

## Burda: Arithmetic properties of Chebyshev polynomials

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$\mathbb{Z} \mapsto \mathbb{Z}^n$  as  $\mathbb{F}_p \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_p$  is a multiplicative homomorphism.  $|\text{Image}| \leq p-1$ ; if  $(n, p-1) = 1$ ,  $|\text{Image}| = p-1$ .

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Yet for a generic  $q(x) \in \mathbb{Z}[x]$ , then  $q: \mathbb{F}_p \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_p$

For  $p \gg n$ ,  $\frac{|\text{Image}|}{p-1} \sim 63\%$

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Schur's Question. Are there other polynomials  $q$  in  $\mathbb{Q}[x]$  s.t.  $q: \mathbb{F}_p \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_p$  is surjective for infinitely many primes.

Ans. Yes, only compositions of

$$\mathbb{Z} \mapsto \mathbb{Z}^n \quad n \geq 2$$

$$\mathbb{Z} \mapsto T_n(z), \text{ Chebyshev poly}$$

For  $n \geq 3$

$$\times \quad \mathbb{Z} \mapsto az+b$$

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$$T_n(x): \quad T_n(\cos x) = \cos(nx)$$

More algebraically:

$$T_n\left(\frac{z+z^{-1}}{2}\right) = \frac{z^n + z^{-n}}{2}$$

$$|n| \quad 2 \quad | \quad \frac{\quad}{2}$$

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 z & \mathbb{F}_{p^2} & \xrightarrow{z \mapsto z^n} \mathbb{F}_{p^2} \\
 \downarrow & \downarrow & \downarrow \\
 \frac{z+z^{-1}}{2} & \mathbb{F}_p & \xrightarrow{T_n} \mathbb{F}_p
 \end{array}$$

So if  $(n, p^2-1) = 1$

then

$$|\text{Image}(T_n)| = p$$