LEFT 3-ENGEL ELEMENTS IN GROUPS

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(joint work with G. Tracey and G. Traustason)

Advances in Group Theory and Applications

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Engel elements and groups

- 2 Known results
- 3 The "Gunnar" Lie algebra E
- Our counterexample
- 5 Last, but not least

 Let G be a group. We say that g ∈ G is a right Engel element if for any x ∈ G, ∃n = n(g, x) ≥ 1 such that [g, nx] = 1, where

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 and $[g, {}_{n}x] = [[g, x, \stackrel{n-1}{\dots}, x], x]$ if $n > 1$.

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- If *n* can be chosen independently of *x*, we say that *g* is right *n*-Engel or bounded right Engel element.
- Similarly g is (bounded) left Engel if for any $x \in G$, $\exists n = n(g, x) \ge 1$ such that [x, ng] = 1 ($\exists n = n(g) \ge 1$ such that [x, ng] = 1).

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Relation between these sets: Heineken's results

- $R_n(G)^{-1} \subseteq L_{n+1}(G)$
- $R(G)^{-1} \subseteq L(G)$

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- If G is locally nilpotent, then G is Engel.
- If G is of exponent 3, then G is 2-Engel. (Burnside)



2 Known results

3 The "Gunnar" Lie algebra *E*

4 Our counterexample

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n-Engel groups

- G is 1-Engel \iff G is abelian.
- G is 2-Engel \implies G is nilpotent of class \leq 3 (Burnside, Hopkins, Levi)
- G is 3-Engel \implies G is locally nilpotent (Heineken)
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Right *n*-Engel elements

- x right 1-Engel $\iff x \in Z(G)$.
- x right 2-Engel ⇒ x left 2-Engel. Right 2-Engel elements form a characteristic subgroup. (Kappe)
- x right 3-Engel $\implies \langle x \rangle^G$ nilpotent of class \leq 3. (Newell)







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Proof.

- Take $g \in HP(G)$ and $x \in G$
- Then $[g, x] \in HP(G)$
- Denote $K = \langle g, [g, x] \rangle$
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• $a \in L_2(G) \Longrightarrow a \in HP(G)$

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- For *n* large enough there are left *n*-Engel elements that are not in HP(G). (Lysenok, Ivanov)

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Question (Abdollahi, 2010)

What is the least positive integer n for which there is a group G with $L_n(G) \not\subseteq HP(G)$?

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Left 3-Engel elements

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Theorem (-, Traustason, Tracey)

Does the same hold for left 3-Engel elements? No!

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- For each $A \in F(\mathbb{N})$, let u_A , v_A , and w_A be distinct (formal) elements.
- We also add another distinct (formal) element, which is called x.
- The space *L* is then defined to be the infinite dimensional vector space over \mathbb{F} spanned by the set

 $B = \{x\} \cup \{u_A : A \in F(\mathbb{N})\} \cup \{v_A : A \in F(\mathbb{N})\} \cup \{w_A : A \in F(\mathbb{N})\}.$

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Lemma (–, Traustason, Tracey)

The associative enveloping algebra E is 12-dimensional.

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- We define G to be the set of elements of A which are finite length products in the alphabet 1 + B.
- Since $a^2 = 1$ for all $a \in 1 + B$, the set G forms a group with identity element 1.

We set

- $\mathcal{U} = \langle 1 + \mathsf{ad}(u_A) : A \subseteq \mathbb{N} \rangle$
- $\mathcal{V} = \langle 1 + \mathsf{ad}(v_A) : A \subseteq \mathbb{N} \rangle$
- $\mathcal{W} = \langle 1 + \mathsf{ad}(w_A) : A \subseteq \mathbb{N} \rangle.$
- Note that $\mathcal{U}, \mathcal{V}, \mathcal{W}$ are elementary abelian of countably infinite rank.
- We will be working with

 $G = \langle 1 + \operatorname{ad}(x), \mathcal{U}, \mathcal{V}, \mathcal{W} \rangle.$

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Furthermore every element $g \in G$ has a unique expression

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Theorem (-, Traustason, Tracey)

The element 1 + ad(x) is a left 3-Engel element in *G*. However $\langle 1 + ad(x) \rangle^G$ is not nilpotent. • We now define some algebra E^* "from E".

Proposition (-, Traustason, Tracey)

We have $(1 + E^*)^{32} = 1$.

Proposition (-, Traustason, Tracey)

Any r-generator subgroup of $1 + E^*$ is nilpotent of r-bounded class.

If we take any r conjugates (1 + ad(x))^{g1},...,(1 + ad(x))^{gr} of (1 + ad(x)) in G, they generate a nilpotent subgroup of r-bounded class that grows linearly with r. In particular:

Proposition (-, Traustason, Tracey)

Let $(1 + ad(x))^{g_1}, \ldots, (1 + ad(x))^{g_r}$ be any r conjugates of 1 + ad(x) in G. Then the group generated by these conjugates is nilpotent of class at most 4r + 2.

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Cetara is a cozy fishermen's village nested along the Amalfi Coast among verdant citrus groves.

GTG 2019 in Cetara

Groups and Topological Groups 2019

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Carmine Monetta, Marialaura Noce, Maria Tota
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• When:

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VI ASPETTIAMO!

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Left 3-Engel elements

Eskerrik asko! Grazie :)