell^m$ and that the étale algebra over $\mathbb{Q}_\ell^{\mathrm{unr}}$ attached to the Galois action of I_ℓ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$ is isomorphic to

$$\mathbb{Q}_{\ell}^{\mathrm{unr}} \times L' \times L^{d(q-\ell^m)/((\ell-1)\ell^m)},$$

where L' is a subfield of L of index $(\ell-1)/d$. If \mathscr{D} denotes the different, then

$$v_{\ell}(\mathscr{D}(L/L')) = \frac{\frac{\ell-1}{d}-1}{\frac{\ell-1}{d}\ell^m} = \frac{\ell-1-d}{(\ell-1)\ell^m}.$$

From this we obtain

$$v_{\ell}(\operatorname{Disc}(K/\mathbb{Q})) = \ell^{m}(v_{\ell}(\mathcal{D}(L/\mathbb{Q}_{\ell}^{\operatorname{unr}})) - v_{\ell}(\mathcal{D}(L/L'))) + (q - \ell^{m})v_{\ell}(\mathcal{D}(L/\mathbb{Q}_{\ell}^{\operatorname{unr}}))
= q \cdot v_{\ell}(\mathcal{D}(L/\mathbb{Q}_{\ell}^{\operatorname{unr}})) - \frac{\ell - 1 - d}{\ell - 1}$$
(4)

Now we invoke [19, Theorem 3], which expresses the different of L/K in terms of k. If $k \le \ell$, this theorem says $v_\ell(\mathscr{D}(L/\mathbb{Q}_\ell^{\mathrm{unr}})) = 1 + \frac{k-1}{\ell-1} - \frac{k-1-d}{(\ell-1)\ell^m}$. Plugging this into (4) and rewriting yields:

$$k-1 = \frac{(\ell-1)\ell^m}{(\ell^m-1)q} \cdot \left(\nu_\ell(\operatorname{Disc}(K/\mathbb{Q})) - q + 1\right) + \frac{d(q-\ell^m)}{(\ell^m-1)q}.$$

As we always have $1 \le d \le \ell - 1$ and $\ell \le \ell^m \le q$, this implies the formula in the proposition.

In the case $k = \ell + 1$, [19, Theorem 3] reads $v_{\ell}(\mathcal{D}(L/\mathbb{Q}_{\ell}^{\mathrm{unr}})) = 2 + \frac{1}{(\ell-1)\ell} - \frac{2}{(\ell-1)\ell^m}$ so that we obtain

$$k-1 = \ell = \frac{(\ell-1)\ell^m}{(\ell^m-1)q} \cdot \left(v_{\ell}(\operatorname{Disc}(K/\mathbb{Q})) - q + 1\right) + \frac{(\ell-1)(\ell^{m-1}-1) + 1}{\ell^m-1} - \frac{\ell^m}{q(\ell^m-1)},$$

which implies the formula in the proposition as well.

If $\tilde{\rho}$ is tamely ramified at ℓ , it seems less clear how to give a direct way of computing the Serre weight of a projective representation in terms of the number field attached to it. However, in that case we always have the upper bound $k(\tilde{\rho}) \leq (\ell+3)/2$, which is in practice sufficient to reduce the number of possibilities to a tractable size.

4.3 Finding the correct form

Once we know the level N and weight k of a given representation $\tilde{\rho}: G_{\mathbb{Q}} \to \operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$, with $q \geq 4$ a power of a prime ℓ , we wish to find an actual newform giving rise to it. As everywhere in this paper, we assume $\operatorname{im}(\tilde{\rho}) \supset \operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$. We also assume that N is square-free and $k \neq 1$; both conditions hold for all representations attached to the polynomials in Section 5.

To apply Serre's conjectures and conclude that there is a modular form associated with $\tilde{\rho}$, we have to verify that $\tilde{\rho}$ is odd. If q is a power of 2, this is automatic, so we assume q is odd. In that case, $\tilde{\rho}$ is odd if and only if the action of a complex conjugation on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$ is non-trivial, which holds if and only if the number field attached to $\tilde{\rho}$ is not totally real. None of the polynomials in Section 5 defines a totally real number field hence all our representations are odd.

We can list all the newforms in $S_k(\Gamma_1(N))$; the book [25] deals extensively with the computational ingredients needed for this task. If we can eliminate all but one of them, then by Serre's conjectures, the remaining one must give rise to $\tilde{\rho}$. We will therefore list a few tricks that can be used to prove $\tilde{\rho} \not\cong \tilde{\rho}_{f,\lambda}$. We do not claim that these tricks are in any way sufficient for the elimination process in general, but they do turn out to be sufficient for the representations occurring in this paper.

Let $f = \sum a_n q^n \in S_k(\Gamma_1(N))$ be a newform and consider its coefficient field K_f . The field K_f is either a totally real field or a totally imaginary quadratic extension of a totally real field. Its subfield F_f generated by all elements $a_p^2/\varepsilon_f(p)$ for $p \nmid N$ is totally real, as can be seen from properties of the Petersson inner product. In many cases, it turns out that there is a small prime p such that $\mathbb{Q}(a_p^2/\varepsilon_f(p))$ is the maximal totally real subfield of K_f and thus equal to F_f . In view of (2), the following proposition is immediate.

Proposition 4. With the notations and assumptions from above, let λ be a prime of K_f lying over the prime λ' of F_f . Assume that there is a prime $p \nmid N\ell$ such that $\mathcal{O}_{F_f}/\lambda'$ is generated by $a_p^2/\varepsilon_f(p)$ over \mathbb{F}_ℓ . If there is an embedding $\mathbb{F}_q \hookrightarrow \mathcal{O}_{K_f}/\lambda$ giving rise to an isomorphism $\tilde{\rho} \cong \tilde{\rho}_{f,\lambda}$, then we have an isomorphism $\mathcal{O}_{F_f}/\lambda' \cong \mathbb{F}_q$.

Remark. The set of primes p with $F_f = \mathbb{Q}(a_p^2/\varepsilon_f(p))$ has density 1 (see [16, Theorem 1]), so one can expect that the condition on λ' is almost always satisfied. In any case we do have an embedding $\mathbb{F}_q \hookrightarrow \mathcal{O}_{F_f}/\lambda'$.

So for given f, we do the following. Determine all primes λ' of F_f above ℓ whose degree is a multiple of $[\mathbb{F}_q : \mathbb{F}_\ell]$. Check whether for each λ' the residue field of λ' is generated by $a_p^2/\varepsilon(p)$ for some small prime p. If this is the case, then we can reject f if none of the λ' have degree $[\mathbb{F}_q : \mathbb{F}_\ell]$. This criterion can often be verified without difficulty.

Using the above trick we can already eliminate a lot of pairs (f, λ) , but some of them remain. For a small prime $p \nmid N\ell$ we can compute

$$\theta(\tilde{
ho}_{f,\lambda}(\operatorname{Frob}_p)) \equiv \frac{a_p^2}{\varepsilon_f(p)p^{k-1}} mod \lambda$$

and check whether it is equal to 4. For a given $\gamma \in GL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$ we have $\theta(\gamma) = 4$ if and only if the eigenvalues of γ are equal if and only if the action of γ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_q)$ is either trivial or has exactly 1 fixed point. Thus for $p \nmid N\ell$, we have $\theta(\tilde{\rho}(\operatorname{Frob}_p)) = 4$ if and only if p either splits completely or has exactly 1 factor of degree 1 over the number field attached to $\tilde{\rho}$. So we check for many small primes $p \nmid N\ell$ whether $\theta(\tilde{\rho}_{f,\lambda}(\operatorname{Frob}_p))$ and $\theta(\tilde{\rho}(\operatorname{Frob}_p))$ are simultaneously equal to 4.

Of the polynomials in Section 5, only one can stand up to the above tricks, namely the one with Galois group $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$. So assume for the rest of the subsection that q is a power of 2. We then have $PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_q) \cong PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_q) \cong SL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$. So $\tilde{\rho}$ is a lifting of itself, and under the assumption that $N(\tilde{\rho})$ be square-free, this lifting is minimal. Thus we are dealing with a representation whose image lands inside $SL_2(\mathbb{F}_q)$. A theorem of Buzzard [6, Corollary 2.7] now shows that there exists a newform f of trivial nebentypus giving rise to $\tilde{\rho}$, so we may assume $f \in S_k(\Gamma_0(N))$.

Applying this to our particular $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$ -polynomial, still two newforms f and f' in $S_k(\Gamma_0(N))$ are not rejected by the above tricks. So we have prime ideals λ and λ' of their respective coefficient fields such that $f \mod \lambda$ and $f' \mod \lambda'$ could both give rise to $\tilde{\rho}$. In fact, it turns out that, after a suitable isomorphism between the respective residue fields, $f \mod \lambda$ is equal to $f' \mod \lambda'$. This can be shown by verifying $\overline{a_n(f)} = \overline{a_n(f')}$ for n up to the so-called Sturm bound $[\operatorname{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z}):\Gamma_0(N)]/6$, which is up to n=27 in our particular case (see [27, Theorem 1]).

Remark. The forms f and f' have eigenvalues +1 and -1 for the Atkin-Lehner operator W_N . In general, for N prime and k=2, a result of Mazur [18, Proposition 10.6] shows that the spectrum of the Hecke algebra attached to $S_k(\Gamma_0(N))$ is connected. This implies the existence of certain congruences between newforms. In particular, if the +1-eigenspace $S_2(\Gamma_0(N))^+$ of W_N on $S_2(\Gamma_0(N))$ is non-zero, there always exists a newform in $S_2(\Gamma_0(N))^+$ that is congruent to a newform in $S_2(\Gamma_0(N))^-$ modulo some prime p. We must have p=2 as +1 and -1 cannot be congruent modulo any other prime.

5 Polynomials

This section displays the polynomials that were computed for this paper. All but the last one of the subsections have a group as title. This group is claimed to be the Galois group of all the

polynomials occurring in that subsection. The final subsection contains information about the ramification properties of the polynomials.

5.1 PSL₂(\mathbb{F}_{25})

$$x^{26} + 25x^{24} - 90x^{23} + 410x^{22} - 2174x^{21} + 7915x^{20} - 24445x^{19} + 82385x^{18} - 174360x^{17} + 340352x^{16} \\ - 596725x^{15} + 606925x^{14} - 845215x^{13} + 2199840x^{12} - 1523031x^{11} + 203295x^{10} - 2102590x^{9} \\ + 1804065x^{8} - 28770x^{7} - 35747x^{6} + 674760x^{5} - 134800x^{4} + 150735x^{3} - 2885x^{2} + 64x - 5 \\ x^{26} - 11x^{25} + 45x^{24} - 240x^{23} + 1425x^{22} - 4005x^{21} + 12885x^{20} - 50435x^{19} + 53555x^{18} - 142870x^{17} \\ + 503050x^{16} + 1144115x^{15} - 1778920x^{14} - 3596690x^{13} - 26810705x^{12} + 72895865x^{11} \\ + 110135765x^{10} + 472613940x^{9} - 1155934625x^{8} - 4427715545x^{7} - 7223127110x^{6} - 17420055270x^{5} \\ + 2907221810x^{4} - 16043305910x^{3} + 21674938395x^{2} + 14749741397x - 14641021707 \\ x^{26} + 8x^{25} + 35x^{24} + 160x^{23} - 20x^{22} - 130x^{21} + 9095x^{20} - 13020x^{19} - 43680x^{18} + 302710x^{17} \\ - 420530x^{16} - 654320x^{15} + 4610695x^{14} - 8622900x^{13} + 2477755x^{12} + 22760620x^{11} \\ - 74710515x^{10} + 87489200x^{9} - 50319960x^{8} + 23366430x^{7} - 50415455x^{6} - 166077740x^{5} \\ + 289509200x^{4} + 186724650x^{3} - 452029570x^{2} + 159622636x - 103539627$$

5.2 $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$

$$x^{33} - 16x^{32} + 108x^{31} - 396x^{30} + 980x^{29} - 3000x^{28} + 12404x^{27} - 35920x^{26} + 52252x^{25} - 12200x^{24} - 56484x^{23} + 54996x^{22} - 56164x^{21} + 101320x^{20} + 90972x^{19} - 226860x^{18} - 92456x^{17} - 106536x^{16} + 299784x^{15} + 681744x^{14} - 308904x^{13} - 863008x^{12} - 67040x^{11} + 431272x^{10} + 192632x^{9} - 9696x^{8} - 1416x^{7} - 2888x^{6} - 6600x^{5} + 2800x^{4} + 696x^{3} - 632x^{2} + 68x - 16$$

5.3 $PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{49})$

```
x^{50} + 14x^{48} - 133x^{47} - 112x^{46} - 1295x^{45} - 378x^{44} - 5929x^{43} - 20643x^{42} + 293209x^{41} + 906654x^{40} \\ + 6607265x^{39} + 24040177x^{38} + 85681897x^{37} + 473415579x^{36} + 1538779634x^{35} + 5045381579x^{34} \\ + 17364043354x^{33} + 49737600486x^{32} + 172099058782x^{31} + 417122339060x^{30} + 1354316398652x^{29} \\ + 3528932603770x^{28} + 7809511870860x^{27} + 28405678075796x^{26} + 42739389341075x^{25} \\ + 124662200818617x^{24} + 270315747916557x^{23} + 494771507303808x^{22} + 1033886525397236x^{21} \\ + 2097338665080414x^{20} + 3256453013950549x^{19} + 4773474576206007x^{18} \\ + 17415459260623270x^{17} - 10288584860072456x^{16} + 69831032535759796x^{15} \\ - 73209901903545764x^{14} + 211847950318229554x^{13} - 484953362514826317x^{12} \\ + 1233922356068052511x^{11} - 2544352497290479589x^{10} + 4386728967245371033x^{9} \\ - 5890119836852604710x^{8} + 5642420291895645202x^{7} - 1522273119205843039x^{6} \\ - 1608191474819379639x^{5} - 985882169176584092x^{4} + 2132948153097061258x^{3} \\ - 165342791798420467x^{2} - 71582764911979429x + 7908857674762849
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x^{50} - 5x^{49} - 77x^{48} + 329x^{47} + 3843x^{46} - 13874x^{45} - 131754x^{44} + 430178x^{43} + 3242540x^{42} \\ - 9995482x^{41} - 60873015x^{40} + 191874340x^{39} + 812024087x^{38} - 2785593678x^{37} \\ - 7329384580x^{36} + 26805294425x^{35} + 51738967427x^{34} - 163941114631x^{33} - 414645913171x^{32} \\ + 759116077097x^{31} + 3774174093592x^{30} - 6482891887052x^{29} - 14580121639230x^{28} \\ + 12142740277948x^{27} + 113966950745802x^{26} - 17806982973332x^{25} - 1405472958758232x^{24} \\ + 4595833892032558x^{23} - 9516541438774671x^{22} + 31704705422352872x^{21} \\ - 116138484174279574x^{20} + 264431039635704172x^{19} - 494002668821182528x^{18} \\ + 1362351868639873993x^{17} - 3448748331607098429x^{16} + 5694479877938233865x^{15} \\ - 9894493925776418252x^{14} + 22915549471984648416x^{13} - 39473448044982762734x^{12} \\ + 55367518860559248182x^{11} - 92744284275900788951x^{10} + 144645718920022553002x^{9} \\ - 202308373939366049761x^{8} + 272248056577059876663x^{7} - 284654408160120598600x^{6} \\ + 310646322644102048632x^{5} - 467838768538599148516x^{4} + 185233561060467551772x^{3} \\ - 489713859491859418738x^{2} - 124345023465677984401x - 248368725729104252373
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5.4 PGL₂(\mathbb{F}_{25})

$$x^{26} - 5x^{25} + 15x^{24} - 30x^{23} + 65x^{22} - 510x^{21} + 1460x^{20} - 1520x^{19} - 5525x^{18} + 29065x^{17} - 48510x^{16} + 56150x^{15} + 74695x^{14} - 28595x^{13} + 124915x^{12} + 430280x^{11} + 555465x^{10} + 318535x^{9} + 805335x^{8} + 1621715x^{7} + 1764955x^{6} + 950255x^{5} + 229675x^{4} - 10010x^{3} - 5560x^{2} + 1984x + 425$$

5.5 PGL₂(\mathbb{F}_{27})

$$x^{28} - 13x^{27} + 69x^{26} - 144x^{25} - 252x^{24} + 2451x^{23} - 6957x^{22} + 8433x^{21} + 8103x^{20} - 64617x^{19} \\ + 187452x^{18} - 406998x^{17} + 734271x^{16} - 1114407x^{15} + 1436532x^{14} - 1653204x^{13} + 1777944x^{12} \\ - 1653399x^{11} + 1189149x^{10} - 767391x^{9} + 511770x^{8} - 130359x^{7} + 16974x^{6} - 106098x^{5} - 49980x^{4} \\ - 20697x^{3} - 6915x^{2} - 989x - 529 \\ x^{28} - 7x^{27} + 51x^{26} - 210x^{25} + 843x^{24} - 2343x^{23} + 6645x^{22} - 12666x^{21} + 26937x^{20} - 25680x^{19} \\ + 42918x^{18} + 73236x^{17} - 28737x^{16} + 589764x^{15} + 137034x^{14} + 1898235x^{13} + 2535021x^{12} \\ + 5783667x^{11} + 11729181x^{10} + 19459167x^{9} + 34925964x^{8} + 46972173x^{7} + 62946807x^{6} \\ + 54973245x^{5} + 47069826x^{4} + 10921458x^{3} + 884292x^{2} - 11509304x - 2199865 \\ x^{28} - x^{27} - 18x^{25} - 45x^{24} - 231x^{23} + 588x^{22} + 1548x^{21} - 816x^{20} + 1785x^{19} - 810x^{18} + 10632x^{17} \\ - 39222x^{16} + 24270x^{15} + 127512x^{14} - 52701x^{13} + 34995x^{12} - 1002237x^{11} + 1837884x^{10} \\ - 1396431x^{9} + 2893974x^{8} - 5570163x^{7} + 4814445x^{6} - 3440091x^{5} + 4975905x^{4} \\ - 4773414x^{3} + 1350804x^{2} + 46475x + 265837$$

5.6 Ramification of the fields

The following table contains information on the ramification properties of each of the number fields defined by a polynomial given above. Each row of the table corresponds to one of the polynomials, sorted on Galois group. In case we have more than one field with a given Galois group, the order given in the table corresponds to the order in which the polynomials are displayed above.

For each of the fields, the absolute value of the discriminant and the decomposition types of the ramified primes are given. The notation for the decomposition type of a given prime p with respect to given number field K is to be read as follows. If the primes of K above p are $\mathfrak{p}_1, \ldots, \mathfrak{p}_r$ and for each i the inertia and ramification degrees of \mathfrak{p}_i are f_i and e_i respectively, then we denote this by the expression $f_1^{e_1} \cdots f_r^{e_r}$. In the cases where there are n > 2 factors of the same type f^e , we abbreviate this as $(f^e)^n$.

The columns labelled N and k indicate the level and weight of the associated representation, according to Propositions 2 and 3 respectively. The corresponding cusp form f, determined using the methods from Subsection 4.3, is written down in the following concise way. In all cases it has turned out that the coefficient $a_2(f)$ generates the coefficient field and that giving N, k, and the minimal polynomial of a_2 does pin down the Galois orbit of f. So we specify f by writing down the minimal polynomial of $a_2(f)$.

Group	Discr.	Decomposition types		N	k	Minimal pol. of a_2
$\overline{\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})}$	$5^{28} \cdot 29^{20}$	5: 1 ¹ 1 ⁵ 1 ²⁰	29: 1 ¹ 1 ⁵ 2 ⁵ 2 ⁵	29		$x^2 + 2x - 1$
	$5^{30} \cdot 41^{20}$	$5:1^11^{25}$	$41: 1^15^5$	41	2	$x^3 + x^2 - 5x - 1$
	$5^{30} \cdot 43^{20}$	$5:1^11^{25}$	$43: 1^11^54^5$	43	2	$x^2 - 2$
$PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{32})$	$2^{62} \cdot 157^{16}$	2: 1 ¹ 1 ³²	157: $1^1(2^2)^8$	157	2	$x^5 + \dots + 1, W_N(f) = f$
$PSL_2(\mathbb{F}_{49})$	$7^{56}\cdot 23^{42}$	$7:1^11^{49}$	$23: 1^11^73^73^7$	23	2	$x^2 + x - 1$
	$7^{56} \cdot 31^{42}$	$7:1^11^{49}$	$31: 1^11^76^7$	31	2	$x^2 - x - 1$
$PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{25})$	$5^{30} \cdot 17^{21}$	$5:1^11^{25}$	$17: 1^11^13^8$	17	2	$x^4 + 4x^3 + 8x^2 + 4x + 1$
$PGL_2(\mathbb{F}_{27})$	$3^{39} \cdot 41^{18}$	$3:1^11^{27}$	$41: 1^11^3(2^3)^4$	41	2	$x^3 + x^2 - 5x - 1$
	$3^{39} \cdot 47^{18}$	$3:1^11^{27}$	$47: 1^11^3(2^3)^4$	47	2	$x^4 - x^3 - 5x^2 + 5x - 1$
	$3^{39} \cdot 53^{18}$	$3:1^11^{27}$	$53: 1^11^3(2^3)^4$	53	2	$x^3 + x^2 - 3x - 1$

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