EXPLICIT CONSTRUCTIONS OF RIP MATRICES AND RELATED PROBLEMS

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Abstract. We give a new explicit construction of $n \times N$ matrices satisfying the Restricted Isometry Property (RIP). Namely, for some $\varepsilon > 0$, large N and any n satisfying $N^{1-\varepsilon} \le n \le N$, we construct RIP matrices of order $k = n^{1/2+\varepsilon}$ and constant $\delta = n^{-\varepsilon}$. This overcomes the natural barrier $k = O(n^{1/2})$ for proofs based on small coherence, which are used in all previous explicit constructions of RIP matrices. Key ingredients in our proof are new estimates for sumsets in product sets and for exponential sums with the products of sets possessing special additive structure. We also give a construction of sets of n complex numbers whose k-th moments are uniformly small for $1 \le k \le N$ (Turán's power sum problem), which improves upon known explicit constructions when $(\log N)^{1+o(1)} \le n \le (\log N)^{4+o(1)}$. This latter construction produces elementary explicit examples of $n \times N$ matrices that satisfy RIP and whose columns constitute a new spherical code; for those problems the parameters closely match those of existing constructions in the range $(\log N)^{1+o(1)} \le n \le (\log N)^{5/2+o(1)}$.

1. Introduction

Suppose $1 \le k \le n \le N$ and $0 < \delta < 1$. A 'signal' $\mathbf{x} = (x_j)_{j=1}^N \in \mathbb{C}^N$ is said to be k-sparse if $\mathbf{x}$ has at most k nonzero coordinates. An $n \times N$ matrix Φ is said to satisfy the Restricted Isometry Property (RIP) of order k with constant δ if, for all k-sparse vectors $\mathbf{x}$, we have

$$(1 - \delta)\|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 \le \|\Phi\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 \le (1 + \delta)\|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2. \tag{1.1}$$

While most authors work with real signals and matrices, in this paper we work with complex matrices for convenience. Given a complex matrix Φ satisfying (1.1), the $2n \times 2N$ real matrix Φ', formed by replacing each element $a + ib$ of Φ by the 2×2 matrix $\left(\begin{smallmatrix} a & b \\ -b & a \end{smallmatrix}\right)$, also satisfies (1.1) with the same parameters k, δ.

Date: July 7, 2010.

2000 *Mathematics Subject Classification.* Primary 11L07; Secondary 11B13, 11B30, 41A46, 94A12, 94B60.

The first author was partially supported by NSF grants DMS-0808042 and DMS-0835373. The second, third and fifth authors were supported by the Workshop in Analysis and Probability at Texas A& M University, 2008. The second author was supported by NSF Grant DMS 0701552 and the third author was supported by NSF grant DMS 0901339. The research was finished while the third and fourth authors were visiting the Institute for Advanced Study, the third author supported by grants from the Ellentuck Fund and The Friends of the Institute For Advanced Study. The last three authors thank the IAS for its hospitality and excellent working conditions.

We know from Candès, Romberg and Tao that matrices satisfying RIP have application to sparse signal recovery (see [11, 12, 13]). A variant of RIP (with the ℓ_2 norm in (1.1) replaced by the ℓ_1 norm) is also useful for such problems [8]. A weak form of RIP, where (1.1) holds for most k-sparse $\mathbf{x}$ (called Statistical RIP) is studied in [20]. Other applications of RIP matrices may be found in [28, 32].

Given n, N, δ, we wish to find $n \times N$ RIP matrices of order k with constant δ, and with k as large as possible. If the entries of Φ are independent Bernoulli random variables with values $\pm 1/\sqrt{n}$, then with high probability, Φ will have the required properties for[1]

$$k \asymp \delta \frac{n}{\log(2N/n)}. \tag{1.2}$$

See [12, 30]; also [6] for a proof based on the Johnson-Lindenstrauss lemma [23]. The first result of similar type for these matrices is due to Kashin [25]. See also [14, 38] for RIP matrices with rows randomly selected from the rows of a discrete Fourier transform matrix and for other random constructions of RIP matrices.

It is an open problem to find good *explicit* constructions of RIP matrices; see T. Tao's Weblog [41] for a discussion of the problem. We mention here that all known explicit examples of RIP matrices are based on constructions of systems of unit vectors (the columns of the matrix) with small *coherence*.

The *coherence parameter* μ of a collection of unit vectors $\{\mathbf{u}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{u}_N\} \subset \mathbb{C}^n$ is defined by

$$\mu := \max_{r \neq s} |\langle \mathbf{u}_r, \mathbf{u}_s \rangle|. \tag{1.3}$$

Matrices whose columns are unit vectors with small coherence are connected to a number of well-known problems, a few of which we describe below. Systems of vectors with small coherence are also known as *spherical codes*. Some other applications of matrices with small coherence may be found in [16, 18, 29].

Proposition 1. *Suppose that $\mathbf{u}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{u}_N$ are the columns of a matrix Φ and have coherence μ. Then Φ satisfies RIP of order k with constant $\delta = (k-1)\mu$.*

Proof. For any k-sparse vector $\mathbf{x}$,

$$\begin{aligned} |\|\Phi \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 - \|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2| &\le 2 \sum_{r<s} |x_r x_s \langle \mathbf{u}_r, \mathbf{u}_s \rangle| \\ &\le \mu((\sum |x_j|)^2 - \|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2) \le (k-1)\mu \|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2. \end{aligned}$$

□

All explicit constructions of matrices with small coherence are based on number theory. Constructions of Kashin [24], Alon et al [2], DeVore [15], and Nelson and Temlyakov [33], each produce matrices with

$$\mu \ll \frac{\log N}{\sqrt{n} \log n}. \tag{1.4}$$

[1] For convenience, we utilize the Vinogradov notation $a \ll b$, which means $a = O(b)$, and the Hardy notation $a \asymp b$, which means $b \ll a \ll b$.

By Proposition 1, these matrices satisfy RIP with constant δ and order

$$k \asymp \delta \frac{\sqrt{n}\log n}{\log N}. \tag{1.5}$$

It follows from random constructions of Erdős and Rényi for Turán's problem (see Proposition 2 and (1.15) below) that for any n, N there are vectors with coherence

$$\mu \ll \sqrt{\frac{\log N}{n}}.$$

By contrast, there is a universal lower bound

$$\mu \gg \Big(\frac{\log N}{n\log(n/\log N)}\Big)^{1/2} \geq \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}}, \tag{1.6}$$

valid for $2\log N \leq n \leq N/2$ and all Φ, due to Levenshtein [27] (see also [19] and [33]). Therefore, by estimating RIP parameters in terms of the coherence parameter we cannot construct $n \times N$ RIP matrices of order larger than $\sqrt{n}$ and constant $\delta < 1$.

Using methods of additive combinatorics, we construct RIP matrices of order k with $n = o(k^2)$.

Theorem 1. *There is an effective constant $\varepsilon_0 > 0$ and an explicit number n_0 such that for any positive integers $n \geq n_0$ and $n \leq N \leq n^{1+\varepsilon_0}$, there is an explicit $n \times N$ RIP matrix of order $\lfloor n^{\frac{1}{2}+\varepsilon_0} \rfloor$ with constant $n^{-\varepsilon_0}$.*

Remark 1. For application to sparse signal recovery, it is sufficient to take fixed $\delta < \sqrt{2}-1$ [11], and one needs an upper bound on n in terms of k, N. By Theorem 1, for some $\varepsilon_0' > 0$, large N and $N^{1/2-\varepsilon_0'} \leq k \leq N^{1/2+\varepsilon_0'}$, we construct explicit RIP matrices with $n \leq k^{2-\varepsilon_0'}$.

The proof of Theorem 1 uses a result on additive energy of sets (Corollary 3, Theorem 4), estimates for sizes of sumsets in product sets (Theorem 5), and bounds for exponential sums over products of sets possessing special additive structure (Lemma 9).

We now return to the problem of constructing matrices with small coherence. By (1.6), the bound (1.4) cannot be improved if $\log n \gg \log N$, but there is a gap between bounds (1.6) and (1.4) when $\log n = o(\log N)$. For example, (1.4) is nontrivial only for $n \gg (\log N/\log\log N)^2$. Of particular interest in coding theory is the range $n = O(\log^C N)$ for fixed C, where there have been some improvements made to (1.4). A construction obtained by concatenating algebraic-geometric codes with Hadamard codes (see e.g. [21, Corollary 3] and Section 3 of [7]) produces matrices with coherence

$$\mu \ll \left(\frac{\log N}{n\log(n/\log N)}\right)^{1/3}, \tag{1.7}$$

which is nontrivial for $n \gg \log N$, and is better than (1.4) when $\log N \ll n \ll (\frac{\log N}{\log\log N})^4$. In the range $(\frac{\log N}{\log\log N})^{5/2} \ll n \ll (\frac{\log N}{\log\log N})^5$, Ben-Aroya and Ta-Shma [7] improved both (1.4) and (1.7) by constructing binary codes (vectors with entries $\pm 1/\sqrt{n}$) with coherence

$$\mu \ll \left(\frac{\log N}{n^{4/5}\log\log N}\right)^{1/2}. \tag{1.8}$$

In this paper, we introduce very elementary constructions of matrices with coherence which matches (up to a $\log\log N$ factor) the bound (1.7). Our constructions, which are based on a method of Ajtai, Iwaniec, Komlós, Pintz and Szemerédi [1], have the added utility of applying to Turán's power-sum problem and to the problem of finding thin sets with small Fourier coefficients. For the last two problems, our construction gives better estimates than existing explicit constructions in certain ranges of the parameters.

Roughly speaking, a set with small Fourier coefficients can be used to construct a set of numbers for Turán's problem, and a set of numbers in Turán's problem can be used to produce a matrix with small coherence. This is made precise below.

We next describe the problem of explicitly constructing thin sets with small Fourier coefficients. If N is a positive integer and S is a set (or multiset) of residues modulo N, we let

$$f_S(k) = \sum_{s\in S} e^{2\pi i ks/N}$$

and

$$|f_S| := \frac{1}{|S|}\max_{1\le k\le N-1} |f_S(k)|.$$

Given N, we wish to find a small set S with $|f_S|$ also small.

Turán's problem [43] concerns the estimation of the function

$$T(n,N) = \min_{|z_1|=\cdots=|z_n|=1} M_N(\mathbf{z}), \quad M_N(\mathbf{z}) := \max_{k=1,\dots,N}\left|\sum_{j=1}^n z_j^k\right|.$$

where n, N are positive integers. There is a vast literature related to Turán's problem; see, e.g., [3], [4], [31] (chapter 5), [39], [40].

If $S = \{t_1,\dots,t_n\}$ is a multiset of integers modulo N and $z_j = e^{2\pi i t_j/N}$ for $1\le j\le n$, we see that

$$T(n,N-1) \le M_{N-1}(\mathbf{z}) \le n|f_S|. \tag{1.9}$$

We also have the following easy connection between Turán's problem and coherence.

Proposition 2. *Given any vector $\mathbf{z} = (z_1,\dots,z_n)$ with $|z_j| = 1$ for all j, the coherence μ of the $n\times N$ matrix with the columns*

$$\mathbf{u}_k = n^{-1/2}(z_1^{k-1},\dots,z_n^{k-1})^T, \quad k = 1,\dots,N \tag{1.10}$$

satisfies $\mu = n^{-1}M_{N-1}(\mathbf{z})$.

Combining (1.9) and Proposition 2, for any multiset S of residues modulo N, the vectors (1.10) satisfy

$$\mu \le |f_S|. \tag{1.11}$$

A corollary of a character sum estimate of Katz [26] shows[2] that for certain N and $1/N \le \mu \le 1$, there are (explicitly defined) sets T of residues modulo N so that

$$|f_T| \le \mu, \qquad |T| = O\left(\frac{\log^2 N}{\mu^2(\log\log N + \log(1/\mu))}\right). \tag{1.12}$$

An application of Dirichlet's approximation theorem shows that a set S with $|S| < \log N$ must have $|f_S| \gg 1$. In [1], sets which are not much larger are explicitly constructed so that $|f_S|$ is small. Specifically, by [1, (1),(2)], for each prime[3] N there is a set S with $|S| = O(\log N (\log^* N)^{13\log^* N})$ and

$$|f_S| = O(1/\log^* N),$$

where $\log^* N$ is the integer k so that the k-th iterate of the logarithm of N lies in $[1, e)$. The proof uses an iterative procedure. By modifying this procedure, and truncating after two steps, we prove the following. To state our results, for brevity write

$$L_1 = \log N, \qquad L_2 = \log\log N, \qquad L_3 = \log\log\log N.$$

Theorem 2. *For sufficiently large prime N and μ such that*

$$\frac{L_2^4}{L_1} \le \mu < 1, \qquad 1/\mu \in \mathbb{N}, \tag{1.13}$$

a set S of residues modulo N can be explicitly constructed so that

$$|f_S| \le \mu, \quad \text{and} \quad |S| = O\left(\frac{L_1 L_2 \log(2/\mu)}{\mu^4(L_3 + \log(1/\mu))}\right) = O\left(\frac{L_1 L_2}{\mu^4}\right).$$

Remark 2. The method from [1], if applied without modification (with two iterations of the basic lemma), produces a conclusion in Theorem 2 with

$$|S| = O\left(\frac{L_1 L_2}{\mu^8 L_3}\right).$$

Remark 3. The bound on $|S|$ in Theorem 2 is better than (1.12) for $\mu \gg L_1^{-1/2} L_2$.

Together, the construction for Theorem 2 and (1.9) give explicit sets $\mathbf{z}$ for Turán's problem. By further modifying the construction, we can do better.

Theorem 3. *For sufficiently large positive integer N and μ such that*

$$\frac{L_2^3}{L_1} \le \mu < 1, \tag{1.14}$$

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[2] Here we take $N = p^d - 1$, where p is prime, $p \approx ((d-1)/\mu)^2$ and $((d-1)\mu^{-1})^{2d} \approx N$. Let $F = \mathbb{F}_{p^d}$. The group of characters on F is a cyclic group of order $N = p^d - 1$ with generator ξ_1. For any $x \in F \setminus \{0\}$ write $\chi_1(x) = e(t_x/N)$. Let x be an element of F not contained in any proper subfield of F and take $T = \{t_{x+j} : j = 0, \ldots, p-1\}$. Then $|T| = p$, and $|f_T| \le (d-1)\sqrt{p}$ by [26].

[3] A corresponding result when N is composite is given in [36].

a multiset $\mathbf{z} = \{z_1, \dots, z_n\}$ *such that* $|z_1| = \cdots = |z_n| = 1$*, can be explicitly constructed so that*

$$M_N(\mathbf{z}) \le \mu n, \qquad n = O\left(\frac{L_1 L_2 \log(2/\mu)}{\mu^3(L_3 + \log(1/\mu))}\right) = O\left(\frac{L_1 L_2}{\mu^3}\right).$$

To put Theorem 3 in context, we briefly review what is known about $T(n, N)$. P. Erdős and A. Rényi [17] used probabilistic methods to prove an upper estimate

$$T(n, N) \le (6n \log(N + 1))^{1/2}. \tag{1.15}$$

Using the character sum bound of Katz [26], J. Andersson [5] gave explicit examples of sets $\mathbf{z}$ which give

$$T(n, N) \le M_N(\mathbf{z}) \ll \frac{\sqrt{n} \log N}{\log n} \tag{1.16}$$

One can see that (1.16) supersedes (1.15) for $\log N \ll \log^2 n$. Also, combining (1.16) with Proposition 2 provides yet another construction of matrices with coherence satisfying (1.4). On the other hand, by (1.6) and Proposition 2, we have the lower estimate

$$T(n, N) \gg \left(\frac{n \log N}{\log(n/\log N)}\right)^{1/2} \gg n^{1/2} \qquad (2 \log N \le n \le N/2).$$

By comparison, the constructions in Theorem 3 are better than (1.16) in the range $n \ll L_1^4/L_2^8$, that is, throughout the range (1.14) (our constructions require n to be prime, however).

The constructions in Theorem 3 also produce, by Proposition 2, explicit examples of matrices with coherence

$$\mu \ll \left(\frac{L_1 L_2}{n}\right)^{1/3},$$

which is close to the bound (1.7). By Proposition 1, these matrices satisfy RIP with constant δ and order

$$k \gg \delta \left(\frac{n}{L_1 L_2}\right)^{1/3}.$$

We prove Theorem 1 in Sections 2–7, Theorem 2 in Section 8 and Theorem 3 in Section 9.

2. Construction of the example in Theorem 1

We fix a large even number m. A value of m can be specified; it depends on the constant in an estimate from additive combinatorics (Proposition 3). For sufficiently large n we take the largest prime $p \le n$, which satisfies $p \ge n/2$ by Bertrand's postulate. By $\mathbb{F}_p$ we denote the field of the residues modulo p, and let $\mathbb{F}_p^* = \mathbb{F}_p \setminus \{0\}$. For $x \in \mathbb{F}_p$, let $e_p(x) = e^{2\pi i x/p}$.

We construct an appropriate $p \times N$ matrix Φ_p with columns $\mathbf{u}_{a,b}, a \in \mathscr{A} \subset \mathbb{F}_p, b \in \mathscr{B} \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ where

$$\mathbf{u}_{a,b} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{p}}(e_p(ax^2 + bx))_{x \in \mathbb{F}_p}$$

and the sets $\mathscr{A}, \mathscr{B}$ will be defined below. Notice that the matrix Φ_p can be extended to a $n \times N$ matrix Φ by adding $n - p$ zero rows. Clearly, the matrices Φ_p and Φ have the same RIP parameters.

To define the set $\mathscr{A}$, we take

$$\alpha = \frac{1}{8m^2}, \quad L = \lfloor p^\alpha \rfloor, \quad U = L^{4m-1}$$

and

$$\mathscr{A} = \{x^2 + Ux : x \in \{1, \ldots, L\}\}. \tag{2.1}$$

To define the set $\mathscr{B}$, we take

$$\beta = \alpha/2 = 1/(16m^2), \quad r = \left\lfloor \frac{\beta \log p}{\log 2} \right\rfloor, \quad M = 2^{(1/\beta)-1} = 2^{16m^2-1}.$$

Let

$$\mathscr{B} = \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^{r} x_j (2M)^{j-1} : x_1, \ldots, x_r \in \{0, \ldots, M-1\} \right\}.$$

We notice that all elements of $\mathscr{B}$ are at most $p/2$, and

$$|\mathscr{B}| \asymp p^{1-\beta}. \tag{2.2}$$

It follows from (2.1) and (2.2) that

$$|\mathscr{A}||\mathscr{B}| \asymp p^{1+\beta} \asymp n^{1+\beta}.$$

For $n \le N \le n^{1+\beta/2}$, take Φ to be the matrix formed by the first N columns of Φ_p, padded with $n-p$ rows of zeros. In the next five sections, we show that Φ has the required properties for Theorem 1.

3. The Flat-RIP property

Let $\mathbf{u}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{u}_N$ be the columns of an $n \times N$ matrix Φ. Suppose that for every j, $\|\mathbf{u}_j\|_2 = 1$. We say that Φ satisfies the flat RIP of order k with constant δ if for any disjoint $J_1, J_2 \subset \{1, \ldots, N\}$ with $|J_1| \le k, |J_2| \le k$ we have

$$\left| \left\langle \sum_{j \in J_1} \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j \in J_2} \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle \right| \le \delta (|J_1||J_2|)^{1/2}. \tag{3.1}$$

For technical reasons, it is more convenient to work with the flat-RIP than with the RIP. However, flat-RIP implies RIP with an increase in δ. The flat-RIP property is closely related to the property that (1.1) holds for any $\mathbf{x}$ with entries which are zero or one and at most k ones (see the calculation at the end of this section).

Lemma 1. *Let $k \ge 2^{10}$ and s be a positive integer. Suppose that Φ satisfies flat-RIP of order k with constant δ. Then Φ satisfies RIP of order $2sk$ with constant $44s\delta\log k$.*

Proof. First, by a convexity-type argument and our assumption,

$$\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} x_j\mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} y_j\mathbf{u}_j\right\rangle\right| \le \delta(|J_1||J_2|)^{1/2} \tag{3.2}$$

provided that $|J_1|\le k, |J_2|\le k$, $0\le x_j, y_j\le 1$ for all j. Next, suppose $|J_1|\le k, |J_2|\le k$, and $0\le x_j, y_j$ for all j. Without loss of generality assume that $\|\mathbf{x}\|_2=\|\mathbf{y}\|_2=1$, where $\|\cdot\|_2$ denotes the l_2 norm. For a positive integer ν let

$$J_{1,\nu}=\{j\in J_1 : 2^{-\nu}<x_j\le 2^{1-\nu}\},\quad J_{2,\nu}=\{j\in J_2 : 2^{-\nu}<y_j\le 2^{1-\nu}\}.$$

Observe that

$$\sum_\nu 4^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|\le 1,\quad \sum_\nu 4^{-\nu}|J_{2,\nu}|\le 1. \tag{3.3}$$

Applying (3.2) to sets $J_{1,\nu}, J_{2,\nu}$, we get

$$\begin{aligned}\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} x_j\mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} y_j\mathbf{u}_j\right\rangle\right| &\le \sum_{\nu_1,\nu_2}\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_{1,\nu_1}} x_j\mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_{2,\nu_2}} y_j\mathbf{u}_j\right\rangle\right|\\ &\le \sum_{\nu_1,\nu_2} 2^{2-\nu_1-\nu_2}\delta(|J_{1,\nu_1}||J_{2,\nu_2}|)^{1/2}\\ &= 4\delta\sum_\nu 2^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|^{1/2}\sum_\nu 2^{-\nu}|J_{2,\nu}|^{1/2}.\end{aligned}$$

Let $t=\lfloor 3+\log k/(2\log 2)\rfloor$. By the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality we infer that

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_\nu 2^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|^{1/2} &\le \sum_{\nu=1}^t 2^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|^{1/2}+\sum_{\nu=t+1}^\infty 2^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|^{1/2}\\ &\le t^{1/2}\left(\sum_{\nu=1}^t 4^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|\right)^{1/2}+\sum_{\nu=t+1}^\infty 2^{-\nu}k^{1/2}\le t^{1/2}+\frac14.\end{aligned}$$

Similarly,

$$\sum_\nu 2^{-\nu}|J_{1,\nu}|^{1/2}\le t^{1/2}+\frac14.$$

Therefore,

$$\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} x_j\mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} y_j\mathbf{u}_j\right\rangle\right| \le 4\delta\left(t^{1/2}+\frac14\right)^2\le 5.5\log k. \tag{3.4}$$

For the next step, suppose x_j, y_j take arbitrary complex values, $|J_1| \le sk$ and $|J_2| \le sk$. We partition J_1 and J_2 into s subsets of cardinality at most k each: $J_1 = \cup_{\mu=1}^{s} J_{1,\mu}$, $J_2 = \cup_{\mu=1}^{s} J_{2,\mu}$. Next, for any j we have

$$x_j = \sum_{\nu=1}^{4} x_{j,\nu} i^{\nu}, \quad y_j = \sum_{\nu=1}^{4} y_{j,\nu} i^{\nu}, \quad |x_j|^2 = \sum_{\nu=1}^{4} x_{j,\nu}^2, \quad |y_j|^2 = \sum_{\nu=1}^{4} y_{j,\nu}^2,$$

where $x_{j,\nu}, y_{j,\nu}$ are non-negative. By (3.4) and the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality,

$$\begin{aligned}
\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} x_j \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} y_j \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle\right| &\le \sum_{\mu_1=1}^{s} \sum_{\nu_1=1}^{4} \sum_{\mu_2=1}^{s} \sum_{\nu_2=1}^{4} \left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_{1,\mu_1}} x_{j,\nu_1} \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_{2,\mu_2}} y_{j,\nu_2} \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle\right| \\
&\le \sum_{\mu_1,\nu_1,\mu_2,\nu_2} 5.5\delta(\log k) \left(\sum_{j\in J_{1,\mu_1}} x_{j,\nu_1}^2 \right)^{1/2} \left(\sum_{j\in J_{2,\mu_2}} y_{j,\nu_2}^2 \right)^{1/2} \\
&\le 22 s\delta \|\mathbf{x}\|_2 \|\mathbf{y}\|_2 \log k.
\end{aligned} \tag{3.5}$$

To complete the proof of the lemma assume $N \ge 2sk$ and consider a vector $\mathbf{x} = \sum_{j\in J} x_j e_j$ with $\|\mathbf{x}\|_2 = 1$ and $|J| = 2sk$, where $(e_1, \dots, e_N)$ is the standard basis of $\mathbb{C}^N$. Take arbitrary partitions J into two sets J_1, J_2 of cardinality sk each. By (3.5), we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\left| \|\Phi \mathbf{x}\|_2^2 - \|\mathbf{x}\|_2^2 \right| &= \left| \sum_{j_1, j_2 \in J, j_1 \ne j_2} \langle x_{j_1} \mathbf{u}_{j_1}, x_{j_2} \mathbf{u}_{j_2} \rangle \right| \\
&= \binom{2sk-2}{sk-1}^{-1} \left| \sum_{J_1, J_2} \left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} x_j \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} x_j \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle \right| \\
&\le \binom{2sk-2}{sk-1}^{-1} \sum_{J_1, J_2} 22 s\delta(\log k) \left(\sum_{j\in J_1} |x_j|^2 \right)^{1/2} \left(\sum_{j\in J_2} |x_j|^2 \right)^{1/2} \\
&\le \binom{2sk-2}{sk-1}^{-1} \sum_{J_1, J_2} 11 s\delta \|\mathbf{x}\|^2 \log k \\
&= \binom{2sk}{sk} \binom{2sk-2}{sk-1}^{-1} 11 s\delta \|\mathbf{x}\|^2 \log k \le 44 s\delta \|\mathbf{x}\|^2 \log k.
\end{aligned}$$

□

Corollary 1. *Let $k \ge 2^{10}$ and s be a positive integer. Assume that the coherence parameter of the matrix Φ is $\mu \le 1/k$. Also, assume that for some $\delta \ge 0$ and any disjoint $J_1, J_2 \subset \{1, \dots, N\}$ with $|J_1| \le k, |J_2| \le k$ we have*

$$\left| \left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle \right| \le \delta k.$$

Then Φ satisfies the RIP of order $2sk$ with constant $44 s\sqrt{\delta} \log k$.

Proof. For any disjoint $J_1, J_2 \subset \{1,\dots,N\}$ with $|J_1| \le k, |J_2| \le k$ we have

$$\left|\left\langle \sum_{j\in J_1} \mathbf{u}_j, \sum_{j\in J_2} \mathbf{u}_j \right\rangle\right| \le \min(\delta k, \mu |J_1||J_2|) \le \min(\delta k, |J_1||J_2|/k) \le \sqrt{\delta |J_1||J_2|},$$

and it remains to apply Lemma 1. □

Remark 4. Using the assumptions of the corollary directly rather than reducing it to Lemma 1, one can get a better constant for RIP; in particular, for a fixed s it tends to zero as $\delta \to 0$, independently of k. However, we do not need a stronger version of the corollary for our purposes.

4. Some definitions and results from additive combinatorics

For an (additive) abelian group G we define the sum and the difference of subsets $A, B \subset G$:

$$A + B = \{a + b :\, a \in A, b \in B\}, \quad A - B = \{a - b :\, a \in A, b \in B\}.$$

We denote $-A = \{-x : x \in A\}$. If $A \subseteq G = \mathbb{F}_p$ and $b \in \mathbb{F}_p$, write $bA = \{ba : a \in A\}$.

Consider $G = \mathbb{F}_p$ and let $\mathscr{B} \subset G$ be the set defined in Section 2. There is a natural bijection Φ between $\mathscr{B}$ and the cube $\mathscr{C}_{M,r} = \{0,\dots,M-1\}^r$ defined by $\Phi(\sum_{j=1}^r x_j (2M)^{j-1}) = (x_1,\dots,x_r)$. Moreover, it is trivial that $b_1 + b_2 = b_3 + b_4$ if and only if $\Phi(b_1) + \Phi(b_2) = \Phi(b_3) + \Phi(b_4)$. In the language of additive combinatorics, Φ is a Freiman isomorphism between $\mathscr{B}$ and $\mathscr{C}_{M,r}$. Thus, $|B_1 + B_2| = |\Phi(B_1) + \Phi(B_2)|$ for any $B_1 \subseteq \mathscr{B}$, $B_2 \subseteq \mathscr{B}$. The problem of the size of sumsets in $\mathscr{C}_{M,r}$ will be investigated in the next section.

We will use the following lemma which is a particular case of Plünecke – Ruzsa estimates ([42], Corollary 6.23).

Lemma 2. *For any nonempty set $A \subset G$ we have $|A + A| \le |A - A|^2/|A|$.*

If $A, B \subset G$, we define the energy $E(A, B)$ of the sets A and B as the number of solutions of the equation

$$a_1 + b_1 = a_2 + b_2, \quad a_1, a_2 \in A,\, b_1, b_2 \in B.$$

Next, let $F \subset A \times B$. The F-restricted sum of A and B is defined as

$$A +_F B = \{a + b :\, a \in A, b \in B, (a, b) \in F\}.$$

Trivially $E(A, A) \le |A|^3$. If $E(A, A)$ is close to $|A|^3$ then A must have a special additive structure.

Lemma 3. *([42], Lemma 2.30) If $E(A, A) \ge |A|^3/K$ then there exists $F \subset A \times A$ such that $|F| \ge |A|^2/(2K)$ and $|A +_F A| \le 2K|A|$.*

The following lemma [10] is a version of the Balog–Szemerédi–Gowers lemma which plays a very important role in additive combinatorics.

Lemma 4. *If $F \subset A \times A$, $|F| \ge |A|^2/L$ and $|A +_F A| \le L|A|$. Then there exists a set $A' \subset A$ such that $|A'| \ge |A|/(10L)$ and $|A' - A'| \le 10^4 L^9 |A|$.*

Combining Lemma 3 and Lemma 4 gives the following.

Corollary 2. *If $E(A,A) \geq |A|^3/K$ then there exists a set $A' \subset A$ such that $|A'| \geq |A|/(20K)$ and $|A'-A'| \leq 10^7 K^9 |A|$.*

For a function $f : \mathbb{F}_p \to \mathbb{C}$ and a number $r \geq 1$ we define the L_r norm of f:

$$\|f\|_r = \left(\sum_{x \in \mathbb{F}_p} |f(x)|^r \right)^{1/r}.$$

The additive convolution of two functions $f, g : \mathbb{F}_p \to \mathbb{C}$ is defined as

$$f * g(x) = \sum_{y \in \mathbb{F}_p} f(y) g(x-y).$$

By 1_A we denote the indicator function of the set A. With this notation, we have

$$E(A,B) = E(A,-B) = \|1_A * 1_B\|_2^2. \tag{4.1}$$

We say that a function $f : \mathbb{F}_p \to \mathbb{R}_+$ is a probability measure if $\|f\|_1 = 1$. Notice that if f, g are probability measures then $f * g$ is also a probability measure.

Proposition 3 ([9, Theorem C]). *Assume $A \subset \mathbb{F}_p$, $B \subset \mathbb{F}_p^*$ with $|A| \geq |B|$. For some $c_0 > 0$,*

$$\sum_{b \in B} E(A, bA) \ll (\min(p/|A|, |B|))^{-c_0} |A|^3 |B|. \tag{4.2}$$

Note that if $|A| < |B|$, we may decompose B as a disjoint union of at most $2|B|/|A|$ sets B_j with $|A|/2 < |B_j| \leq |A|$ and apply (4.2) for each B_j. Hence

$$\sum_{b \in B} E(A, bA) \ll \left[\min\left(|A|, |B|, \frac{p}{|A|} \right) \right]^{-c_0} |A|^3 |B|. \tag{4.3}$$

Applying the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality we get

$$\sum_{b \in B} \|1_A * 1_{bA}\|_2 \ll |A|^{3/2} \left(|A|^{-c_0/2} |B| + |B|^{1-c_0/2} + p^{-c_0/2} |A|^{c_0/2} |B| \right). \tag{4.4}$$

Remark 5. It would be interesting to find best possible value for c_0 in Proposition 3. The example $A = B = \{1, \ldots, [\sqrt{p}]\}$ shows that $c_0 < 1$.

Corollary 3. *For any $A \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ and a probability measure λ we have*

$$\sum_{b \in \mathbb{F}_p^*} \lambda(b) \|1_A * 1_{bA}\|_2 \ll \left(\|\lambda\|_2 + |A|^{-1/2} + |A|^{1/2} p^{-1/2} \right)^{c_0} |A|^{3/2}.$$

Proof. Put $\lambda(p) = 0$, and let b be a permutation of $\{1, \ldots, p\}$ such that $\lambda(b_1) \geq \cdots \geq \lambda(b_p) = 0$. By Lemma 3, for $1 \leq j \leq p-1$ we have $S_j \ll G_j$, where

$$S_j = \sum_{h=1}^{j} \|1_A * 1_{bA}\|_2, \quad G_j := |A|^{3/2} \left(|A|^{-c_0/2} j + |A|^{c_0/2} p^{-c_0/2} j + j^{1-c_0/2} \right).$$

Applying summation by parts,

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|1_A*1_{bA}\|_2 &= \sum_{j=1}^{p}\lambda(b_j)\left(S_j-S_{j-1}\right)=\sum_{j=1}^{p-1}S_j\left(\lambda(b_j)-\lambda(b_{j+1})\right)\\ &\ll \sum_{j=1}^{p-1}G_j\left(\lambda(b_j)-\lambda(b_{j+1})\right)=\sum_{j=1}^{p-1}\lambda(b_j)\left(G_j-G_{j-1}\right)\\ &= |A|^{3/2}\Big[|A|^{-c_0/2}+p^{-c_0/2}|A|^{c_0/2}+O\Big(\sum_{j=1}^{p}\lambda(b_j)j^{-c_0/2}\Big)\Big]\end{aligned}$$

Denote $u_0=\|\lambda\|_2^{-2}$. Notice that $1\le u_0\le p$ since $\|\lambda\|_1=1$. Separately considering $j\le u_0$ and $j>u_0$ and using the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality, we get

$$\sum_{j=1}^{p}\lambda(b_j)j^{-c_0/2}\le\|\lambda\|_2\left(\sum_{j\le u_0}j^{-c_0}\right)^{1/2}+u_0^{-c_0/2}=O\left(\|\lambda\|_2^{c_0}\right). \qquad \square$$

Although Corollary 3 suffices for the purposes of this paper, a further generalization of Proposition 3 might be useful. For $z\in\mathbb{F}_p^*$ we define a function $\rho_z[f]$ by $\rho_z[f](x)=f(x/z)$.

Theorem 4. *Let λ,μ be probability measures on $\mathbb{F}_p$. Then*

$$\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu*\rho_b[\mu]\|_2\ll\left(\|\lambda\|_2+\|\mu\|_2+\|\mu\|_2^{-1}p^{-1/2}\right)^{c_0/7}\|\mu\|_2.$$

Proof. Using a parameter $\Delta\ge 1$ which will be specified later we define the sets

$$A_-=\{x:\ \mu(x)\ge\|\mu\|_2^2\Delta\},\quad A_+=\{x:\ \mu(x)<\|\mu\|_2^2\Delta^{-2}\},\quad A=\mathbb{F}_p\setminus A_-\setminus A_+.$$

Decompose $\mu=\mu_-+\mu_0+\mu_+$ where

$$\mu_-=\mu 1_{A_-},\quad \mu_0=\mu 1_A,\quad \mu_+=\mu 1_{A_+}.$$

The contribution to the sum in the theorem from μ_- and μ_+ is negligible. First,

$$\|\mu_-\|_1\le\frac{1}{\Delta\|\mu\|_2^2}\sum_{x\in A_-}\mu(x)^2\le\Delta^{-1}. \tag{4.5}$$

and

$$\|\mu_+\|_2\le\|\mu\|_2\Delta^{-1}\|\mu_+\|_1^{1/2}\le\|\mu\|_2\Delta^{-1}. \tag{4.6}$$

Using Young's inequality (cf [42], Theorem 4.8), we find that

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_-*\rho_b[\mu]\|_2 &\le\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_-\|_1\|\rho_b[\mu]\|_2\\ &\le\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2\le\Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2,\end{aligned}\tag{4.7}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_+ * \rho_b[\mu]\|_2 &\le \sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_+\|_2\|\rho_b[\mu]\|_1\\ &\le \sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2 \le \Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2,\end{aligned} \tag{4.8}$$

Similarly,

$$\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_0 * \rho_b[(\mu_- + \mu_+)]\|_2 \le 2\Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2, \tag{4.9}$$

So, it suffices to estimate the contribution of μ_0. We have

$$1 = \|\mu\|_1 \ge \sum_{x\in A}\mu(x) \ge |A|\|\mu\|_2^2\Delta^{-2}.$$

Hence, $|A| \le \|\mu\|_2^{-2}\Delta^2$. Now we can use Corollary 3:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu_0 * \rho_b[\mu_0]\|_2 &\le \|\mu\|_2^4\Delta^2\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|1_A * 1_{bA}\|_2\\ &\ll \|\mu\|_2^4\Delta^2\left(\|\lambda\|_2^{c_0} + |A|^{-c_0/2} + |A|^{c_0/2}p^{-c_0/2}\right)|A|^{3/2}\\ &\le \|\mu\|_2^4\Delta^2\left(\|\lambda\|_2^{c_0}\|\mu\|_2^{-3}\Delta^3 + \|\mu\|_2^{-3+c_0}\Delta^{3-c_0} + \|\mu\|_2^{-3-c_0}\Delta^{3+c_0}\right)\\ &\le \Delta^6\|\mu\|_2\left(\|\lambda\|_2^{c_0} + \|\mu\|_2^{c_0} + \|\mu\|_2^{-c_0}p^{-c_0/2}\right).\end{aligned}$$

Combining the last inequality with (4.7) – (4.9) we get

$$\sum_{b\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(b)\|\mu * \rho_b[\mu]\|_2 \le 4\Delta^{-1}\|\mu\|_2 + O(\Delta^6\|\mu\|_2 S),$$

where

$$S = \|\lambda\|_2^{c_0} + \|\mu\|_2^{c_0} + \|\mu\|_2^{-c_0}p^{-c_0/2}.$$

Taking $\Delta = \max(1, S^{1/7})$ completes the proof of the theorem. □

5. A sumset estimate in product sets

The main result of this section is the following.

Theorem 5. *Let $r, M \in \mathbb{N}, M \ge 2$ and $\mathscr{C} = \mathscr{C}_{M,r} = \{0,\dots,M-1\}^r$. Let $\tau = \tau_M$ be the solution of the equation*

$$\left(\frac{1}{M}\right)^{2\tau} + \left(\frac{M-1}{M}\right)^{\tau} = 1.$$

Then for any subsets $A, B \subset \mathscr{C}$ we have

$$|A+B| \ge (|A||B|)^{\tau}. \tag{5.1}$$

Observe that for $A = B = \mathscr{C}$ we have $|A + B| = |A|^{\tau'}|B|^{\tau'}$ where

$$\tau' = \tau'_M = \frac{\log(2M-1)}{2\log M}.$$

By Theorem 5, $\tau \le \tau'$. On the other hand, $\tau > 1/2$. If $M \to \infty$ then

$$u^{2\tau} = 1 - (1-u)^\tau \sim \frac{u}{2}, \quad 2\tau - 1 \sim \frac{\log 2}{\log M} \sim 2\tau' - 1. \tag{5.2}$$

So, the asymptotic behavior of $2\tau_M - 1$ as $M \to \infty$ is sharp. Likely, inequality (5.1) holds with $\tau = \tau'$. We can prove it for $M = 2$; see Remark below.

For positive integers K, L we define an $UR-$path as a sequence of pairs of integers $\mathscr{P} = ((i_1, j_1) = (0,0), \dots, (i_{K+L-1}, j_{K+L-1}) = (K-1, L-1)$ such that for any n either $i_{n+1} = i_n + 1, j_{n+1} = j_n$, or $i_{n+1} = i_n, j_{n+1} = j_n + 1$.

Lemma 5. *Let $KL \le M^2$, $u_0 \ge \dots \ge u_{K-1} \ge 0$, $v_0 \ge \dots \ge v_{L-1} \ge 0$, $\tau = \tau_M$. Then there exists an $UR-$path $\mathscr{P}$ such that*

$$\sum_{n=1}^{K+L-1} (u_{i_n} v_{j_n})^\tau \ge \left(\sum_{i=0}^{K-1} u_i\right)^\tau \left(\sum_{j=0}^{L-1} v_j\right)^\tau. \tag{5.3}$$

Proof. We proceed by induction on $K + L$. For $K = 1$ or $L = 1$ the assertion is obvious. We prove it for K, L with $\min(K, L) \ge 2$, $KL \le M^2$ supposing that it holds for (K, L) replaced by $(K-1, L)$ and $(K, L-1)$. Without loss of generality we assume that

$$\sum_{i=0}^{K-1} u_i = \sum_{j=0}^{L-1} v_j = 1.$$

By the induction supposition, there exists an $UR-$path $\mathscr{P}$ such that $i_1 = 1, j_1 = 0$ and

$$\sum_{n=2}^{K+L-1} (u_{i_n} v_{j_n})^\tau \ge \left(\sum_{i=1}^{K-1} u_i\right)^\tau \left(\sum_{j=0}^{L-1} v_j\right)^\tau = (1 - u_0)^\tau.$$

Therefore,

$$S := \max_{\mathscr{P}} \sum_{n=1}^{K+L-1} (u_{i_n} v_{j_n})^\tau \ge (u_0 v_0)^\tau + (1 - u_0)^\tau.$$

Similarly, $S \ge (u_0 v_0)^\tau + (1 - v_0)^\tau$. Thus, $S \ge w^{2\tau} + (1 - w)^\tau$ where

$$w = (u_0 v_0)^{1/2} \ge (KL)^{-1/2} \ge 1/M.$$

The function $f(x) = x^{2\tau} + (1-x)^\tau - 1$ has negative third derivative on $[0, 1]$ and $f(0) = f(1/M) = f(1) = 0$. By Rolle's theorem, f has no other zeros on $[0, 1]$, and since $f(u) > 0$ for u close to 1, $f(x) \ge 0$ for $1/M \le x \le 1$. Therefore, $f(w) \ge 0$ as desired. $\square$

We will need Lemma 5 only for $K = L = M$ (although for the proof it was convenient to have varying K, L).

Lemma 6. *Let $U_0,\dots,U_{M-1}$, $V_0,\dots,V_{M-1}$ be non-negative numbers, $\tau=\tau_M$. Then*

$$\sum_{\mu=0}^{2M-2} \max_{\substack{\kappa+\lambda=\mu,\\ \kappa\ge 0,\lambda\ge 0}} (U_\kappa V_\lambda)^\tau \ge \left(\sum_{\kappa=0}^{M-1} U_\kappa\right)^\tau \left(\sum_{\lambda=0}^{M-1} V_\lambda\right)^\tau. \tag{5.4}$$

Lemma 6 has some similarity with inequality (2.1) from [34].

Proof. We order $U_0,\dots,U_{M-1}$ and $V_0,\dots,V_{M-1}$ in the descending order $u_0\ge\dots\ge u_{M-1}$ and $v_0\ge\dots\ge v_{M-1}$, respectively, where for some permutations π and σ of the set $\{0,\dots,M-1\}$ we have $u_i=U_{\pi_i}, v_j=V_{\sigma_j}$. We consider an arbitrary $UR-$path $\mathscr{P}$ with $K=L=M$. Since $|\{\pi_{i_1},\dots,\pi_{i_n}\}|=i_n+1$ and $|\{\sigma_{j_1},\dots,\sigma_{j_n}\}|=j_n+1$,

$$|\{\pi_{i_1},\dots,\pi_{i_n}\}+\{\sigma_{j_1},\dots,\sigma_{j_n}\}|\ge i_n+j_n+1=n.$$

Consequently, there is a permutation ψ of $\{0,\dots,2M-2\}$ so that

$$\psi(n-1)\in\{\pi_{i_1},\dots,\pi_{i_n}\}+\{\sigma_{j_1},\dots,\sigma_{j_n}\} \qquad (1\le n\le 2M-1).$$

Thus, for some $\kappa_0\in\{\pi_{i_1},\dots,\pi_{i_n}\}$ and $\lambda_0\in\{\sigma_{j_1},\dots,\sigma_{j_n}\}$ we have

$$\max_{\substack{\kappa+\lambda=\psi(n-1),\\ \kappa\ge 0,\lambda\ge 0}} (U_\kappa V_\lambda)^\tau \ge (U_{\kappa_0}V_{\lambda_0})^\tau.$$

But $U_{\kappa_0}=u_i$ for some $i\in\{i_1,\dots,i_n\}$. Recalling that $i_1\le i_2\le\dots$ and $u_1\ge u_2\ge\dots$ we obtain $U_{\kappa_0}\ge u_{i_n}$. Similarly, $V_{\lambda_0}\ge v_{j_n}$. Therefore,

$$\max_{\substack{\kappa+\lambda=\psi(n-1),\\ \kappa\ge 0,\lambda\ge 0}} (U_\kappa V_\lambda)^\tau \ge (u_{i_n}v_{j_n})^\tau$$

and

$$\sum_{\mu=0}^{2M-2} \max_{\substack{\kappa+\lambda=\mu,\\ \kappa\ge 0,\lambda\ge 0}} (U_\kappa V_\lambda)^\tau = \sum_{n=1}^{2M-1} \max_{\substack{\kappa+\lambda=\psi(n-1),\\ \kappa\ge 0,\lambda\ge 0}} (U_\kappa V_\lambda)^\tau \ge \sum_{n=1}^{2M-1} (u_{i_n}v_{j_n})^\tau,$$

and the result follows from Lemma 5. □

Now we are ready to prove Theorem 5. We proceed by induction on r. For $r=0$ the set $\mathscr{C}_{M,r}$ is a singleton, and there is nothing to prove. Now suppose that the assertion holds for r replaced by $r-1\ge 0$. We consider arbitrary subsets $A,B\subset\mathscr{C}=\mathscr{C}_{M,r}$. For $i=0,\dots,M-1$ we denote

$$A_i=\{(x_1,\dots,x_{r-1}):\ (x_1,\dots,x_{r-1},i)\in A\},$$
$$B_i=\{(x_1,\dots,x_{r-1}):\ (x_1,\dots,x_{r-1},i)\in B\}.$$

Let $D=A+B$. For $n=0,\dots,2M-2$ we denote

$$D_n=\{(x_1,\dots,x_{r-1}):\ (x_1,\dots,x_{r-1},n)\in D\}.$$

Observe that

$$|A|=\sum_i |A_i|,\quad B=\sum_j |B_j|,\quad D=\sum_n |D_n|.$$

For any $n = 0, \dots, 2M-2$ we have

$$|D_n| \geq \max_{\substack{i+j=n,\\ i\geq 0, j\geq 0}} |A_i + B_j|.$$

By the induction supposition, $|A_i + B_j| \geq (|A_i||B_j|)^\tau$. Hence,

$$|D_n| \geq \max_{\substack{i+j=n,\\ i\geq 0, j\geq 0}} (|A_i||B_j|)^\tau.$$

Applying Lemma 6,

$$|D| = \sum_n |D_n| \geq \sum_n \max_{\substack{i+j=n,\\ i\geq 0, j\geq 0}} (|A_i||B_j|)^\tau \geq \left(\sum_i |A_i|\right)^\tau \left(\sum_j |B_j|\right)^\tau = (|A||B|)^\tau.$$

Remark 6. For $M = 2$ one can prove inequality (5.4) in the sharp form:

$$(U_0V_0)^\tau + \max\left((U_0V_1)^\tau, (U_1V_0)^\tau\right) + (U_1V_1)^\tau \geq (U_0+U_1)^\tau (V_0+V_1)^\tau \tag{5.5}$$

with $\tau = \log 3/(2\log 2)$. Indeed, by homogeneity and symmetry we may assume that $U_0 = V_0 = 1$ and $V_1 \geq U_1$. Thus, inequality (5.5) is equivalent to

$$1 + v^\tau + (uv)^\tau \geq (1+u)^\tau (1+v)^\tau \qquad (v \geq u \geq 0).$$

This follows by checking that $f(u) = 1 + v^\tau + (uv)^\tau - (1+u)^\tau(1+v)^\tau$ is concave on $[0, v]$, $f(0) \geq 0$ and $f(v) \geq 0$.

Corollary 4. *Let m be a positive integer. For the set $\mathscr{B} \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ defined in Section 2 and for any subset $B \subset \mathscr{B}, |B| > p^{1/4}$ we have $|B - B| \geq p^{\beta/5}|B|$.*

Proof. The set $-B$ is a translate of some set $B' \subset \mathscr{B}$, and $\mathscr{B}$ is Freiman isomorphic to $\mathscr{C}_{M,r}$. Hence, for any $B \subset \mathscr{B}$ we have $|B - B| = |B + B'| \geq |B|^{2\tau_M}$. If $|B| > p^{1/4}$ then $|B - B| \geq |p|^{(2\tau_M - 1)/4}|B|$. By (5.2) and a short calculation using $M \geq 2^{15}$, $p^{(2\tau_M-1)/4} \geq p^{\beta/5}$. ☐

Corollary 5. *Fix $m \in \mathbb{N}$ and let $p \geq p(m)$ be a sufficiently large prime. Let $\mathscr{B} \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ be the set defined in Section 2. Then for any subset $S \subset \mathscr{B}, |S| > p^{1/3}$ we have $E(S,S) \leq p^{-\beta/50}|S|^3$.*

Proof. Let $E(S,S) = |S|^3/K$. By Corollary 2, there is a set $B \subset S$ such that $|B| \geq |S|/(20K)$ and $|B - B| \leq 10^7 K^9 |S|$. If $K \leq p^{\beta/50} < p^{1/24}$ and p is so large that $10^7 \leq p^{\beta/50}$ then we get contradiction with Corollary 4. ☐

6. The statement of the main lemma

In this section we present the main lemma required to prove Theorem 1. Moreover, the RIP property may be established not only for the matrix constructed in Section 2 with specific $\mathscr{A}$ and $\mathscr{B}$ but for more general matrices with $\mathscr{A}$ and $\mathscr{B}$ satisfying certain conditions. Again, let Φ_p be the matrix with columns $\mathbf{u}_{a,b}, a \in \mathscr{A} \subset \mathbb{F}_p, b \in \mathscr{B} \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ where

$$\mathbf{u}_{a,b} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{p}} (e_p(ax^2 + bx))_{x\in\mathbb{F}_p}.$$

Let $m \in \mathbb{N}$, $m \equiv 0 (\mathrm{mod} 2)$, $\alpha \in (0, 0.01)$. The set $\mathscr{A}$ should satisfy the conditions

$$|\mathscr{A}| \le p^{\alpha} \tag{6.1}$$

and, for $a \in \mathscr{A}$ and $a_1, \dots, a_{2m} \in \mathscr{A} \setminus \{a\}$,

$$\sum_{j=1}^{m} \frac{1}{a - a_j} = \sum_{j=m+1}^{2m} \frac{1}{a - a_j} \implies (a_1, \dots, a_m) \text{ is a permutation of } (a_{m+1}, \dots, a_{2m}). \tag{6.2}$$

Here we write $1/x$ for the multiplicative inverse of $x \in \mathbb{F}_p$. We will consider the sets $\mathscr{B}$ satisfying

$$\forall S \subset \mathscr{B} \quad \text{if} \quad |S| \ge p^{1/3} \quad \text{then} \quad E(S, S) \le p^{-\gamma} |S|^3 \tag{6.3}$$

with some $\gamma > 0$.

Lemma 7. *Let $m \in 2\mathbb{N}$, $\alpha \in (0, 0.01)$, $0 < \gamma \le \min(\alpha, \frac{1}{3m})$, $p \ge p(m, \alpha, \gamma)$. Then for any disjoint sets $\Omega_1, \Omega_2 \subset \mathscr{A} \times \mathscr{B}$ such that $|\Omega_1| \le \sqrt{p}$, $|\Omega_2| \le \sqrt{p}$, the inequality*

$$\left| \sum_{(a_1,b_1) \in \Omega_1} \sum_{(a_2,b_2) \in \Omega_2} \langle \mathbf{u}_{a_1,b_1}, \mathbf{u}_{a_2,b_2} \rangle \right| \le p^{1/2 - \varepsilon_1}$$

holds where $\varepsilon_1 = c_0 \gamma / 20 - 43\alpha / m$.

Now we discuss an application of Lemma 7 to the matrix constructed in Section 2. Fix a large positive integer m and $\alpha = 1/(8m^2)$, $\beta = 1/(16m^2)$. Let p be a large prime. Condition (6.2) follows from (2.1). Condition (6.3) is satisfied due to Corollary 5 with $\gamma = \beta/50$. We will show that (6.2) also holds. Then we can use Lemma 7. If $m > 86000 c_0^{-1}$ then the lemma gives a nontrivial estimate with $\varepsilon_1 > 0$. Thus, Φ_p satisfies the conditions of Corollary 1 with $k = \lfloor \sqrt{p} \rfloor \ge \sqrt{n/2}$ and $\delta = p^{-\varepsilon_1} \le (n/2)^{-\varepsilon_1}$ (using $p \ge 0.9n$ for large n, which follows from the prime number theorem). Let $\varepsilon_0 = \varepsilon_1/5$. Let $n \le N \le n^{1+\varepsilon_0}$, and let Φ be the $n \times N$ matrix formed by taking the first N columns of Φ_p, then adding $n - p$ rows of zeros. Clearly, Φ satisfies the conditions of Corollary 1 with the same parameters as Φ_p. By Corollary 1 with $s = \lfloor p^{\varepsilon_1/4} \rfloor$, Theorem 1 follows.

In the rest of this section we prove (6.2) for the set $\mathscr{A}$ constructed in Section 2 provided that $p > (2m)^{8m^2}$ (and thus $L > 2m$). We have to show that for any distinct $x, x_1 \dots, x_n \in \{1, \dots, L\}$ and any nonzero integers $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n$ such that

$$n \le 2m, \quad \sum_{j=1}^{n} |\lambda_j| \le 2m,$$

the sum

$$V = \sum_{j=1}^{n} \frac{\lambda_j}{(x - x_j)(x + x_j + U)}$$

is a nonzero element of $\mathbb{F}_p$. However, we will treat V as a rational number. Denote

$$D_1 = \prod_{j=1}^{n}(x - x_j), \quad D_2 = \prod_{j=1}^{n}(x + x_j + U).$$

So,

$$D_1 D_2 V = \sum_{j=1}^{n} \frac{\lambda_j D_1}{x - x_j} \frac{D_2}{x + x_j + U}. \tag{6.4}$$

All summands in the right-hand side of (6.4) but the first one are divisible by $x + x_1 + U$. For the first summand we have

$$\frac{\lambda_1 D_1}{x - x_1} \frac{D_2}{x + x_1 + U} \equiv V_1 \ (\mathrm{mod}\ x_0 + x_1 + U),$$

where

$$V_1 = \lambda_1 \prod_{j=2}^{n}(x - x_j) \prod_{j=2}^{n}(x_j - x_1).$$

We have

$$|V_1| \le 2mL^{2n-2} \le 2mL^{4m-2} < L^{4m-1} = U.$$

This shows that $V_1 \ne 0 \ (\mathrm{mod}\ x_0 + x_1 + U)$. Therefore, $V \ne 0$.

It remains to check that $p \nmid D_1 D_2 V$. By assumption, $p \nmid D_1$, and

$$|D_2 V| \le 2m(U + 2L)^n / U \le 4mU^{2m-1} \le U^{2m} < p.$$

7. The proof of Lemma 7

It is easy to see that for a fixed a the vectors $\{u_{a,b} : b \in \mathbb{F}_p\}$ form an orthogonal system. Using a well-known formula for Gauss sums $\sum_{x \in \mathbb{F}_p} e_p(dx^2)$ (see, for example, [22], Proposition 6.31), we have for $a \ne a'$ the equality

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \mathbf{u}_{a,b}, \mathbf{u}_{a',b'} \rangle &= p^{-1} e_p \left(-\frac{(b - b')^2}{4(a - a')} \right) \sum_{x \in \mathbb{F}_p} e_p((a - a')x^2) \\ &= \frac{\sigma_p}{\sqrt{p}} \left(\frac{a - a'}{p} \right) e_p \left(-\frac{(b - b')^2}{4(a - a')} \right), \end{aligned}$$

where $\left(\frac{a}{p}\right)$ is the Legendre symbol and

$$\sigma_p = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } p \equiv 1 \ (\mathrm{mod}\ 4), \\ i & \text{if } p \equiv 3 \ (\mathrm{mod}\ 4). \end{cases}$$

Consequently, the assertion of Lemma 7 can be rewritten as

$$\left| \sum_{(a_1,b_1) \in \Omega_1} \sum_{(a_2,b_2) \in \Omega_2} \left(\frac{a_1 - a_2}{p} \right) e_p \left(\frac{(b_1 - b_2)^2}{4(a_1 - a_2)} \right) \right| \le p^{1-\varepsilon_1}, \tag{7.1}$$

where Ω_1, Ω_2 are disjoint subsets of $\mathscr{A} \times \mathscr{B}$ with $|\Omega_1| \leq \sqrt{p}$, $|\Omega_2| \leq \sqrt{p}$, and here and throughout the following the summands with $a = a'$ are excluded from the summation. In particular, we may assume $\varepsilon_1 > 0$, otherwise there is nothing to prove.

For $a \in \mathscr{A}$ and $i = 1, 2$ we denote

$$\Omega_i(a) = \{b \in \mathscr{B} : (a, b) \in \Omega_i\}.$$

To prove (7.1) it is enough to show that

$$|S(A_1, A_2)| \leq p^{1-1.1\varepsilon_1}, \quad S(A_1, A_2) = \sum_{\substack{a_1 \in A_1,\\ a_2 \in A_2}} \sum_{\substack{b_1 \in \Omega_1(a_1),\\ b_2 \in \Omega_2(a_2)}} \left(\frac{a_1 - a_2}{p}\right) e_p\left(\frac{(b_1 - b_2)^2}{4(a_1 - a_2)}\right), \tag{7.2}$$

where there are M_1, M_2 so that for $i = 1, 2$ and for any $a_i \in A_i$,

$$M_i/2 \leq |\Omega_i(a_i)| < M_i, \qquad |A_i| M_i \leq 2\sqrt{p}. \tag{7.3}$$

Indeed, there are $O(\log^2 p)$ choices for M_1, M_2 being powers of 2. If $|A_1|M_1 < p^{1/2-\gamma/10}$, then by (7.3), $|S(A_1, A_2)| \leq 2p^{1-\gamma/10}$ and (7.2) holds (recall that $c_0 < 1$, hence $\varepsilon_1 < \gamma/20$). Thus, we can assume that $|A_1|M_1 \geq p^{1/2-\gamma/10}$, which implies, by (6.1), that

$$M_1 \geq p^{1/2-\alpha-\gamma/10}. \tag{7.4}$$

Lemma 8. *For any $a_1 \in A_1, a_2 \in A_2, a_2 \neq a_1$, $B_1 \subset \mathbb{F}_p$, $B_2 \subset \mathbb{F}_p$ we have*

$$\left| \sum_{\substack{b_1 \in B_1,\\ b_2 \in B_2}} e_p\left(\frac{(b_1 - b_2)^2}{4(a_1 - a_2)}\right) \right| \leq |B_1|^{1/2} E(B_1, B_1)^{1/8} |B_2|^{1/2} E(B_2, B_2)^{1/8} p^{1/8}.$$

Proof. Let W denote the double sum over b_1, b_2 and let $\theta = 1/(4(a_1 - a_2))$. By the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality,

$$\begin{aligned} |W|^2 &\leq |B_1| \sum_{b_1 \in B_1} \left| \sum_{b_2 \in B_2} e_p\left(\theta(b_1 - b_2)^2\right) \right|^2 \\ &= |B_1| \sum_{b_2, b_2' \in B_2} \sum_{b_1 \in B_1} e_p\left(\theta\left(b_2^2 - (b_2')^2 - 2b_1(b_2 - b_2')\right)\right). \end{aligned}$$

Another application of the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality gives

$$\begin{aligned} |W|^4 &\leq |B_1|^2 |B_2|^2 \left| \sum_{b_1} e_p\left(2\theta b_1(b_2 - b_2')\right) \right|^2 \\ &= |B_1|^2 |B_2|^2 \sum_{x, y \in \mathbb{F}_p} \lambda_x \mu_y e_p(-2\theta xy), \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\lambda_x = 1_{B_1} * 1_{(-B_1)}(x), \qquad \mu_y = 1_{B_2} * 1_{(-B_2)}(y).$$

A third application of the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality, followed by Parseval's identity yields a well-known inequality (cf. [44], Problem 14(a) for Chapter 6)

$$\begin{aligned}\left|\sum_{x,y\in\mathbb{F}_p}\lambda_x\mu_y e_p(-2\theta xy)\right|^2 &\le \|\lambda\|_2^2\sum_{x\in\mathbb{F}_p}\left|\sum_{y\in\mathbb{F}_p}\mu_y e_p(-2\theta xy)\right|^2\\ &= p\|\lambda\|_2^2\|\mu\|_2^2 = pE(B_1,B_1)E(B_2,B_2).\end{aligned}$$ □

By (7.4), $|\Omega_i(a_i)|\ge p^{1/3}$, and by Lemma 8 and (6.3),

$$\left|\sum_{\substack{b_1\in\Omega_1(a_1)\\ b_2\in\Omega_2(a_2)}} e_p\left(\frac{(b_1-b_2)^2}{4(a_1-a_2)}\right)\right| \le |\Omega_1(a_1)|^{7/8}|\Omega_2(a_2)|^{7/8}p^{1/8-\gamma/4}.$$

Next, by (7.3), we have

$$|S(A_1,A_2)|\le 4|A_1|^{1/8}|A_2|^{1/8}p^{1-\gamma/4}.$$

Thus, if $|A_1|<p^{\gamma/2}$ and $|A_2|<p^{\gamma/2}$, then $|S(A_1,A_2)|\le 4p^{1-\gamma/8}$ and (7.2) follows. Otherwise, without loss of generality we may assume that

$$|A_2|\ge p^{\gamma/2}. \tag{7.5}$$

The following lemma gives the necessary estimates to complete the proof of Lemma 7. For $a_1\in A_1$, set

$$T(A,B)=T_{a_1}(A,B)=\sum_{\substack{b_1\in B\\ a_2\in A, b_2\in\Omega_2(a_2)}}\left(\frac{a_1-a_2}{p}\right)e_p\left(\frac{(b_1-b_2)^2}{4(a_1-a_2)}\right)$$

Lemma 9. *If $a_1\in A_1$, $0<\gamma\le\min(\alpha,\frac{1}{3m})$, conditions (7.3) and (7.5) are satisfied and a set $B\subset\mathbb{F}_p$ is such that*

$$p^{1/2-6\alpha}\le|B|\le p^{1/2} \tag{7.6}$$

and

$$|B-B|\le p^{28\alpha}|B|, \tag{7.7}$$

then

$$|T(A_2,B)|\le|B|p^{(1/2)-\varepsilon_2},\qquad \varepsilon_2=\frac{c_0\gamma}{20}-\frac{42\alpha}{m}. \tag{7.8}$$

Remark 7. The proof of Lemma 9 applies to more general sums, e.g. in $T(A,B)$ one may replace the Legendre symbol $(\frac{a_1-a_2}{p})$ with arbitrary complex numbers $\psi(a_1,a_2)$ with modulus ≤ 1, and one may replace $\frac{1}{a_1-a_2}$ with different quantities $g(a_1,a_2)$ having the dissociative property (the analog of (6.2) holds).

Postponing the proof of Lemma 9, we show first how to deduce Lemma 7.

We take a maximal subset $B_0 \subset \Omega_1(a_1)$ so that (7.8) holds for $B = B_0$. Denote $B_1 = \Omega_1(a_1) \setminus B_0$. By Lemma 8, (7.3), and (6.1) we have

$$\begin{aligned}|T_{a_1}(A_2, B_1)| &\le \sum_{a_2 \in A_2} |B_1|^{1/2} E(B_1, B_1)^{1/8} |\Omega_2(a_2)|^{1/2} E(\Omega_2(a_2), \Omega_2(a_2))^{1/8} p^{1/8} \\ &\le |A_2|\, |B_1|^{1/2} E(B_1, B_1)^{1/8} M_2^{7/8} p^{1/8} \\ &\le 2|B_1|^{1/2} E(B_1, B_1)^{1/8} p^{(9/16)+(\alpha/8)}.\end{aligned}$$

Consider the case when

$$E(B_1, B_1) \le p^{-3\alpha} M_1^3. \tag{7.9}$$

Then we have, due to (7.3),

$$|T_{a_1}(A_2, B_1)| \le 2M_1^{7/8} p^{(9/16)-\alpha/4}. \tag{7.10}$$

Now assume that (7.9) does not hold. By (7.3), we get

$$|B_1| > p^{-\alpha} M_1, \quad E(B_1, B_1) \ge p^{-3\alpha} |B_1|^3.$$

Applying now Corollary 2 and (7.3) we obtain the existence of a set $B_1' \subset B_1$ such that

$$|B_1'| \ge \frac{M_1}{20 p^{4\alpha}} \ge \frac{p^{1/2 - 5\alpha - \gamma/10}}{20} \ge p^{1/2 - 6\alpha}$$

and $|B_1' - B_1'| \le 10^7 p^{27\alpha} |B_1| \le p^{28\alpha} |B_1|$. Using Lemma 9 we get inequality (7.8) for $B = B_1'$. Therefore, (7.8) is also satisfied for $B = B_0 \cup B_1'$, contradicting the choice of B_0.

Thus, we have shown that (7.9) must hold. Using (7.8) for $B = B_0$ and (7.10) we get

$$|T_{a_1}(A_2, \Omega_1(a_1))| \le M_1 p^{(1/2) - \varepsilon_2} + 2M_1^{7/8} p^{(9/16) - \alpha/4}.$$

Summing on $a_1 \in A_1$ and using (6.1) and (7.3), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}|S(A_1, A_2)| &\le |A_1| \left(M_1 p^{(1/2)-\varepsilon_2} + 2M_1^{7/8} p^{(9/16)-\alpha/4} \right) \\ &\le 2p^{1-\varepsilon_2} + 4|A_1|^{1/8} p^{1-\alpha/4} \le 2p^{1-\varepsilon_2} + 4p^{1-\alpha/8},\end{aligned}$$

completing the proof of Lemma 7.

Proof of Lemma 9. By the Cauchy–Schwartz inequality we have

$$|T(A_2, B)|^2 \le \sqrt{p} \sum_{b_1, b \in B} |F(b, b_1)|,$$

where

$$F(b, b_1) = \sum_{\substack{a_2 \in A_2 \\ b_2 \in \Omega_2(a_2)}} e_p\left(\frac{b_1^2 - b^2}{4(a_1 - a_2)} - \frac{b_2(b_1 - b)}{2(a_1 - a_2)} \right).$$

Consequently, by Hölder's inequality,

$$|T(A_2,B)|^2 \le \sqrt{p}|B|^{2-2/m}\left(\sum_{b_1,b\in B}|F(b,b_1)|^m\right)^{\frac{1}{m}}. \tag{7.11}$$

Next,

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b_1,b\in B}|F(b,b_1)|^m &\le \sum_{\substack{x\in B+B,\\ y\in B-B}}\left|\sum_{\substack{a_2\in A_2,\\ b_2\in\Omega_2(a_2)}} e_p\left(\frac{xy}{4(a_1-a_2)}-\frac{b_2y}{2(a_1-a_2)}\right)\right|^m \\ &\le \sum_{y\in B-B}\sum_{\substack{a_2^{(i)}\in A_2\\ b_2^{(i)}\in\Omega_2(a_2^{(i)})\\ 1\le i\le m}}\left|\sum_{x\in B+B} e_p\left(\frac{xy}{4}\sum_{i=1}^{m/2}\left[\frac{1}{a_1-a_2^{(i)}}-\frac{1}{a_1-a_2^{(i+m/2)}}\right]\right)\right|.\end{aligned}$$

Hence, for some complex numbers $\varepsilon_{y,\xi}$ of modulus ≤ 1,

$$\sum_{b_1,b\in B}|F(b,b_1)|^m = M_2^m\sum_{y\in B-B}\sum_{\xi\in\mathbb{F}_p}\lambda(\xi)\varepsilon_{y,\xi}\sum_{x\in B+B}e_p(xy\xi/4), \tag{7.12}$$

where

$$\lambda(\xi)=\left|\left\{a^{(1)},\dots,a^{(m)}\in A_2:\ \sum_{i=1}^{m/2}\left(\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(i)}}-\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(i+m/2)}}\right)=\xi\right\}\right|.$$

By (6.2),

$$\lambda(0)\le (m/2)!|A_2|^{m/2}. \tag{7.13}$$

Let

$$\zeta'(z)=\sum_{\substack{y\in B-B\\ \xi\in\mathbb{F}_p^*\\ y\xi=z}}\varepsilon_{y,\xi}\lambda(\xi), \qquad \zeta(z)=\sum_{\substack{y\in B-B\\ \xi\in\mathbb{F}_p^*\\ y\xi=z}}\lambda(\xi).$$

Then $|\zeta'(z)| \leq \zeta(z)$. By Hölder's inequality,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\left|\sum_{y\in B-B}\sum_{\xi\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(\xi)\varepsilon_{y,\xi}\sum_{x\in B+B}e_p(xy\xi/4)\right| &= \left|\sum_{\substack{x\in B+B\\ z\in\mathbb{F}_p}}\zeta'(z)e_p(xz/4)\right| \\
&\leq |B+B|^{3/4}\left(\sum_{x\in\mathbb{F}_p}\left|\sum_{z\in\mathbb{F}_p}\zeta'(z)e_p(xz/4)\right|^4\right)^{1/4} \\
&= |B+B|^{3/4}\left(\sum_{x\in\mathbb{F}_p}\left|\sum_{z'\in\mathbb{F}_p}(\zeta'*\zeta')(z')e_p(xz'/4)\right|^2\right)^{1/4} \\
&= |B+B|^{3/4}\|\zeta'*\zeta'\|_2^{1/2}p^{1/4} \\
&\leq |B+B|^{3/4}\|\zeta*\zeta\|_2^{1/2}p^{1/4}.
\end{aligned}
\tag{7.14}
$$

As $\zeta(z) = \sum_\xi \lambda(\xi)\zeta_\xi(z)$, where $\zeta_\xi(z) = 1_{B-B}(z/\xi)$, we have by the triangle inequality,

$$
\begin{aligned}
\|\zeta*\zeta\|_2 &\leq \sum_{\xi,\xi'\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(\xi)\lambda(\xi')\|\zeta_\xi*\zeta_{\xi'}\|_2 \\
&= \sum_{\xi,\xi'\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(\xi)\lambda(\xi')\|1_{\xi(B-B)}*1_{\xi'(B-B)}\|_2 \\
&= \sum_{\xi,\xi'\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda(\xi)\lambda(\xi')\|1_{B-B}*1_{(\xi'/\xi)(B-B)}\|_2.
\end{aligned}
\tag{7.15}
$$

Define the probability measure λ_1 by

$$\lambda_1(\xi) = \frac{\lambda(\xi)}{\|\lambda\|_1} = \frac{\lambda(\xi)}{|A_2|^m}.$$

The sum $\sum_{\xi\in\mathbb{F}_p}\lambda(\xi)^2$ is equal to the number of solutions of the equation

$$\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(1)}}+\cdots+\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(m)}}-\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(m+1)}}-\frac{1}{a_1-a^{(2m)}}=0$$

with $a^{(1)},\dots,a^{(2m)}\in A_2$. By (6.2), this has only trivial solutions and thus

$$\sum_{\xi\in\mathbb{F}_p}\lambda(\xi)^2 \leq m!|A_2|^m. \tag{7.16}$$

Now we are in position to apply Corollary 3 which gives for any $\xi'\in\mathbb{F}_p^*$

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\sum_{\xi\in\mathbb{F}_p^*}\lambda_1(\xi)\|1_{B-B}*1_{(\xi'/\xi)(B-B)}\|_2 \\
&\qquad \ll \left(\|\lambda_1\|_2+|B-B|^{-1/2}+|B-B|^{1/2}p^{-1/2}\right)^{c_0}|B-B|^{3/2}.
\end{aligned}
\tag{7.17}
$$

By (7.5) and (7.16),

$$\|\lambda_1\|_2 \le \sqrt{m!}p^{-m\gamma/4}.$$

By (7.6) and $\alpha < 0.01$,

$$|B-B| \ge |B| \ge p^{1/2-6\alpha} \ge p^{0.44}.$$

On the other hand, it follows from (7.6) and (7.7) that

$$|B-B| \le p^{1/2+28\alpha} \le p^{0.78}.$$

Since $m\gamma \le 1/3$ we get

$$\|\lambda_1\|_2 + |B-B|^{-1/2} + |B-B|^{1/2}p^{-1/2} \le \sqrt{m!}p^{-m\gamma/4} + p^{-0.1} \le p^{-m\gamma/5}.$$

So, by (7.15) and (7.17),

$$\begin{aligned}\|\zeta * \zeta\|_2 &\le |A_2|^{2m} \sum_{\xi' \in \mathbb{F}_p^*} \lambda_1(\xi') \sum_{\xi \in \mathbb{F}_p^*} \lambda_1(\xi) \|1_{B-B} * 1_{(\xi'/\xi)(B-B)}\|_2 \\ &\ll |A_2|^{2m} p^{-(c_0/5)m\gamma} |B-B|^{3/2}.\end{aligned}$$

Subsequent application of (7.12), (7.13) and (7.14) gives

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b_1, b \in B} |F(b,b_1)|^m \le (\tfrac{m}{2})!(M_2|A_2|)^m |A_2|^{-m/2} |B-B||B+B| \\ + O(M_2^m |A_2|^m |B-B|^{3/4} |B+B|^{3/4} p^{-(c_0/10)m\gamma} p^{1/4}).\end{aligned}$$

Due to Lemma 2, condition (7.7) implies

$$|B+B| \le p^{56\alpha}|B|.$$

Recalling $\gamma \le \alpha$, (7.3), (7.5), (7.6) and (7.7), we conclude that

$$\begin{aligned}\sum_{b_1, b \in B} |F(b,b_1)|^m &\ll (\tfrac{m}{2})!(2\sqrt{p})^m p^{-m\gamma/4} p^{84\alpha} |B|^2 + (2\sqrt{p})^m p^{63\alpha} |B|^{3/2} p^{-(c_0/10)m\gamma} p^{1/4} \\ &\le |B|^2 p^{m/2-(c_0/10)m\gamma+84\alpha}.\end{aligned}$$

Plugging the last estimate into (7.11), we get

$$\begin{aligned}|T(A_2,B)|^2 &\le \sqrt{p}|B|^{2-2/m} \left(|B|^2 p^{m/2-(c_0/10)m\gamma+84\alpha}\right)^{\frac{1}{m}} \\ &\le |B|^2 p^{1+84\alpha/m-(c_0/10)\gamma}.\end{aligned}$$

□

8. Thin sets with small Fourier coefficients

Denote by $(a^{-1})_m$ the inverse of a modulo m. It is easy to see for relatively prime integers a, b that

$$\frac{(a^{-1})_b}{b} + \frac{(b^{-1})_a}{a} - \frac{1}{ab} \in \mathbb{Z}. \tag{8.1}$$

Lemma 10. *Let $P \geq 4$, $S \geq 2$, and R be a positive integer. Suppose that for every prime $p \leq P$, S_p is a set of integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$. Suppose q is a prime satisfying $q \geq RP^2$. Then the numbers $r + s^{(p)}(p^{-1})_q$, where $1 \leq r \leq R, P/2 < p \leq P, s^{(p)} \in S_p$, are distinct modulo q.*

Proof. Suppose that

$$r_1 + s_1^{(p_1)}(p_1^{-1})_q \equiv r_2 + s_2^{(p_2)}(p_2^{-1})_q \pmod{q}.$$

Multiplying both sides by p_1p_2 gives

$$r_1p_1p_2 + p_2s_1^{(p_1)} \equiv r_2p_1p_2 + p_1s_2^{(p_2)} \pmod{q}.$$

By hypothesis,

$$\left|(r_1 - r_2)p_1p_2 + p_2s_1^{(p_1)} - p_1s_2^{(p_2)}\right| < (R-1)P^2 + P^2 \leq q,$$

thus

$$(r_1 - r_2)p_1p_2 = -p_2s_1^{(p_1)} + p_1s_2^{(p_2)}.$$

The right side is divisible by p_1p_2 and the absolute value of the right side is $< p_1p_2$, hence both sides are zero, $r_1 = r_2$, $p_1 = p_2$ and $s_1^{(p_1)} = s_2^{(p_2)}$. □

For brevity, we write $e(z)$ for $e^{2\pi iz}$ is what follows.

Lemma 11. *Let $P \geq 4$, $S \geq 2$, and R be a positive integer. Suppose that for every prime $p \in (P/2, P]$, S_p is a multiset of integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$, $|S_p| = S$ and $|f_{S_p}| \leq \varepsilon$. Suppose q is a prime satisfying $q > P$. Then the multiset*

$$T = \{r + s^{(p)}(p^{-1})_q : 1 \leq r \leq R, P/2 < p \leq P, s^{(p)} \in S_p\}$$

of residues modulo q, satisfies

$$|f_T| \leq \varepsilon + \frac{2/\sqrt{3}}{R} + \frac{\log(q/3)}{V\log(P/2)}, \tag{8.2}$$

where V is the number of primes in $(P/2, P]$.

Proof. Since $|f_T(k)| = |f_T(q-k)|$, we may assume without loss of generality that $1 \leq k < q/2$. We have

$$f_T(k) = A(k) \sum_{P/2 < p \leq P} B(p, k),$$

where

$$A(k) = \sum_{r \leq R} e\left(\frac{kr}{q}\right), \qquad B(p, k) = \sum_{s \in S_p} e\left(\frac{ks(p^{-1})_q}{q}\right).$$

Trivially,

$$|A(k)| \leq \min\left(R, \frac{2}{|e(k/q) - 1|}\right). \tag{8.3}$$

If $k \ge q/3$, we use the trivial bound $|B(p,k)| \le S$ and conclude

$$\frac{|f_T(k)|}{|T|} \le \frac{2}{R|e(k/q)-1|} \le \frac{2}{R|e(1/3)-1|} = \frac{2/\sqrt{3}}{R}.$$

Now assume $k \le q/3$. If $p|k$, then $|B(p,k)| \le S$. When $p \nmid k$, by (8.1),

$$\begin{aligned} |B(p,k)| &= \left| \sum_{s\in S_p} e\left(-\frac{sk(q^{-1})_p}{p} + \frac{ks}{pq} \right) \right| \\ &\le |S_p| \max_{s\in S_p} \left| e\left(\frac{ks}{pq}\right) - 1 \right| + \left| \sum_{s\in S_p} e\left(\frac{sk(q^{-1})_p}{p} \right) \right| \\ &\le (\varepsilon + |e(k/2q)-1|)\, S. \end{aligned}$$

Since there are $\le \frac{\log k}{\log(P/2)}$ primes $p|k$ with $p > P/2$, we have

$$\sum_{P/2<p\le P} |B(p,k)| \le (\varepsilon + |e(k/2q)-1|)\, SV + \frac{\log(q/3)}{\log(P/2)} S.$$

Combining our estimates for $|A(k)|$ and $|B(p,k)|$, we arrive at

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{|f_T(k)|}{|T|} &\le \varepsilon + \frac{\log(q/3)}{V\log(P/2)} + \frac{2}{R}\left| \frac{e(k/2q)-1}{e(k/q)-1} \right| \\ &\le \varepsilon + \frac{\log(q/3)}{V\log(P/2)} + \frac{2/\sqrt{3}}{R}. \end{aligned}$$

□

For a specific choice of S_p, the inequality (8.2) can be strengthened.

Lemma 12. *Let $P \ge 4$ and R be a positive integer. For every prime $p \in (P/2, P]$ denote by S_p the set of all integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$. Suppose q is a prime satisfying $q > P$. Then the multiset*

$$T = \{r + s^{(p)}(p^{-1})_q : 1 \le r \le R, P/2 < p \le P, s^{(p)} \in S_p\}$$

of residues modulo q satisfies

$$|f_T| \le \frac{W}{2V} + \frac{W}{RV}\left(1 + \frac{\log\left(1+\frac{V}{W}\right)}{2}\right). \tag{8.4}$$

where V is the number of primes in $(P/2, P]$ and $W = 4\frac{\log(q/2)}{\log(P/2)}$.

Proof. Again, we may assume without loss of generality that $1 \le k < q/2$. We use notation from the proof of Lemma 11. If $p|k$, we use the trivial estimate $|B(p,k)| \le |S_p| \le P$. Now there are $\le \frac{\log(q/2)}{\log(P/2)}$ primes $p|k$ with $p > P/2$. When $p \nmid k$, by (8.1),

$$|B(p,k)| \le \left|\sum_{s=(1-p)/2}^{(p-1)/2} e\left(-\frac{sk(q^{-1})_p}{p} + \frac{ks}{pq}\right)\right| = \frac{\left|e\left(\frac{k}{q}\right)-1\right|}{\left|e\left(-\frac{k(q^{-1})_p}{p}+\frac{k}{pq}\right)-1\right|}$$
$$\le \frac{\left|e\left(\frac{k}{q}\right)-1\right|}{\left|e\left(-\frac{2|k(q^{-1})_p|-1}{2p}\right)-1\right|} \le \frac{\left|e\left(\frac{k}{q}\right)-1\right|}{\left|e\left(-\frac{2|k(q^{-1})_p|-1}{2P}\right)-1\right|},$$

where it is assumed that $k(q^{-1})_p \in (-p/2, p/2)$. For $a = 1, \dots, [(P-1)/2]$ we denote

$$P_a = \{p \in (P/2, P] : |k(q^{-1})_p| = a\}.$$

Taking into account that $|e(u)-1|^{-1} \le 1/(4u)$ for $u \in (0, 1/2]$ we get

$$\sum_{p\nmid k} |B(p,k)| \le \frac{P}{2}\left|e\left(\frac{k}{q}\right)-1\right| \sum_a |P_a| \frac{1}{2a-1}. \tag{8.5}$$

If $k(q^{-1})_p = \pm a$ then $k \pm aq$ is divisible by p. But $|k \pm aq| \le Pq/2$. Therefore, the number of prime divisors $p > P/2$ of any number $k \pm aq$ is at most $\frac{\log q}{\log P/2} + 1$ and for any a we get

$$|P_a| \le 2\left[\frac{\log q}{\log(P/2)}\right] + 2 \le W.$$

Let $A = [V/W] + 1$. We have

$$\sum_a |P_a| \frac{1}{2a-1} \le \sum_{a\le A} |P_a| \frac{1}{2a-1} + \left(V - \sum_{a \le A} |P_a|\right)\frac{1}{2A+1}$$
$$\le \sum_{a\le A} W \frac{1}{2a-1} + \left(V - \sum_{a\le A} W\right)\frac{1}{2A+1} \le \sum_{a \le A} W \frac{1}{2a-1}$$
$$\le W\left(1 + \frac{\log A}{2}\right) \le W\left(1 + \frac{\log\left(1+\frac{V}{W}\right)}{2}\right).$$

Combining our estimates for $|A(k)|$ and $|B(p,k)|$ ((8.3) and (8.5)), we arrive at

$$\frac{|f_T(k)|}{|T|} \le \frac{2\log(q/2)}{V\log(P/2)} + \frac{PW/2}{R(P-2)V/2}\left(1 + \frac{\log\left(1+\frac{V}{W}\right)}{2}\right)$$
$$= \frac{W}{2V} + \frac{W}{RV}\left(1 + \frac{\log\left(1+\frac{V}{W}\right)}{2}\right). \qquad \square$$

Remark 8. Applying Lemma 11 for all primes q in a dyadic interval, we can then feed these multisets $T = T_q$ back into the lemma and iterate.

Using explicit estimates for counts of prime numbers [37], we have

Proposition 4. *For $P \ge 250$, there are more than $\frac{2P}{5\log(P/2)}$ primes in $(P/2, P]$. For any $P > 2$, there are at most $0.76P/\log P$ primes in $(P/2, P]$.*

Using Proposition 4 we obtain a more convenient version of Lemma 12.

Lemma 13. *Let $P \ge 250$. For every prime $p \in (P/2, P]$ denote by S_p the set of all nonzero integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$. Suppose q is a prime satisfying $q > P$ and suppose $R \ge 1 + \log(1 + 0.26P/\log(2q))/2$ is a positive integer. Then the multiset*

$$T = \{r + s^{(p)}(p^{-1})_q : 1 \le r \le R, P/2 < p \le P, s^{(p)} \in S_p\}$$

of residues modulo q satisfies

$$|f_T| \le 15\frac{\log q}{P}. \tag{8.6}$$

Proof. We use the notation of Lemma 12. By Proposition 4 we have

$$\frac{W}{2V} \le 5\frac{\log q}{P}. \tag{8.7}$$

On the other hand, using Proposition 4 again we get

$$\frac{V}{W} \le \frac{0.76P/\log P}{4\log(q/2)/\log(P/2)} \le 0.19\frac{P}{\log(q/2)} \le 0.26\frac{P}{\log(2q)}.$$

Hence,

$$R \ge 1 + \frac{\log\left(1 + \frac{V}{W}\right)}{2}.$$

Now the inequality (8.6) follows from (8.7) and (8.4). □

Using just one iteration one can get the following effective result on thin sets with small Fourier coefficients, of nearly the same strength as (1.12).

Corollary 6. *For sufficiently large prime N and μ such that $N^{-1/2}\log^2 N \le \mu < 1$ there is a set T of residues modulo N so that*

$$|f_T| \le \mu, \qquad |T| = O\left(\frac{L_1^2}{\mu^2}\left(\frac{1 + \log(1/\mu)}{L_2 + \log(1/\mu)}\right)\right).$$

Proof. We choose $P = (15/\mu)\log N$ and

$$R = \left[2 + \frac{\log(1 + 5/\mu)}{2}\right] \ge 1 + \frac{\log\left(1 + \frac{0.26P}{\log N}\right)}{2}.$$

Clearly, $R \ll 1 + \log(1/\mu)$. Let T be the multiset constructed in Lemma 13. We have $|f_T| \le \mu$. By Lemma 10, T is a set. Moreover,

$$|T| \ll P^2\frac{1 + \log(1/\mu)}{\log P} \ll \frac{P^2(1 + \log(1/\mu))}{L_2 + \log(1/\mu)}.$$

□

Proof of Theorem 2. We choose real parameters P_0, P_1 and positive integers R_0, R_1 so that

$$P_0 \geq 250, \qquad P_1 \geq 2R_0P_0^2, \qquad N \geq R_1P_1^2, \qquad R_0 \geq 1 + \frac{\log\left(1 + \frac{0.26P_0}{\log P_1}\right)}{2} \tag{8.8}$$

and also

$$\frac{2/\sqrt{3}}{R_1} + 15\frac{\log P_1}{P_0} + \frac{5\log N}{2P_1} \leq \mu. \tag{8.9}$$

For $P_0/2 < p \leq P_0$, let S_p be the set of integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$. By Lemmas 10, 13 and (8.8), for each prime $q \in (P_1/2, P_1]$, there is a set $T = S_q$ of residues modulo q such that

$$|f_{S_q}| \leq 15\frac{\log(P_1)}{P_0} =: \varepsilon_1.$$

By an application of Lemmas 10 and 11 with $P = P_1$, $\varepsilon = \varepsilon_1$, $q = N$, and $S = R_0\sum_{P_0/2<p\leq P_0} p$, together with (8.9), there is a set T of residues modulo N so that

$$|f_T| \leq \varepsilon_1 + \frac{2/\sqrt{3}}{R_1} + \frac{5\log N}{2P_1} \leq \mu.$$

Using Proposition 4, we find that

$$|T| \leq (0.76)^2R_0R_1\frac{P_1P_0^2}{(\log P_0)(\log P_1)}.$$

Recalling that $1/\mu \in \mathbb{N}$, we now take

$$R_0 = \left[2 + \log(1 + 13/\mu)/2\right], \qquad R_1 = 4/\mu,$$
$$P_1 = (8/\mu)\log N, \qquad P_0 = (45/\mu)\log P_1$$

so that (8.9) follows immediately. The condition (1.13) implies (8.8) for large enough N. □

Remark 9. Theorem 2 supersedes Corollary 6 for $\mu \gg L_1^{-1/2}L_2^{1/2}$.

9. An explicit construction for Turán's problem

Proof of Theorem 3. We follow the proof of Theorem 2 and Lemma 11. We choose real parameters P_0, P_1 and a positive integer R_0, so that

$$P_0 \geq 250, \qquad P_1 > 2P_0^2, \qquad R_0 \geq 1 + \frac{\log\left(1 + \frac{0.26P_0}{\log P_1}\right)}{2} \tag{9.1}$$

and also

$$15\frac{\log P_1}{P_0} + \frac{5\log N}{2P_1} \leq \mu. \tag{9.2}$$

For $P_0/2 < p \le P_0$, let S_p be the set of integers in $(-p/2, p/2)$. By Lemma 13 and (9.1), for each prime $q \in (P_1/2, P_1]$, there is a multiset $T = S_q$ of residues modulo q such that

$$|f_{S_q}| \le 15 \frac{\log(P_1)}{P_0} := \varepsilon_1. \tag{9.3}$$

We have $|S_q| = S$ for all q, where $S = R_0 \sum_{P_0/2 < p \le P_0} p$. Now define a multiset $\{z_1, \dots, z_n\}$ as a union of multisets $\{e(s/q) : s \in S_q, q \in (P_1/2, P_1]\}$. We have, for $1 \le k \le N$,

$$\sum_{j=1}^n z_j^k = \sum_{P_1/2 < q \le P_1} B(q,k), \qquad B(q,k) = \sum_{s \in S_q} e\left(\frac{ks}{q}\right).$$

If $q|k$, then $B(q,k) = S$. When $q \nmid k$, by (9.3), $|B(q,k)| \le \varepsilon_1 S$. Therefore,

$$\sum_{q \nmid k} |B(q,k)| \le \varepsilon_1 n. \tag{9.4}$$

The sum over $q|k$ is estimated at the same way as in Lemma 11:

$$\sum_{q|k} |B(q,k)| \le \frac{\log N}{\log(P_1/2)} S. \tag{9.5}$$

Combining (9.4), (9.5) and using Proposition 4 we arrive at

$$\frac{1}{n} \left| \sum_{j=1}^n z_j^k \right| \le \varepsilon_1 + \frac{5 \log N}{2 P_1},$$

as required. Moreover, by Proposition 4 we have

$$n \le (0.76)^2 R_0 \frac{P_1 P_0^2}{(\log P_0)(\log P_1)}.$$

Now we take R_0, P_0, P_1 the same as in the proof of Theorem 2 so that (9.2) follows immediately. The condition (1.14) implies (9.1) for large enough N. $\square$

Remark 10. As in [1], one can construct thin sets T modulo N with $|T| = o(L_1 L_2)$ and $|f_T|$ small, by iterating Lemma 11. Roughly speaking, applying Lemma 13 followed by r iterations of Lemma 11 produces sets T, with small $|f_T|$, as small as $|T| = O(L_1 L_{r+1})$, where L_j is the j-th iterate of the logarithm of N. We omit the details.

Acknowledgments. The authors thank Ronald DeVore, Zeev Dvir, Venkatesan Guruswami, Piotr Indyk, Sina Jafarpour, Boris Kashin, Howard Karloff, Igor Shparlinski and Avi Wigderson for helpful conversations.

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