

§ 5. Amalgams and HNN-extensions

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Let $(G_i)_{i \in I}$ be a family of ^(nonempty) grps, let H be a grp, with homomorphisms $\varepsilon_i: H \rightarrow G_i$.
We are interested in the colimit G of the

diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & & G_i \\ & \nearrow & \\ H & \longrightarrow & G_j \\ & \vdots & \end{array}$$

Since grp is complete, such a colimit exists.

In the special case $\#I = 2$, this is a push-out,

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H & \longrightarrow & G_1 \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ G_2 & \longrightarrow & G \end{array}$$

1. Construction We let $\varepsilon_i: H \rightarrow G_i$ be as above

and we consider the free product $\coprod_{i \in I} G_i$,

with the canonical homomorphism $\iota_j: G_j \rightarrow \coprod_{i \in I} G_i$.

$$\text{Put } Z = \left\{ \iota_j \varepsilon_j(h) \iota_k^{-1} \varepsilon_k(h^{-1}) \mid h \in H, j, k \in I \right\}$$

$$\text{and } N = \langle\langle Z \rangle\rangle \trianglelefteq \coprod_{i \in I} G_i$$

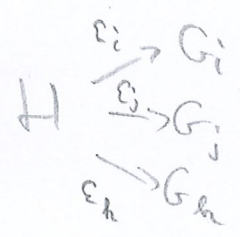
$$\pi: \coprod_{i \in I} G_i \rightarrow \coprod_{i \in I} G_i / \mathcal{N} = G \text{ and}$$

$$\bar{\pi}_j = \pi \circ \epsilon_j: G_j \rightarrow G.$$

Lemma

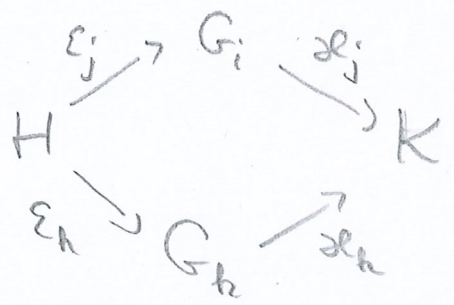
G with the homomorphisms
 $G_j \xrightarrow{\bar{\pi}_j} G$ and $H \xrightarrow{\bar{\pi}_j \circ \epsilon_j} G$ (canon)

is the colimit of the diagram



pf Let K be any group, with homomorphisms

$\alpha_j: G_j \rightarrow K$ such that $\alpha_j \circ \epsilon_j = \alpha_h \circ \epsilon_h$
 for all j, h .



We define $\alpha: G \rightarrow K$ as follows,

Consider $\coprod_{i \in I} G_i \xrightarrow{\tilde{\alpha}} K$ given by

$$\tilde{\alpha}(g) = \alpha_j(\epsilon_j(g)) \text{ if } g \in G_j \subseteq \coprod_{i \in I} G_i$$

(universal property of the free product).

3. Let $H \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_i} G_i$ be a nonempty family [96]
of group homomorphisms, let $W = \coprod_{i \in I} G_i$

= {reduced words} and put

$$Z = \{ \iota_j \varepsilon_j(h) \iota_k^{-1} \varepsilon_k(h^{-1}) \mid h \in H, j, k \in I \}, \quad N = \langle\langle Z \rangle\rangle \trianglelefteq W$$

$G = W/N$ the colimit of the diagram, as in

§ 5.1. Put $H_i = \varepsilon_i(H) \subseteq G_i$ and choose
for each $i \in I$ a lift transversal for $H_i \subseteq G_i$.

$$\text{Put } A = \{ (\bar{a}_2, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \mid r \geq 0, (\bar{a}_2, \dots, \bar{a}_r) \text{ reduced}, h \in H \}$$

The elements of A are called normal forms.

Choose $0 \in I$.

Proposition With the notation set up as above,
every coset $gN \in G$ has a representative

$(\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \in A$, such that

$$gN = \bar{a}_1 \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \quad \text{where } h_0 = \iota_0 \varepsilon_0(h)$$

Be for we prove this we note the following.

Given $h \in H_j$, choose $\tilde{h} \in H$ with $\varepsilon_j(\tilde{h}) = h$.

For $k \in I$, put $h' = \varepsilon_k(\tilde{h})$. Then $\varepsilon_j(h)N = \varepsilon_k(h')N$.

PF let $(x_1, \dots, x_r) \in W$ be a shortest reduced word in the coset $gN = x_1 \dots x_r N$, $x_j \in G_{\alpha_j} = G_{\beta_j}$
 $j = 1, \dots, r$

Put $a_1 = x_1$, and $a_1 = \bar{a}_1 h_1$ $h_1 \in H_1$

$$\begin{aligned}
 x_1 \dots x_r N &= \bar{a}_1 h_1 x_2 \dots x_r N \\
 &= \bar{a}_1 \underbrace{(h_1' x_2)}_{= a_2} x_3 \dots x_r N && h_1' \in H_1 \\
 &= \bar{a}_1 (\bar{a}_2 h_2) x_3 \dots x_r N && h_2 \in H_2 \\
 &= \bar{a}_1 \bar{a}_2 \underbrace{(h_2' x_3)}_{= a_3} x_4 \dots x_r N && h_2' \in H_2 \\
 &\vdots \\
 &= \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_{r-1} a_r N
 \end{aligned}$$

Note: $\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_{r-1}, a_r$ are non trivial by minimality. If $\bar{a}_r \neq e$ put $\bar{a}_r = a_r h_r$

$$\begin{aligned}
 gN &= \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_r N \\
 &= \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \quad (\text{done})
 \end{aligned}$$

If $\bar{a}_r = e$ put $h_r = a_r$

$$gN = \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_{r-1} h_r = \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_{r-1} h_0 N \quad (\text{done}) \quad \square$$

4. Theorem Let $H \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_i} G_i$ be a (nonempty) family of injective group homomorphisms.

With the notation set up in §5.3, every coset $gN \in W/N$ has a unique representative in A .

PF Fix $j \in I$. We first construct an action

$$G_j \times A \rightarrow A \text{ as follows.}$$

$$\text{Let } (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \in A, \quad a_\Delta \in G_{i_\Delta} = G_\Delta$$

$\Delta = 1, \dots, r$

$$\text{and } g \in G_j.$$

Case $j \neq i_1$

Re-write

$$\begin{aligned}
g \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N &= (\bar{g} h_j) \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \\
&= \bar{g} \underbrace{(h'_1 \bar{a}_1)}_{= b_1} \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \\
&= \bar{g} b_1 \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \\
&= \bar{g} (\bar{b}_1 h_1) \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \\
&= \bar{g} \bar{b}_1 \underbrace{(h'_2 \bar{a}_2)}_{= b_2} \bar{a}_3 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \\
&= \bar{g} \bar{b}_1 (\bar{b}_2 h_2) \bar{a}_3 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N
\end{aligned}$$

$$\dots$$

$$= \bar{g} \bar{b}_1 \dots \bar{b}_r \tilde{h}_0 \mathcal{N}$$

Put $L_g(\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) = \begin{cases} (\bar{g}, \bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_r, \tilde{h}) & \text{if } \bar{g} \neq e \\ (\bar{b}_1, \dots, \bar{b}_r, \tilde{h}) & \text{if } \bar{g} = e \end{cases}$

Note: $b_0 \notin H_0$ since $a_0 \notin H_0$ and $b_0 = h_{a_0}^{-1} a_0$
 $h_0 \in H_0$

Since the ε_i are isomorphisms, this re-writing procedure is well-defined.

Case $j = i_1$

$$(g \bar{a}_1) \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \mathcal{N}$$

$$= \bar{g} \bar{a}_1 h_1 \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \mathcal{N}$$

$$= \bar{g} \bar{a}_1 \underbrace{(h_1^{-1} \bar{a}_2)}_{= b_2} \bar{a}_3 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \mathcal{N}$$

$$\vdots$$

$$= \bar{g} \bar{a}_1 \bar{b}_2 \dots \bar{b}_r \tilde{h}_0 \mathcal{N}$$

again $b_0 \notin H_0$, put

$$L_g(\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) = (\bar{g} \bar{a}_1, \bar{b}_2, \dots, \bar{b}_r, \tilde{h})$$

We claim that this is an action.

Let $x, y, a \in G_R$ put $z = xy$. Then

$$z \bar{a} = \overline{z a} \underbrace{\overline{z a}^{-1} z a}_{= h_z} = \overline{z a} h_z$$

$$y \bar{a} = \overline{y a} h_y$$

$$x \overline{y a} = \overline{x y a} \underbrace{\overline{x y a}^{-1} x y a}_{= h_x} = \overline{x y a} h_x$$

$$\Rightarrow x y \bar{a} = x \overline{y a} h_y = \overline{x y a} h_x h_y, \quad h_z = h_x h_y$$

From this we see that re-writing is compatible with the multiplication in G_j , hence we obtain an

action $G_j \times A \rightarrow A, \quad G_j \rightarrow \text{Sym}(A)$ and

thus an action $W \times A \rightarrow A$
 $(w, v) \mapsto L_w(v)$

This action has the following properties.

(1) If $h \in H$, then $L_{\varepsilon_i(h)} = L_{\varepsilon_j(h)}$ for all i, j .

In particular, N acts trivially on A , and we get an induced action $W/N \times A \rightarrow A$.

(2) If $(\bar{a}_2, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \in A$, then

$$L_{\bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0}(e) = \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0, \quad \text{hence } W \text{ (and } W/N) \text{ act transitively}$$

(3) If $w \in W$ fixes $(e) \in A$, then $w \in N$, because there is $n \in N$ and $v = (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \in A$ with $\bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \cdot n = w$, hence $L_{\bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0} = L_w$, whence $(\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h_0) = (e)$.

Thus the map $W/N \rightarrow A$ is bijective,
 $wN \mapsto L_w(e) = v = (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h)$

and $wN = \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N$

□
#

5. Conventions Give a family of homomorphisms

$$H \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_i} G_i, \text{ we write}$$

$$\varinjlim (H \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_i} G_i)_{i \in I} = W/N = G$$

In case that the ε_i are all injective, one writes also

$$\varinjlim (H \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_i} G_i)_{i \in I} = \bigstar_{i \in I} H G_i = G$$

and calls this an amalgamated product. In the special case when

H is the trivial group, we obtain

again the free product. We put

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{\iota}_k: G_k &\rightarrow \ast_{i \in I} G_i & \bar{\iota}_k &= \pi \circ \iota_k \\ \pi: W &\rightarrow W/N = G \\ \text{and } \varepsilon: H &\rightarrow \ast_{i \in I} G_i, & \varepsilon(h) &= \pi \circ \iota_k \circ \varepsilon_k \\ & & & \text{(any } k \in I) \end{aligned}$$

6. Proposition If the homomorphisms $\varepsilon_k: H \rightarrow G_k$ are all injective, then the $\bar{\iota}_k$ are injective and ε is also injective. We have.

$$\ast_{i \in I} G_i = \langle \bigcup_{i \in I} \bar{\iota}_i(G_i) \rangle \quad \text{and}$$

$$\bar{\iota}_k(G_k) \cap \langle \bigcup_{i \neq k} \bar{\iota}_i(G_i) \rangle = \varepsilon(H)$$

PF This follows from the normal form for the elements in G . □

Note: If the ε_k are not injective, this is false.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} E_7 & \mathbb{Z} & \xrightarrow{\varepsilon_1} \mathbb{Z}/2 \\ \varepsilon_2 \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ & \mathbb{Z}/3 & \rightarrow G \end{array} \quad \text{yields } G = \langle 1 \rangle \quad \nabla$$

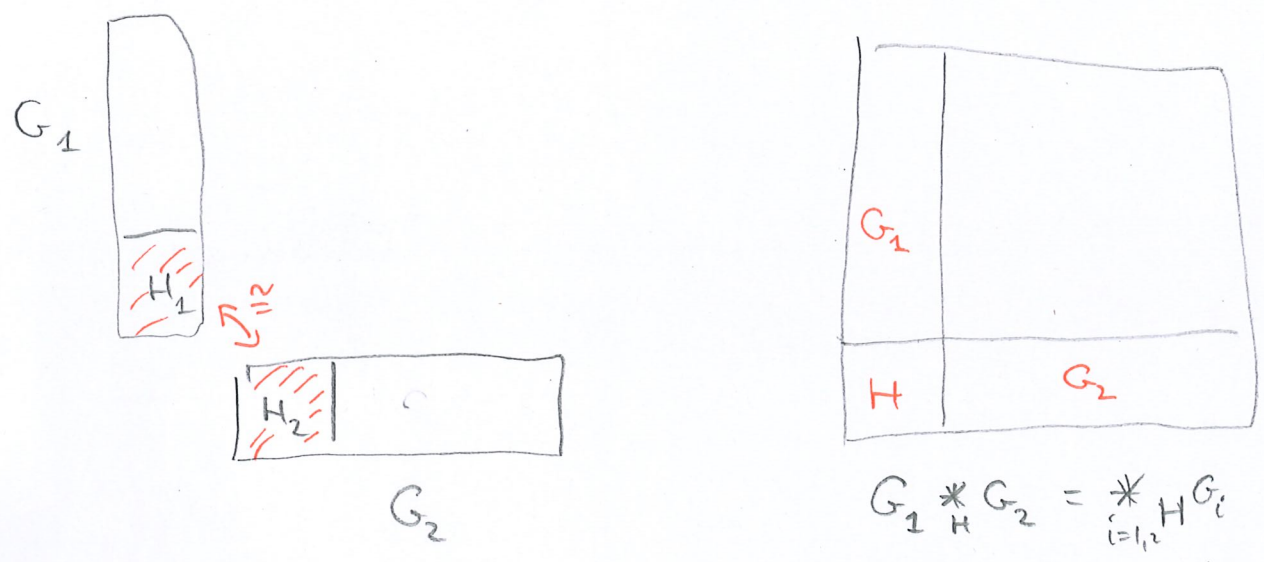
→ homework

In view of the proposition, we may view each

G_j as a subgrp of $\ast_{i \in I} H_i G_i$.

Idea for $I = \{1, 2\}$: we glue the grps

G_1 and G_2 along the subgrps $H_1 \cong H_2$.



7. Prop let $(H \xrightarrow{\sigma_i} G_i)_{i \in I}$ be a family of injective homomorphisms, let $\ast_{i \in I} H_i G_i = G$ denote the amalgamated product, let A be the set of normal forms (for a choice of left transversals $H_i \subseteq G_i$). Then we have the following.

(i) If $g \in G$ has normal form $g \triangleq (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h)$ with $i_1 \neq i_r$, then g has infinite order.

(ii) If there are indices j, k with $i \neq k$ and $H_j \neq G_j$ and $H_k \neq G_k$, then G is infinite.

(iii) if $g \in G$ has finite order, then (104)
 g is conjugate to an element $g \in G_k \subseteq G$,
 for some $k \in \mathbb{I}$.

pf (i) Consider $(\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \in A$ and

$$g = \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 N \in G = W/N$$

$$\text{Then } g^m = \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r h_0 \dots N$$

$$= \bar{a}_1 \dots \bar{a}_r \cdot \underbrace{(\bar{h}_1 a_{12} \bar{a}_{22} \dots \bar{a}_{r2} \bar{a}_{13} \dots \bar{a}_{rm} h)}_{= \bar{a}_{1,2}} N$$

reduced word

$$\Rightarrow g^m \neq e \text{ for } m \geq 1.$$

(ii) Choose $a \in G_j - H_j$ $b \in G_k - H_k$, $j \neq k$

Consider $g \triangleq (\bar{a}, b, e) \in A \rightsquigarrow g$ has infinite order.

(iii) Suppose $g \triangleq (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h)$ has finite order.

$$r=0 \rightsquigarrow g \triangleq h \quad g = h_0 \in H_0 \subseteq G_0 \quad (\nu)$$

$$r=1 \rightsquigarrow g \triangleq (\bar{a}, h) \quad g = \bar{a} h_1 \in G_1 \quad (\nu)$$

Now proceed by induction on r .

$$g = (\bar{a}_1, \dots, \bar{a}_r, h) \quad r \geq 2 \quad \text{and } i_1 = i_r \text{ by (i)}$$

$$\bar{a}_1^{-1} g \bar{a}_1 \triangleq (\bar{a}_2, \dots, \underbrace{\bar{a}_r h_0 \bar{a}_1}_= b) N$$

$$= \bar{a}_2 \dots \bar{a}_{r-1} \bar{b} \tilde{h}_0 \mathcal{N} \triangleq (\bar{a}_2, \dots, \bar{a}_{r-1}, \bar{b}, \tilde{h})$$

(105)

$$\text{or } (\bar{a}_2, \dots, \bar{a}_{r-1}, \tilde{h}) \quad \text{if } \bar{b} = e$$

shorter element.



Corollary If all groups G_i are torsion free
(no elts of finite order besides e), then

$\ast_{i \in I} G_i$ is torsion free.

8. HNN - Extensions

(Graham Higman, Bernhard Neumann, Hanna Neumann)

Let G be a group, with subgroups $K, H \subseteq G$.

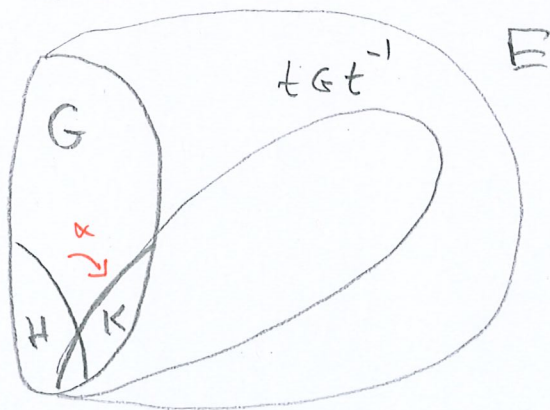
Suppose that there is an isomorphism

$$\alpha: H \xrightarrow{\cong} K$$

Then there is a group E , with $G \subseteq E$

and an element $t \in E$, such that

$$t h t^{-1} = \alpha(h) \quad \text{for all } h \in H$$



PF Choose two letters $u, v \notin G$, put
 $U = F(u) \cong \mathbb{Z}$, $V = F(v) \cong \mathbb{Z}$ and put
 $X = G * U$, $Y = G * V$. Consider the inclusion

homomorphisms $G \cong X, * \{e\} \subseteq G \subseteq * \{e\}$,
 $G \cong G * \{e\} \subseteq G * V$

Now define

$$\xi: H \rightarrow X, \quad h \mapsto u h u^{-1}$$

$$\eta: K \rightarrow Y, \quad k \mapsto v k v^{-1}$$

which induce homomorphisms

$$\hat{\xi}: G * H \rightarrow X \quad \begin{matrix} g \mapsto g \\ h \mapsto u h u^{-1} \end{matrix}$$

$$\hat{\eta}: G * K \rightarrow Y \quad \begin{matrix} g \mapsto g \\ k \mapsto v k v^{-1} \end{matrix}$$

Note: $\hat{\xi}$ maps reduced words to reduced words,

eg $\hat{\xi}(g_1, h_1, g_2, h_2, \dots) = g_1 u h_1 u^{-1} g_2 u h_2 u^{-1} \dots$

similarly for $\hat{\eta}$. Hence $\hat{\xi}$ and $\hat{\eta}$ are injective. Put

$$L = \hat{\xi}(G * H) \subseteq X$$

$$M = \hat{\eta}(G * K) \subseteq Y$$

We obtain an isomorphism

$$\varphi: L \xrightarrow{\cong} \Pi$$

via $G * H \xrightarrow{\cong} G * K$

$$g \longmapsto g$$

$$h \longmapsto \alpha(h)$$

i.e. $\varphi(g) = g$, $\varphi(uhu^{-1}) = v\alpha(h)v^{-1}$

Now we consider the amalgamated product

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 X *_L Y & \text{for} & L \subseteq X \\
 & & \varphi \downarrow \quad \downarrow \\
 & & Y \rightarrow X *_L Y
 \end{array}$$

We have an injective homomorphism

$$G \longrightarrow X \longrightarrow X *_L Y$$

In $X *_L Y$ we have $uhu^{-1} = v\alpha(h)v^{-1}$.

If we put $t = v^{-1}u \in X *_L Y$, then

$$t h t^{-1} = \alpha(h) \text{ in } X *_L Y.$$

Put $E = \langle G \cup \{t\} \rangle \subseteq X *_L Y$



One also writes for short

$$E = G *_\alpha = \langle G, t \mid \alpha(h) = t h t^{-1} \text{ for all } h \in H \rangle$$

This is the HNN-Extension of G with respect to α .

Note: if G is torsion free, then E is also torsion free by § 5.7.

HNN-extensions are useful for constructing groups.

9. Thm (Higman-Neumann-Neumann) Let G be a countably infinite, torsion free group. Then there is a (countable) group U , with $G \subseteq U$, such that all non trivial elements in U are conjugate: given $v, w \neq e$, there is u such that $v = u w u^{-1}$.

PF Put $G = \{g_0, g_1, \dots\}$ $g_0 = e$

and $G_0 = G$. We construct groups

$G_0 \subseteq G_1 \subseteq G_2 \subseteq \dots$ such that

g_1, \dots, g_k are conjugate in G_k . Put $G_1 = G_0 = G$.
(U)

Suppose that G_k is constructed. Since

$\langle g_h \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z} \cong \langle g_{k+1} \rangle$, we have an isomorphism

$$\alpha: \langle g_h \rangle \rightarrow \langle g_{k+1} \rangle \quad \alpha(g_h) = g_{k+1}$$

Put $G_{k+1} = G_k^* \alpha$ and $G_\infty^* = \bigcup_{k=0}^{\infty} G_k$.

In G_∞^* , all g_1, g_2, \dots are conjugate.

Moreover G_∞^* is countable and torsion free.

Now put $U_0 = G_\infty^*$, $U_1 = (U_0)^*$,

$U_{k+1} = (U_k)^*$ and finally $U = \bigcup_{k=0}^{\infty} U_k$.

□

10. Theorem (H-N-N) let G be a countable group. Then there is a group K , with $G \subseteq K$, such that $K = \langle a, t \rangle$ is generated by two elements.

pf let $a, b \notin G, a \neq b$, put $F = F(\{a, b\})$

and $G = \{g_0 = e, g_1, \dots\}$. Put

$$A = \langle \{a, bab^{-1}, b^2ab^{-2}, b^3ab^{-3}, \dots\} \rangle \subseteq F \subseteq G * F$$

Claim A is free, with basis $\{a, bab^{-1}, \dots\}$

and $B = \langle \{bg_0, abag_1, a^2ba^2g_2, \dots\} \rangle \subseteq G * F$

is free with basis $\{bg_0, abag_1, \dots\}$ by §3.10

pf of the claim

For A : consider $(b^{n_1} a b^{-n_1})^{l_1} (b^{n_2} a b^{-n_2})^{l_2} \dots (b^{n_r} a b^{-n_r})^{l_r}$
 this is a reduced word in $F(\{a, b\})$
 $= b^{n_1} a^{l_1} b^{n_2 - n_1} a^{l_2} \dots b^{n_r - n_{r-1}} a^{l_r} b^{-n_r}$
 $n_1 \neq n_2$

similarly for B

Consider the isomorphism $\alpha: A \xrightarrow{\cong} B$

$$\alpha(b^n a b^{-n}) = a^n b a^{-n} g_n$$

and the HNN-extension $E = (G *_A F) *_{\alpha}$

□□□□

Put $K = \langle \{a, t\} \rangle \subseteq E$. We have

$bg_0 = b = tat^{-1} \in K$, hence $t, a, b \in K$ for all

$\Rightarrow g_n \in K$ for all n (and $K = E$) □

11. Theorem (B. Neumann) There are

2^{\aleph_0} many non-isomorphic groups with two generators.

PF Put $\mathbb{P} = \{p \in \mathbb{N} \mid p \text{ prime number}\}$, for

$S \subseteq \mathbb{P}$ let $A_S = \bigoplus_{p \in S} \mathbb{Z}/p$. The A_S is

countable abelian, and A_S contains an element

of order $p \in \mathbb{P}$ iff $p \in S$. Consider the

previous construction. The group $A_S * F(\{a, b\})$

contains elements of order p iff $p \in S$,

because $F(\{a, b\})$ is torsion free, cp. §5.7.

The HNN extension constructed in the

previous proof is

$$E = (G *_x F)_\alpha, \quad G = A_S$$

$$K \subseteq E \subseteq (G * F * \mathbb{Z}) *_L (G * F * \mathbb{Z})$$

$$K = \{a, t\}$$

Let E contain elements of order p iff
 $p \in S$. In other words

$$S = \{ p \in \mathbb{P} \mid K \text{ contains elements of order } p \}$$

Now $\# \mathbb{Q}^{\times} = \mathbb{Q}^{\times}$

