

# Some questions around the Bruhat order

or: Counting and Classifying Bruhat Intervals (Our Favorite  
Pastime)

or: Euclidean Geometry Secretly Runs the Show

Nicolás Libedinsky

Joint work with F. Castillo, D. de la Fuente, D. Plaza,  
and G. Burrull, R. Villegas

Category Theory, Combinatorics, and Machine Learning  
September 2025

# Why should we study the Bruhat order?

- 1 Determine the characters of simple representations of reductive algebraic groups over fields of positive characteristic.

# Why should we study the Bruhat order?

- 1 Determine the characters of simple representations of reductive algebraic groups over fields of positive characteristic.
- 2 Construct projectors onto indecomposable objects in the (anti-spherical) Hecke category in characteristic zero.

# Why should we study the Bruhat order?

- 1 Determine the characters of simple representations of reductive algebraic groups over fields of positive characteristic.
- 2 Construct projectors onto indecomposable objects in the (anti-spherical) Hecke category in characteristic zero.
- 3 Find closed formulas for Kazhdan–Lusztig polynomials in affine Weyl groups.



# Why should we study the Bruhat order?

- 1 Determine the characters of simple representations of reductive algebraic groups over fields of positive characteristic.
- 2 Construct projectors onto indecomposable objects in the (anti-spherical) Hecke category in characteristic zero.
- 3 Find closed formulas for Kazhdan–Lusztig polynomials in affine Weyl groups.

# Definition of Bruhat intervals

Let  $(W, S)$  be a Coxeter system, equip it with the length function  $\ell$  and a partial order  $\leq$  (the Bruhat order):

# Definition of Bruhat intervals

Let  $(W, S)$  be a Coxeter system, equip it with the length function  $\ell$  and a partial order  $\leq$  (the Bruhat order):

- For  $w \in W$ , write

$$w = s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k, \quad s_i \in S.$$

If  $k$  is minimal, we define  $\ell(w) = k$  and we say that  $s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k$  is a reduced expression of  $w$ .

# Definition of Bruhat intervals

Let  $(W, S)$  be a Coxeter system, equip it with the length function  $\ell$  and a partial order  $\leq$  (the Bruhat order):

- For  $w \in W$ , write

$$w = s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k, \quad s_i \in S.$$

If  $k$  is minimal, we define  $\ell(w) = k$  and we say that  $s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k$  is a reduced expression of  $w$ .

- We say that  $u \leq w$  if each reduced expression of  $w$  has a subexpression which is a reduced expression of  $u$ .

# Definition of Bruhat intervals

Let  $(W, S)$  be a Coxeter system, equip it with the length function  $\ell$  and a partial order  $\leq$  (the Bruhat order):

- For  $w \in W$ , write

$$w = s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k, \quad s_i \in S.$$

If  $k$  is minimal, we define  $\ell(w) = k$  and we say that  $s_1 s_2 \cdots s_k$  is a reduced expression of  $w$ .

- We say that  $u \leq w$  if each reduced expression of  $w$  has a subexpression which is a reduced expression of  $u$ .

**First big problem:** Compute the cardinalities of Bruhat intervals

$$[u, w] := \{z \in W \mid u \leq z \leq w\},$$

in particular of lower Bruhat intervals  $\leq w := [id, w]$ .

# Some known results

- (Oh-Postnikov-Yoo, 2008): For smooth elements in the symmetric group,  $|\leq w|$  is the number of chambers in the hyperplane arrangement corresponding to all inversions of  $w$ .

# Some known results

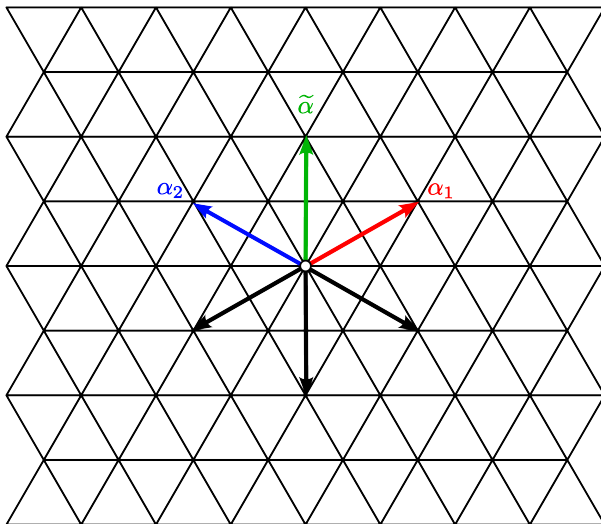
- (Oh-Postnikov-Yoo, 2008): For smooth elements in the symmetric group,  $|\leq w|$  is the number of chambers in the hyperplane arrangement corresponding to all inversions of  $w$ .
- (Oh-Yoo, 2010): Generalization of the previous result for all (finite) Weyl groups (for rationally smooth elements).

# Some known results

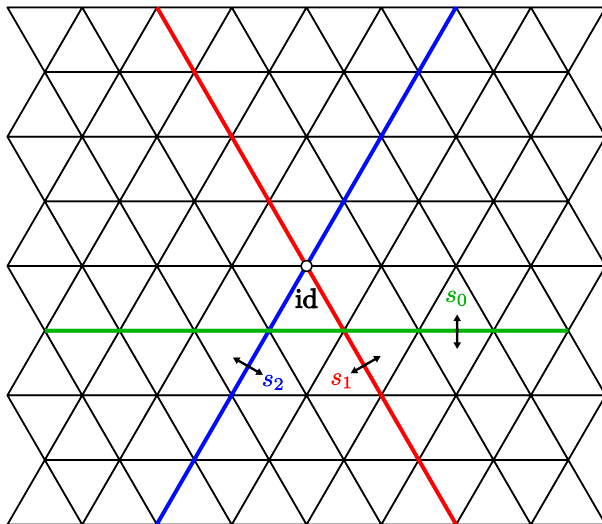
- (Oh-Postnikov-Yoo, 2008): For smooth elements in the symmetric group,  $|\leq w|$  is the number of chambers in the hyperplane arrangement corresponding to all inversions of  $w$ .
- (Oh-Yoo, 2010): Generalization of the previous result for all (finite) Weyl groups (for rationally smooth elements).
- (Libedinsky-Patimo, 2023) and (Batistelli-Bingham-Plaza, 2023): In affine type  $\tilde{A}_2$  ( $\tilde{B}_2$ , respectively), explicit formula of all  $|\leq w|$ . Under some parametrization of the group, these are polynomial formulas.



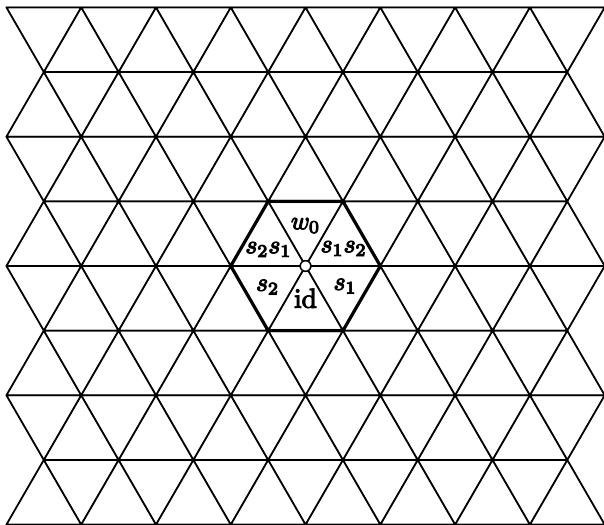
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



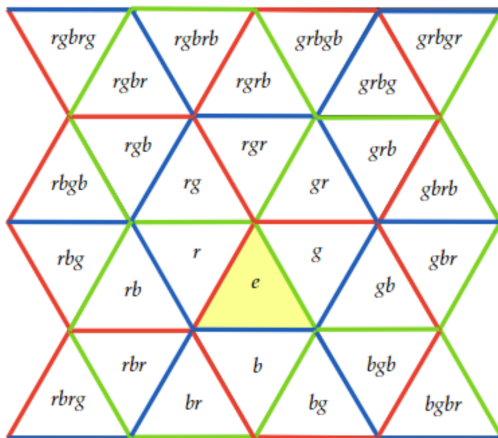
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



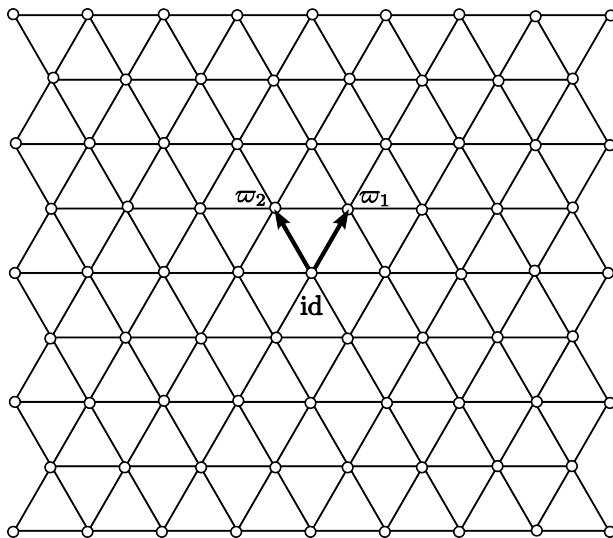
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



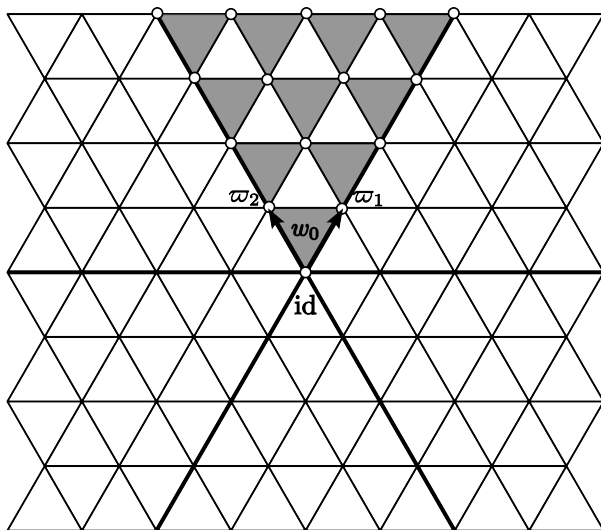
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



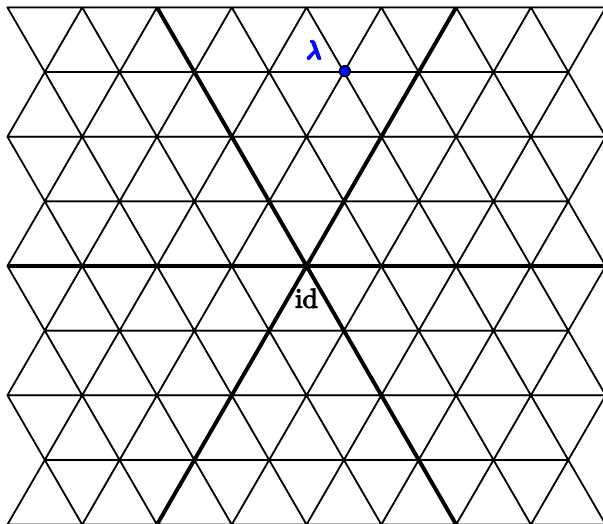
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



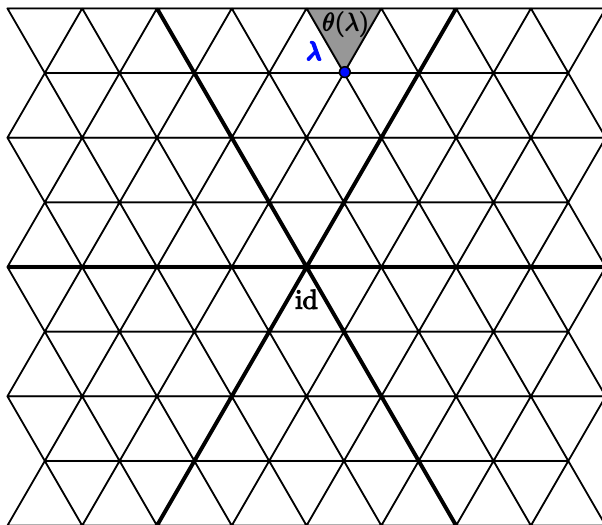
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

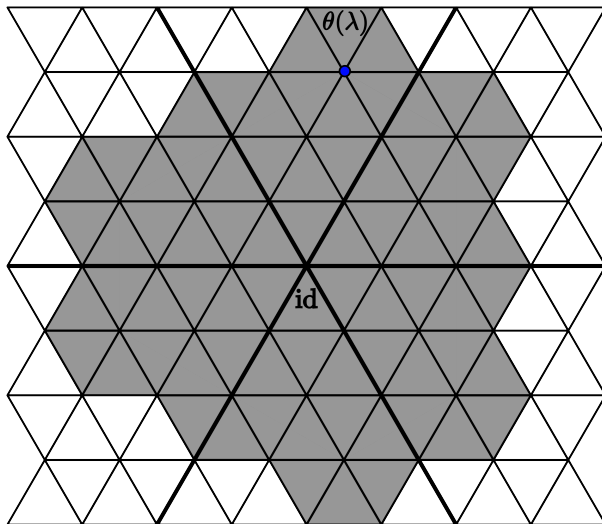


# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

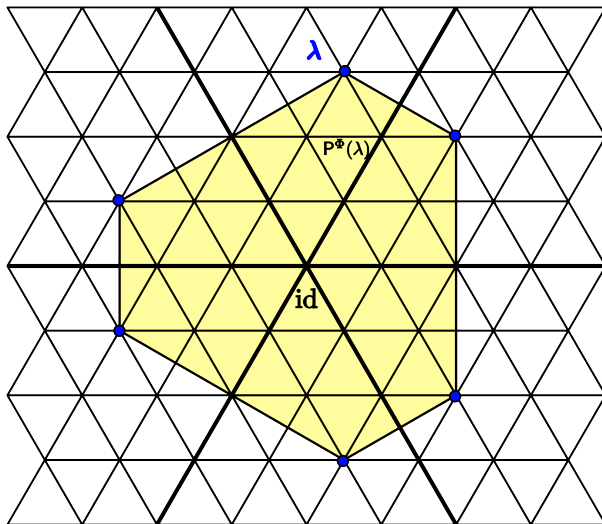




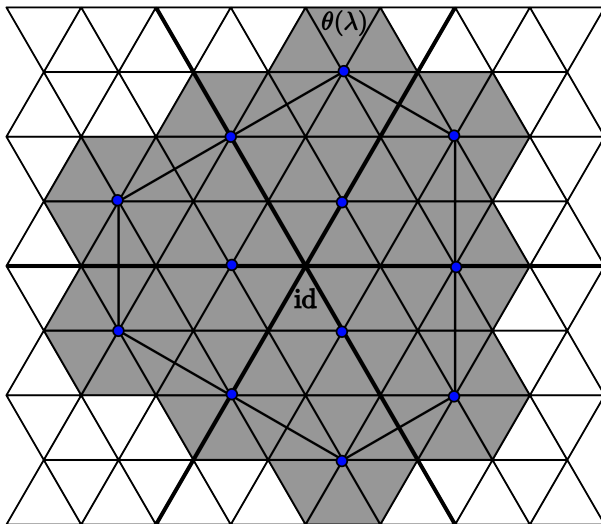
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



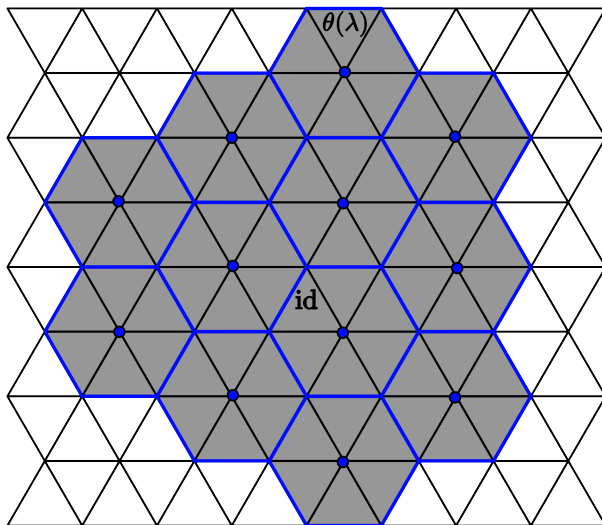
# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Lattice Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Lattice Formula

Let  $\Phi$  be an irreducible root system with finite Weyl group  $W_f$  and affine Weyl group  $W_a$ . For a dominant coweight  $\lambda$ , we define

$$P^\Phi(\lambda) := \text{Conv}(W_f \cdot \lambda).$$

# The Lattice Formula

Let  $\Phi$  be an irreducible root system with finite Weyl group  $W_f$  and affine Weyl group  $W_a$ . For a dominant coweight  $\lambda$ , we define

$$P^\Phi(\lambda) := \text{Conv}(W_f \cdot \lambda).$$

Theorem: Lattice Formula (Castillo, de la Fuente, L., Plaza) in "On the size of Bruhat intervals"

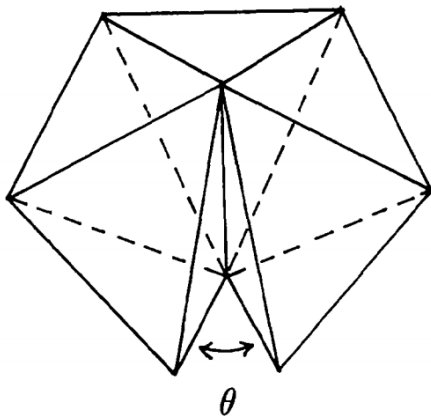
For every dominant coweight  $\lambda$ , we have

$$|\text{Alcoves}(\leq \theta(\lambda))| = \sum_{\mu} |\text{Alcoves}(W_f) + \mu|,$$

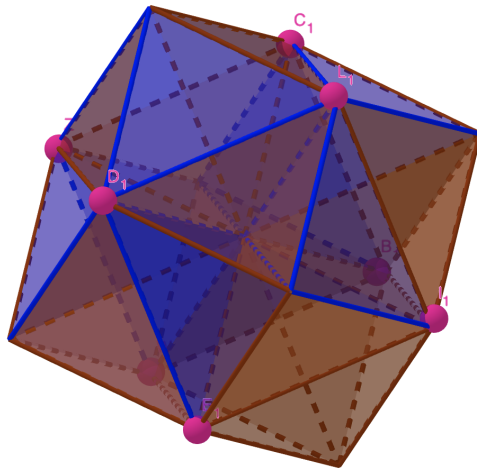
where  $\mu$  ranges over  $P^\Phi(\lambda) \cap (\lambda + \mathbb{Z}\Phi^\vee)$ .

In particular,

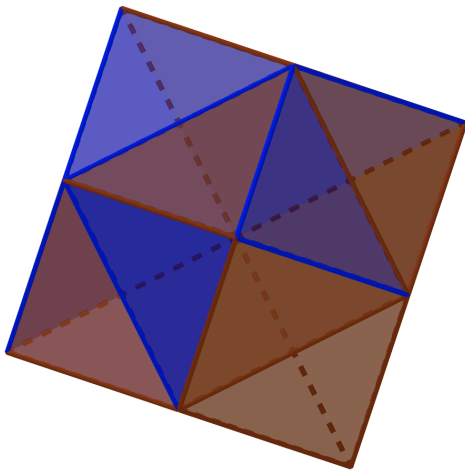
$$|\leq \theta(\lambda)| = |W_f| |P^\Phi(\lambda) \cap (\lambda + \mathbb{Z}\Phi^\vee)|.$$

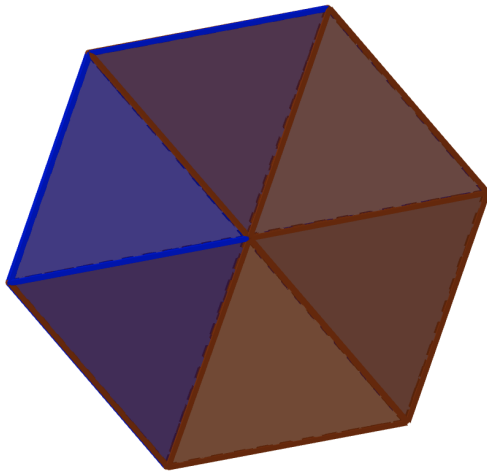


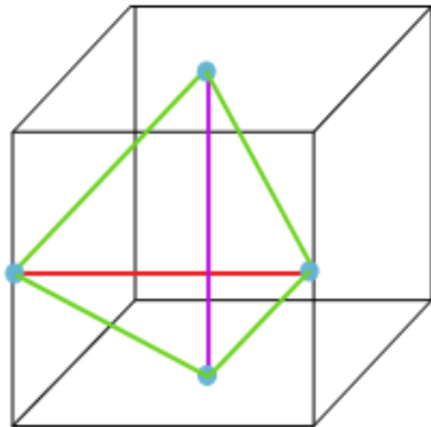
$W_f$  in  $\tilde{A}_3$

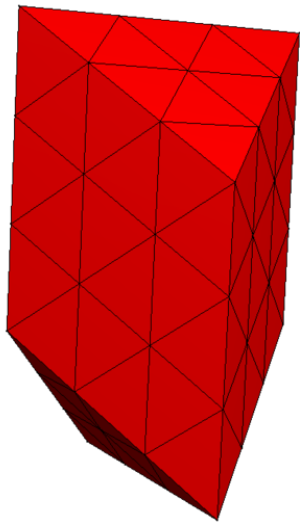


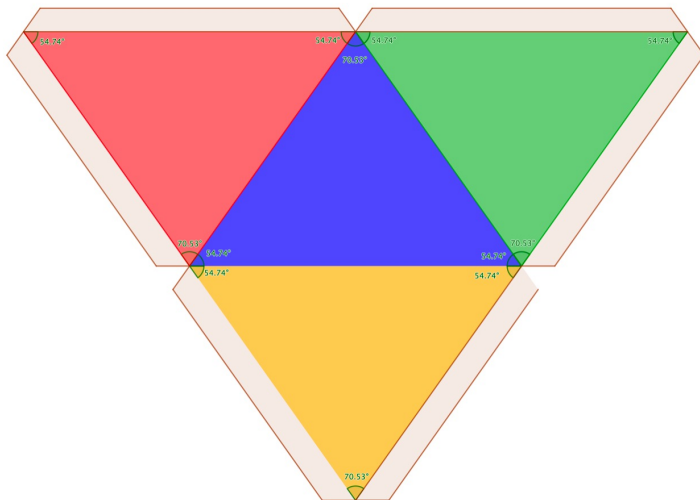




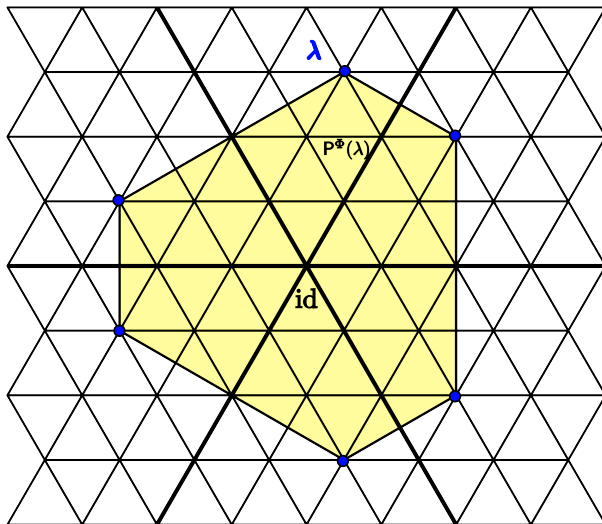




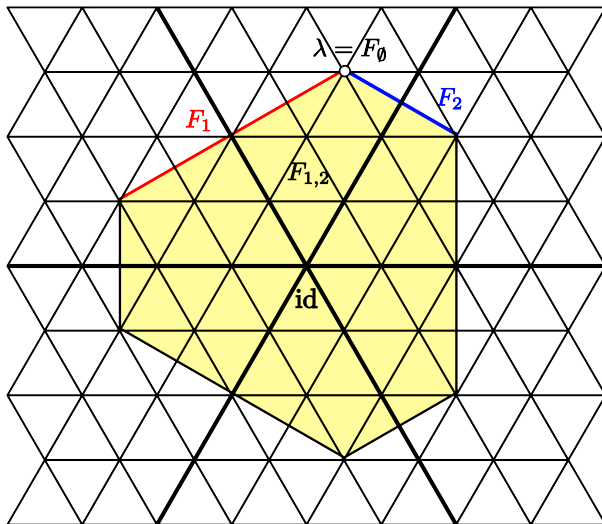




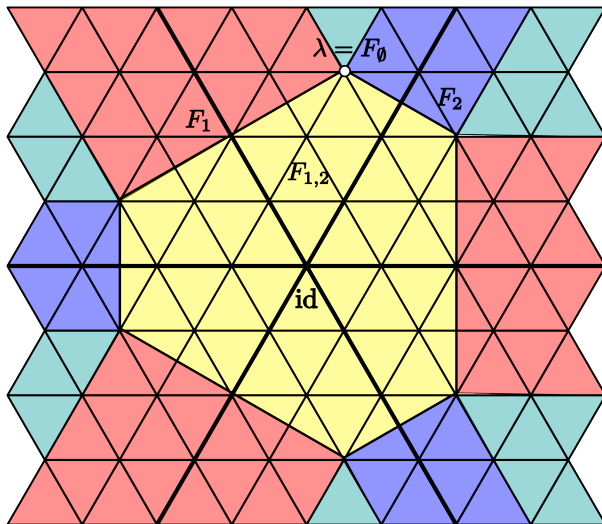
# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

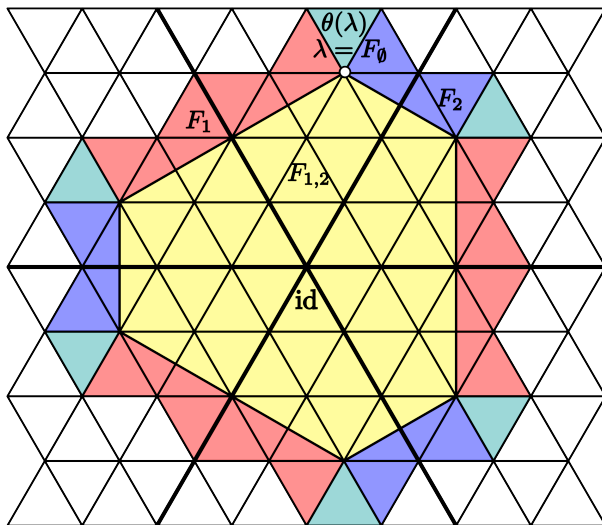


# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



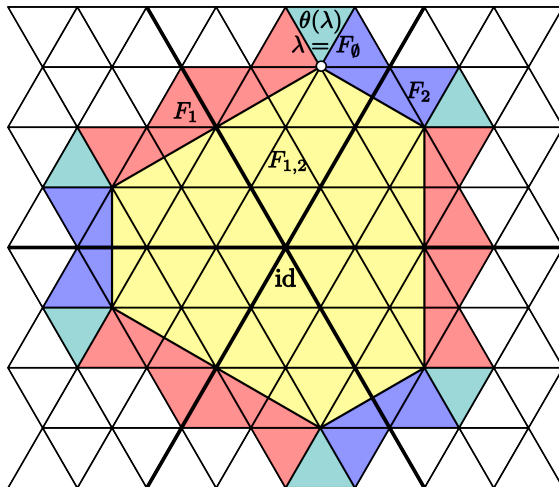


# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )



# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

$$|\leq \theta(\lambda)| = \mu_{1,2} \text{Area}(F_{1,2}) + \mu_1 \text{Length}(F_1) + \mu_2 \text{Length}(F_2) + \mu_\emptyset \text{Card}(F_\emptyset)$$



# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

$$\begin{aligned} |\leq \theta(\lambda)| &= \mu_{1,2} \text{Area}(F_{1,2}) + \mu_1 \text{Length}(F_1) + \mu_2 \text{Length}(F_2) + \mu_\emptyset \text{Card}(F_\emptyset) \\ &= \mu_{1,2} V_{1,2}(\lambda) + \mu_1 V_1(\lambda) + \mu_2 V_2(\lambda) + \mu_\emptyset V_\emptyset(\lambda) \end{aligned}$$

# The Geometric Formula (example in $\tilde{A}_2$ )

$$\begin{aligned} |\leq \theta(\lambda)| &= \mu_{1,2} \text{Area}(F_{1,2}) + \mu_1 \text{Length}(F_1) + \mu_2 \text{Length}(F_2) + \mu_\emptyset \text{Card}(F_\emptyset) \\ &= \mu_{1,2} V_{1,2}(\lambda) + \mu_1 V_1(\lambda) + \mu_2 V_2(\lambda) + \mu_\emptyset V_\emptyset(\lambda) \end{aligned}$$

If  $\lambda = (a, b)$  in the fundamental weight basis, then:

- $V_{1,2}(a, b) = \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2}(a^2 + 4ab + b^2), \quad \mu_{1,2} = 2\sqrt{3}$
- $V_1(a, b) = a\sqrt{2}, \quad \mu_1 = \frac{9}{2}\sqrt{2}$
- $V_2(a, b) = b\sqrt{2}, \quad \mu_2 = \frac{9}{2}\sqrt{2}$
- $V_\emptyset(a, b) = 1, \quad \mu_\emptyset = 6$

Thus,

$$|\leq \theta(a, b)| = 3a^2 + 3b^2 + 12ab + 9a + 9b + 6$$

# The Geometric Formula

Let  $\Phi$  be any irreducible root system and let  $S_f$  be the set of simple reflections of the finite Weyl group  $W_f$ .

**Theorem: Geometric Formula (Castillo, de la Fuente, L., Plaza)**

There exist unique real numbers  $\mu_J^\Phi$  such that for any dominant coweight  $\lambda$ ,

$$|\leq \theta(\lambda)| = \sum_{J \subset S_f} \mu_J^\Phi V_J^\Phi(\lambda).$$

**Important:** The coefficients  $\mu_J^\Phi$  **do not** depend on  $\lambda$ .

# The Geometric Formula

Let  $\Phi$  be any irreducible root system and let  $S_f$  be the set of simple reflections of the finite Weyl group  $W_f$ .

## Theorem: Geometric Formula (Castillo, de la Fuente, L., Plaza)

There exist unique real numbers  $\mu_J^\Phi$  such that for any dominant coweight  $\lambda$ ,

$$|\leq \theta(\lambda)| = \sum_{J \subset S_f} \mu_J^\Phi V_J^\Phi(\lambda).$$

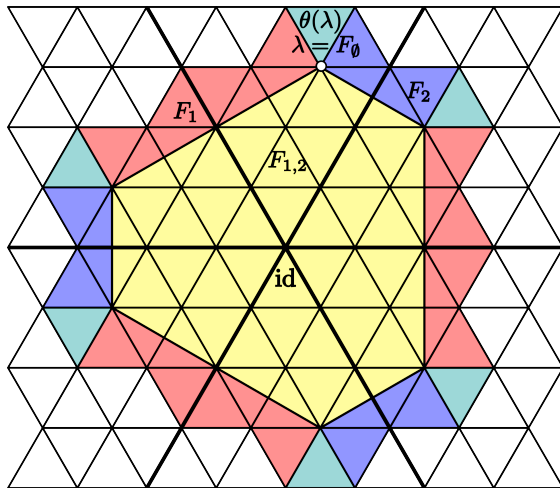
**Important:** The coefficients  $\mu_J^\Phi$  **do not** depend on  $\lambda$ .

If  $\lambda = (m_1, \dots, m_n)$  in the fundamental coweight basis, then the volumes  $V_J^\Phi(\lambda)$  are polynomials in  $m_1, \dots, m_n$ . ( $n = \text{rank of } \Phi$ )

Thus, the Geometric Formula implies that  $|\leq \theta(\lambda)|$  is also a polynomial of degree  $n$  in  $m_1, \dots, m_n$ .

# Treacherous $\tilde{A}_2$

$$|\leq \theta(\lambda)| = \mu_{1,2} \text{Area}(F_{1,2}) + \mu_1 \text{Length}(F_1) + \mu_2 \text{Length}(F_2) + \mu_\emptyset \text{Card}(F_\emptyset)$$



# Possible names for the theory:

- Bruhart: Bruhat meets Ehrhart



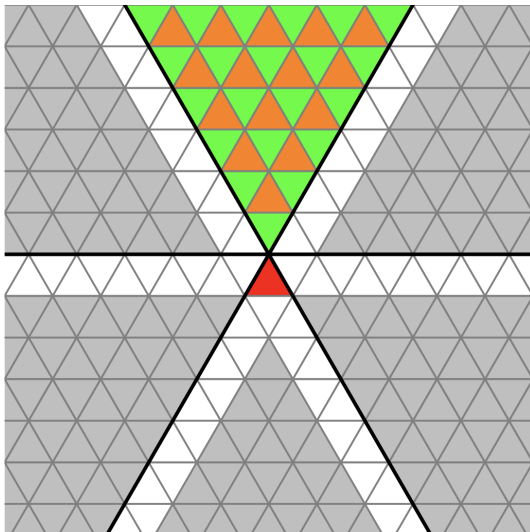
# Possible names for the theory:

- Bruhart: Bruhat meets Ehrhart
- Christmas tree from above

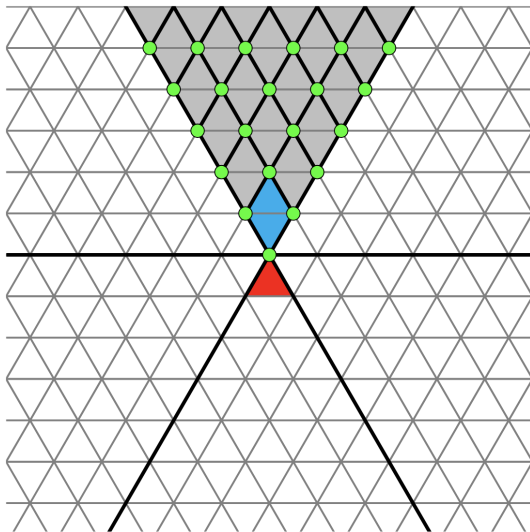
# Possible names for the theory:

- Bruhart: Bruhat meets Ehrhart
- Christmas tree from above
- BOAT: Bruhat order and alcovic tilings.

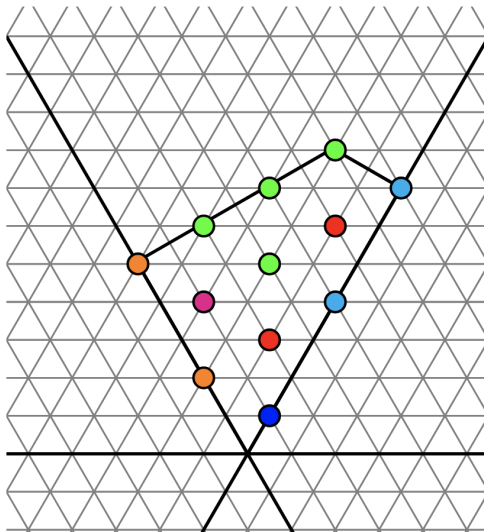
# Paper BOAT



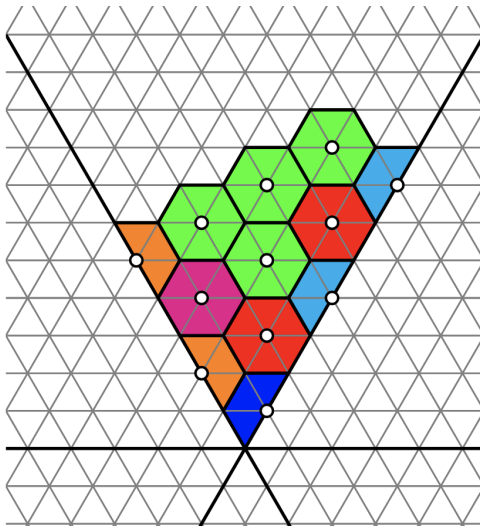
# Paper BOAT



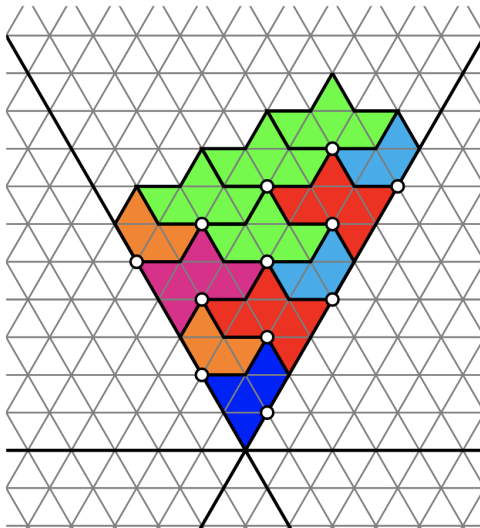
# Paper BOAT



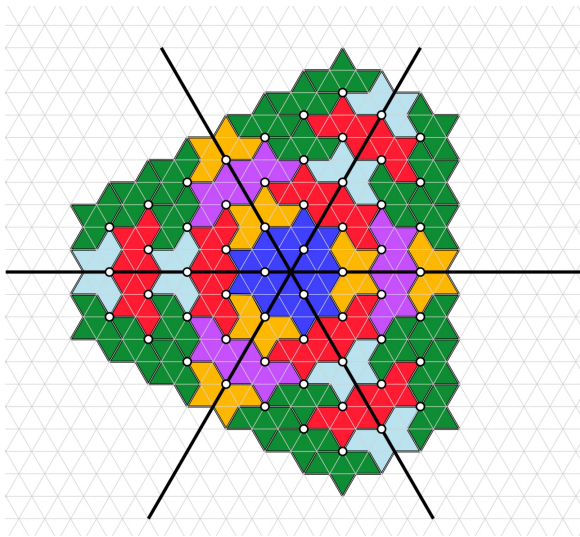
# Paper BOAT



# Paper BOAT

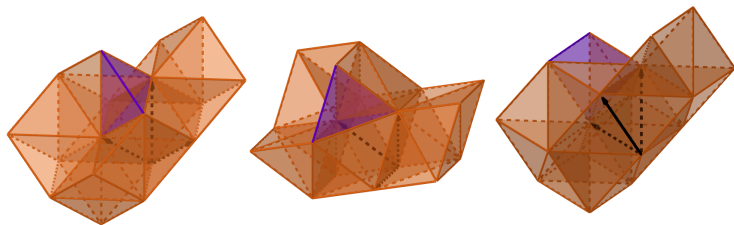


# Paper BOAT





# Paper BOAT



## Theorem (Castillo, de la Fuente, L., Plaza in "Paper BOAT")

Let  $\lambda \in \Lambda^+$  and  $(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n)$  its coordinates in the basis of fundamental weights. For a fixed  $a \in \mathcal{AMIGO}$  the function  $q_a : \mathbb{N}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  defined as  $(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n) \mapsto |\leq \theta_a(\lambda)|$ , agrees with a **quasi-polynomial** of degree  $n$  on a cofinite subset of  $\mathbb{N}^n$ .

## Theorem (Castillo, de la Fuente, L., Plaza in "Paper BOAT")

Let  $\lambda \in \Lambda^+$  and  $(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n)$  its coordinates in the basis of fundamental weights. For a fixed  $a \in \mathcal{AMIGO}$  the function  $q_a : \mathbb{N}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  defined as  $(\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n) \mapsto |\leq \theta_a(\lambda)|$ , agrees with a **quasi-polynomial** of degree  $n$  on a cofinite subset of  $\mathbb{N}^n$ .

## Conjecture

For any affine Weyl group the map  $q_a$  is a geometric polynomial.

- 1 All lower intervals (growing codimension of the cells)

- 1 All lower intervals (growing codimension of the cells)

## 2 THE WORLD

① All lower intervals (growing codimension of the cells)

② THE WORLD (all intervals)

- 1 All lower intervals (growing codimension of the cells)

- 2 THE WORLD (all intervals) (outside from  $W_f$ ).

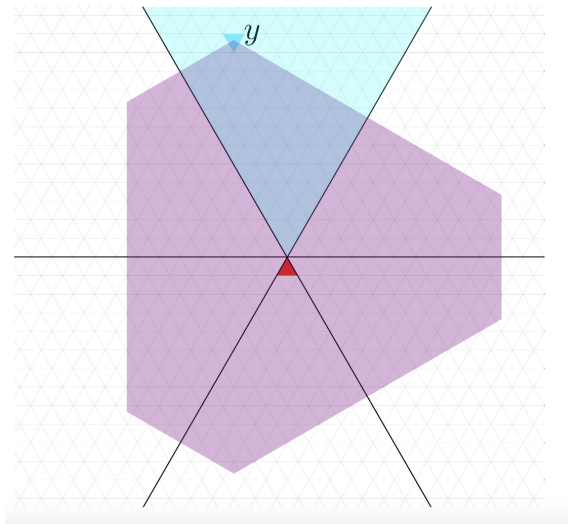
**Second big problem:** Classify Bruhat intervals modulo poset isomorphisms.



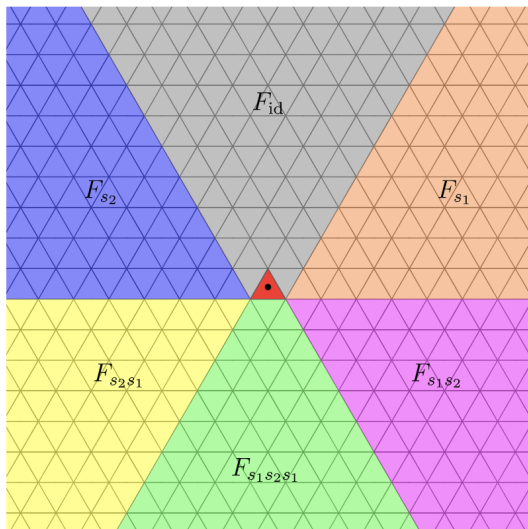
**Second big problem:** Classify Bruhat intervals modulo poset isomorphisms.

*Question 8 (I80, WK70, D40)* Prove that if  $W$  and  $W'$  are two Coxeter groups,  $[x, y]$  and  $[x', y']$  Bruhat intervals in  $W$  and  $W'$ , respectively, then if  $[x, y]$  is isomorphic as a poset to  $[x', y']$ , then  $p_{x,y} = p_{x',y'}$ .

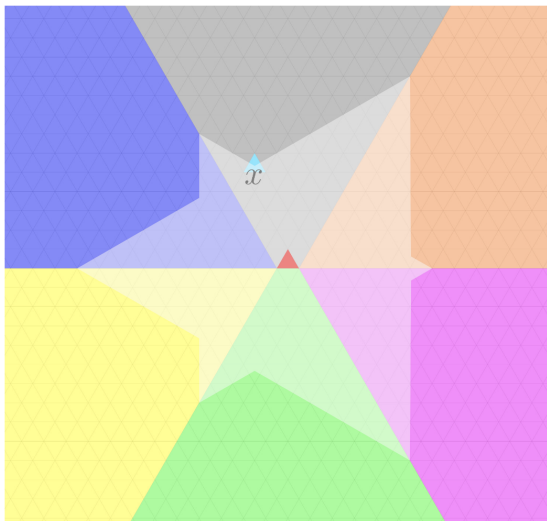
# Geometry of the intervals



# Geometry of the intervals



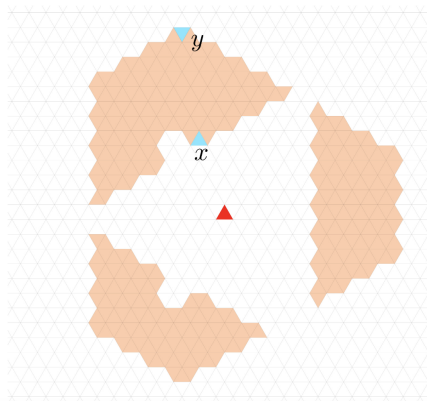
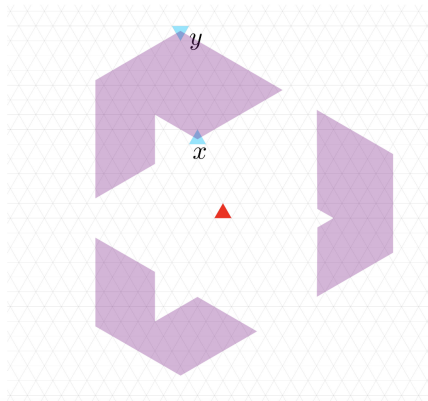
# Geometry of the intervals



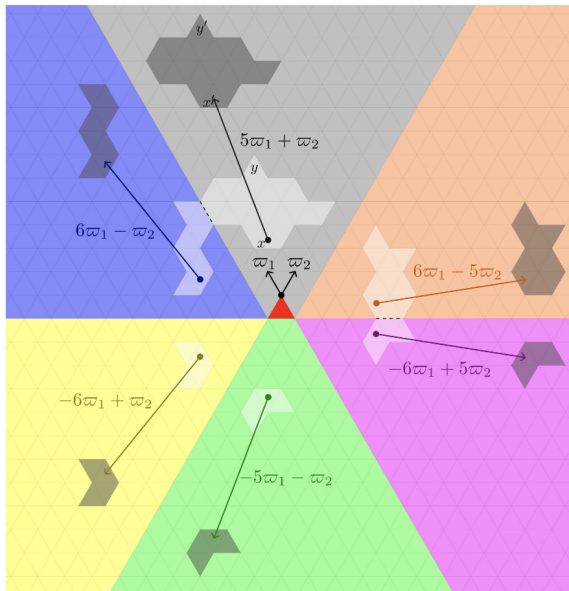
Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

The shape of the interval  $[x, y]$  is illustrated in the following figure.

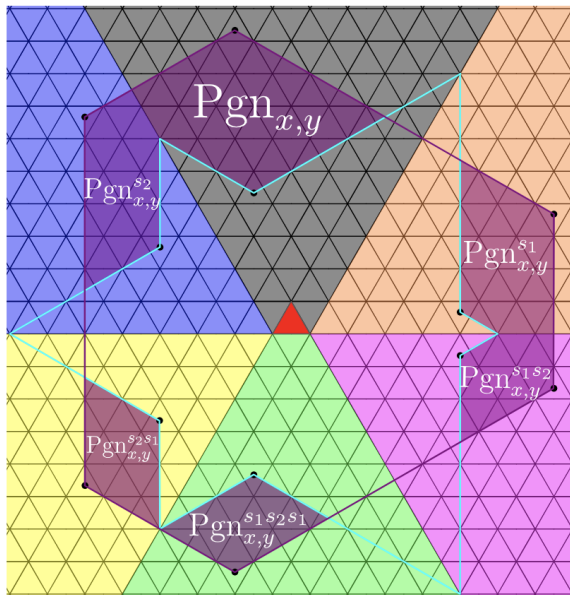
# Geometry of the intervals



# Translations



# Translations





# A Theorem and a Conjecture

## Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of  $\tilde{A}_2$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms".

# A Theorem and a Conjecture

## Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of  $\tilde{A}_2$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms".

This implies the combinatorial invariance conjecture for these elements.

# A Theorem and a Conjecture

## Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of  $\tilde{A}_2$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms".

This implies the combinatorial invariance conjecture for these elements.

## Suboptimal conjecture (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of any affine Weyl group  $W$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms"

# A Theorem and a Conjecture

## Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of  $\tilde{A}_2$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms".

This implies the combinatorial invariance conjecture for these elements.

## Suboptimal conjecture (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of any affine Weyl group  $W$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms" **IF**  $x$  is a translation of  $x'$  by a weight

# A Theorem and a Conjecture

## Theorem (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of  $\tilde{A}_2$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms".

This implies the combinatorial invariance conjecture for these elements.

## Suboptimal conjecture (Burrull, L., Villegas) in "Shape and class of Bruhat intervals"

Let  $x, x', y, y'$  be in the dominant chamber of any affine Weyl group  $W$ . If the intervals  $[x, y] \cong [x', y']$  are isomorphic as posets, they are related by a translation modulo "silly isomorphisms" **IF**  $x$  is a translation of  $x'$  by a weight (outside from  $W_f$ ).

# Approximate miracle

Consider the interval  $[x, y]$ .

# Approximate miracle

Consider the interval  $[x, y]$ .

Define  $D_{[x,y]}$  as the set of elements  $z \in [x, y]$  for which either the subinterval  $[x, z]$  or the subinterval  $[z, y]$  is dihedral—that is, isomorphic to an interval in some dihedral group.

# Approximate miracle

Consider the interval  $[x, y]$ .

Define  $D_{[x,y]}$  as the set of elements  $z \in [x, y]$  for which either the subinterval  $[x, z]$  or the subinterval  $[z, y]$  is dihedral—that is, isomorphic to an interval in some dihedral group.

## Approximate miracle

$$[x, y] \cong [x', y'] \iff D_{[x,y]} \cong D_{[x',y']}.$$



## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?
- Maybe also for the length function?

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?
- Maybe also for the length function?
- Maybe also for left or right weak Bruhat order?

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?
- Maybe also for the length function?
- Maybe also for left or right weak Bruhat order?
- Maybe also for double cosets Bruhat order?

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?
- Maybe also for the length function?
- Maybe also for left or right weak Bruhat order?
- Maybe also for double cosets Bruhat order?
- Maybe also for higher Bruhat orders? etc.

## Conclusion

Euclidean geometry controls some basic properties of the Bruhat order (at least for affine Weyl groups).

- Maybe for other (all?) Coxeter groups?
- Maybe also for the length function?
- Maybe also for left or right weak Bruhat order?
- Maybe also for double cosets Bruhat order?
- Maybe also for higher Bruhat orders? etc.



How deep does the rabbit hole really go?

