

# A Four-Dimensional Simple Algebra with Fractional PI-Exponent

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**Abstract**—Numerical characteristics of identities of finite-dimensional nonassociative algebras are studied. The main result is the construction of a four-dimensional simple unitary algebra with fractional PI-exponent strictly less than its dimension.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper studies identities of nonassociative algebras over a field  $F$  of characteristic zero. All necessary information about identities in algebras can be found in the books [1]–[3].

Each algebra  $A$  can be associated with an integer sequence  $\{c_n(A)\}$ ,  $n = 1, 2, \dots$ , called the *sequence of codimensions* (all necessary definitions are given below). If this sequence grows exponentially, as, e.g., in the finite-dimensional case, there arises the question of the existence of the limit  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt[n]{c_n(A)}$ . It has been proved that such a limit exists and is integer for all associative PI-algebras [4], [5], for finite-dimensional Lie algebras [6], [7], for finite-dimensional Jordan and alternative algebras [8], [9], and for a whole series of other algebras. In the infinite-dimensional case, this limit, called the *PI-exponent*, may take both fractional and integer values even in the class of Lie algebras (see [10]–[12]); in the class of Lie superalgebras, finite-dimensional algebras with fractional exponent have recently been found [13].

In the general case, the PI-exponent of a finite-dimensional algebra does not exceed the dimension of this algebra and can be arbitrarily close to 1 [14], [15]. However, for two-dimensional algebras, the PI-exponent either takes one of the values 2 and 1 (in this case,  $c_n(A) \leq n + 1$ ) or vanishes (in this case,  $c_n(A) = 0$  for all sufficiently large  $n$ ) [16]. For three-dimensional algebras, the question of whether the exponent is integer remains open; however, it is known that either  $c_n(A) \geq 2^n$  asymptotically, or this sequence is polynomially bounded. However, for a unitary three-dimensional algebra, the PI-exponent always exists and is integer [17]. Until recently, the least known dimension of an algebra with fractional exponent was 5 [18], and that of a Lie superalgebra was 7 [13]. In the abstract [19], the existence of a four-dimensional commutative algebra with fractional exponent was announced.

The question of the existence and the value of the PI-exponent of a simple finite-dimensional algebra over an algebraically closed field occupies a special place. In most of the studied classes of algebras (associative [20], Lie [6], Jordan, alternative, and some other classes [8], [9]), the PI-exponent of an algebra is equal to the dimension of this algebra. The first examples of simple algebras for which the PI-exponent is strictly less than dimension were given in [13]. The least dimension of an algebra among those presented in [13] is 17. But the question of whether their PI-exponents are integer remains open.

In this paper, we construct an example of a four-dimensional simple unitary algebra with fractional PI-exponent (Theorem 1).

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## 2. BASIC NOTIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Throughout the paper,  $F$  denotes a field of characteristic zero, and all algebras are considered over  $F$ . We follow the convention of omitting parentheses from left-normed products, i.e., write  $abc$  instead of  $(ab)c$ .

By  $F\{X\}$  we denote a free nonassociative algebra over  $F$  with a countable set  $X$  of generators. Recall that, given an algebra  $A$  over  $F$ , a nonassociative polynomial  $f = f(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  from  $F\{X\}$  is called an *identity of  $A$*  if

$$f(a_1, \dots, a_n) = 0 \quad \text{for any } a_1, \dots, a_n \in A.$$

All identities of  $A$  form an ideal in  $F\{X\}$ , which we denote by  $\text{Id}(A)$ .

Let  $P_n = P_n(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  denote the subspace of  $F\{X\}$  consisting of all multilinear polynomials in  $x_1, \dots, x_n$ . Then  $P_n \cap \text{Id}(A)$  is the subspace of all multilinear identities of the algebra  $A$  in  $n$  variables.

Recall that the  *$n$ th codimension of identities* of an algebra  $A$  (or simply the  *$n$ th codimension of  $A$* ) is defined as

$$c_n(A) = \dim \frac{P_n}{P_n \cap \text{Id}(A)}.$$

In a variety of cases, the sequence  $\{c_n(A)\}$  grows no faster than the exponential of  $n$ , i.e.,

$$c_n(A) < a^n$$

for some  $a > 1$ . In these cases, the sequence of codimensions satisfies the conditions

$$0 \leq \sqrt[n]{c_n(A)} \leq a,$$

which suggests the following definition.

**Definition.** The *lower PI-exponent* of an algebra  $A$  is the lower limit

$$\underline{\text{exp}}(A) = \liminf_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt[n]{c_n(A)}.$$

The upper limit

$$\overline{\text{exp}}(A) = \limsup_{n \rightarrow \infty} \sqrt[n]{c_n(A)}$$

is called the *upper PI-exponent* of  $A$ . If  $\underline{\text{exp}}(A)$  and  $\overline{\text{exp}}(A)$  are equal, i.e., the sequence  $\{\sqrt[n]{c_n(A)}\}$  has an ordinary limit, then this limit is called the *PI-exponent* of the algebra  $A$  and denoted by  $\text{exp}(A)$ ; thus,

$$\text{exp}(A) = \overline{\text{exp}}(A) = \underline{\text{exp}}(A).$$

On the space  $P_n$ , the symmetric group  $S_n$  naturally acts as

$$\sigma f(x_1, \dots, x_n) = f(x_{\sigma(1)}, \dots, x_{\sigma(n)});$$

when endowed with this action,  $P_n$  becomes a module over the group ring  $FS_n$ , or, briefly, an  $S_n$ -module. The intersection  $P_n \cap \text{Id}(A)$  is an  $S_n$ -submodule in  $P_n$ . We recall that the degree of the character  $\chi(M)$  of an  $S_n$ -module  $M$  is the dimension of  $M$ , i.e.,  $\deg \chi(M) = \dim M$ . Moreover, the irreducible characters of such a module, that is, the characters of its irreducible representations, are uniquely determined by partitions  $\lambda \vdash n$  of the number  $n$ , where

$$\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k), \quad \lambda_1 \geq \dots \geq \lambda_k > 0, \quad \lambda_1 + \dots + \lambda_k = n$$

(all necessary information on the representation theory of symmetric groups can be found in [21] and on its application in the theory of identities, in [1], [2]).

Any  $S_n$ -module  $M$  decomposes into a sum of irreducible modules; in terms of characters, this can be written as

$$\chi(M) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \chi_\lambda,$$

where  $\chi_\lambda$  is the character of the irreducible module corresponding to  $\lambda$  and  $m_\lambda$  is its multiplicity in the decomposition of  $M$ . This implies

$$\deg \chi(M) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \deg \chi_\lambda.$$

In particular, for the  $S_n$ -module  $P_n/P_n \cap \text{Id}(A)$ , we obtain

$$\chi_n(A) = \chi\left(\frac{P_n}{P_n \cap \text{Id}(A)}\right) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \chi_\lambda, \tag{1}$$

$$c_n(A) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \deg \chi_\lambda. \tag{2}$$

Decomposition (1) is called the *n*th cocharacter of  $A$ , and relation (2) makes it possible to estimate  $c_n(A)$ . We say that the character  $\chi(M) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \chi_\lambda$  of the module  $M$  lies in a strip of width  $d$  if all partitions  $\lambda$  with nonzero multiplicities  $m_\lambda$  include at most  $d$  parts, i.e.,  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k)$  and  $k \leq d$ . It is known that, for such partitions, we have  $\deg \chi_\lambda \leq d^n$ .

It is also known (see, e.g., [2, Theorem 4.6.2] and [15]) that, if  $A$  is a finite-dimensional  $F$ -algebra with  $\dim A = d$ , then its cocharacter  $\chi_n(A)$  lies in a strip of width  $d$  and, moreover, the sum

$$l_n(A) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda$$

(see (1)), which is called the *n*th colength, is bounded by a polynomial function in  $n$ . To be more precise, according to Theorem 1 from [15], we have

$$l_n(A) \leq d(n + 1)^{d^2+d}. \tag{3}$$

This means, in particular, that, in the case of exponentially growing codimensions, a key role is played by the maximal dimensions  $\deg \chi_\lambda$ . They can be conveniently estimated by using the functions  $\Phi(\lambda)$  defined below, which depend on partitions  $\lambda \vdash n$ . Let

$$\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k) \vdash n, \quad \text{where } k \leq d, \quad \lambda_1 + \dots + \lambda_k = n.$$

We set

$$\Phi(\lambda) = \frac{1}{(\lambda_1/n)^{\lambda_1/n} \dots (\lambda_d/n)^{\lambda_d/n}}.$$

(If  $k$  is strictly less than  $d$ , then the corresponding multipliers  $0^0$  are equal to 1).

In [13], the following relationship between a value of the function  $\Phi(\lambda)$  and the degree  $\deg \chi(\lambda)$  of the corresponding character was mentioned (see Lemma 1). Given  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k) \vdash n$ , where  $n \geq 100$  and  $k \leq d$ , we have

$$\frac{\Phi(\lambda)^n}{n^{d^2+d}} \leq \deg \chi_\lambda \leq n\Phi(\lambda)^n. \tag{4}$$

Now, let  $A$  be any finite-dimensional algebra over  $F$ . Consider its *n*th cocharacter (1) and let  $\Phi_{\max}^{(n)}$  denote the maximal value of  $\Phi(\lambda)$  over all those  $\lambda \vdash n$  for which  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in (1). Combining relations (2), (3), and (4), we obtain the following assertion.

**Lemma 1.** *If  $\dim A = d$ , then*

$$\frac{1}{n^{d^2+d}} (\Phi_{\max}^{(n)})^n \leq c_n(A) \leq (n + 1)^{d^2+d+1} (\Phi_{\max}^{(n)})^n$$

for all  $n \geq 100d$ .

We also need the following property of the function  $\Phi(\lambda)$ . If  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_q)$  and  $\mu = (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_q)$  are two partitions of the same integer  $n$ , then the *Young diagram*  $D_\lambda$  corresponding to the partition  $\lambda$  is the table whose first row contains  $\lambda_1$  boxes, second row contains  $\lambda_2$  boxes, and so on. In a similar way, the diagram  $D_\mu$  corresponding to the partition  $\mu \vdash n$  is constructed. We say  $D_\mu$  is obtained from  $D_\lambda$  by *pushing down one box* if there exist  $i$  and  $j$ ,  $1 \leq i < j \leq q$ , such that  $\mu_i = \lambda_i - 1$ ,  $\mu_j = \lambda_j + 1$ , and  $\mu_p = \lambda_p$  for all other  $1 \leq p \leq q$ . Given  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_q) \vdash n$  and  $\mu = (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_q, 1) \vdash n$ , we say that  $D_\mu$  is obtained from  $D_\lambda$  by pushing down one box if one of the rows in  $D_\mu$  is shorter by one box than the corresponding row in  $D_\lambda$  and all of the remaining rows (except the last one) are of the same length.

**Lemma 2.** *If  $D_\mu$  is obtained from  $D_\lambda$  by pushing down one box, then  $\Phi(\mu) \geq \Phi(\lambda)$ .*

**Proof.** Suppose that  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_q)$  and  $\mu = (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_{q'})$  are two partitions of  $n$  and  $q' = q$  or  $q + 1$ . Then

$$\Phi(\lambda)^n = \frac{n^n}{\lambda_1^{\lambda_1} \dots \lambda_q^{\lambda_q}}. \tag{5}$$

If  $q = q'$ , then the denominator in the analogous expression for  $\Phi(\mu)^n$  is obtained from the denominator in (5) by replacing one product of the form  $a^a b^b$ ,  $a \geq b + 2$ , by  $(a - 1)^{a-1} (b + 1)^{b+1}$ . In this case, we have  $\Phi(\mu)^n \geq \Phi(\lambda)^n$ , because the function  $f(x) = x^x (c - x)^{c-x}$  decreases in the interval  $(c/2; 0)$ . If  $q' = q + 1$ , then we replace the factor  $a^a$  in the denominator in (5) by  $(a - 1)^{a-1} \cdot 1^1 < a^a$  and again obtain  $\Phi(\mu)^n > \Phi(\lambda)^n$ . This inequality, together with  $\Phi(\lambda), \Phi(\mu) > 0$ , implies the assertion of the lemma. □

### 3. A FOUR-DIMENSIONAL ALGEBRA AND ITS COCHARACTER

Consider a four-dimensional vector space  $W$  with basis  $\{e_{-1}, e_0, e_1, e_2\}$ . Let us define multiplication on this space as follows:

- (a)  $e_i e_0 = e_0 e_i = e_i$  for all  $-1 \leq i \leq 2$ ;
- (b)  $e_i e_j = 0$  if  $i, j \neq 0$  and either one of the inequalities  $i > j$  and  $i + j < -1$  or the inequality  $i + j > 2$  holds;
- (c)  $e_i e_j = e_{i+j}$  otherwise.

It is easy to see that  $W$  is a simple algebra with unit  $e_0$  and that the decomposition

$$W = W_{-1} \oplus W_0 \oplus W_1 \oplus W_2,$$

where  $W_i = \langle e_i \rangle$  for  $i = -1, \dots, 2$ , is a  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading on  $W$ .

Consider the cocharacter

$$\chi_n(W) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \chi_\lambda \tag{6}$$

of the algebra  $W$ . Since  $\dim W = 4$ , this cocharacter lies in a strip of width 4, i.e.,  $\lambda_5 = 0$  for any partition  $\lambda \vdash n$ , provided that  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in (6).

Recall that a *Young tableau*  $T_\lambda$  is a diagram  $D_\lambda$  whose boxes are filled in with the numbers  $1, \dots, n$ . Any irreducible module over the group algebra  $R = FS_n$  is isomorphic to the minimal left ideal  $Re_{T_\lambda}$ , where  $e_{T_\lambda}$  is the element  $R$  defined as follows.

We refer to the subgroup of all permutations in  $S_n$  which leave the symbols  $1, \dots, n$  in their rows as the *row stabilizer* and denote this subgroup by  $R_{T_\lambda}$ ; to the subgroup which leaves these symbols in their columns we refer as the *column stabilizer* and denote it by  $C_{T_\lambda}$ . We set

$$R(T_\lambda) = \sum_{\sigma \in R_{T_\lambda}} \sigma, \quad C(T_\lambda) = \sum_{\tau \in C_{T_\lambda}} (\text{sgn } \tau) \tau, \quad e_{T_\lambda} = R(T_\lambda)C(T_\lambda).$$

The element  $e_{T_\lambda}$  is a quasi-idempotent of the group ring  $FS_n$ , i.e.,  $e_{T_\lambda}^2 = \alpha e_{T_\lambda}$ ,  $\alpha \neq 0$ , and  $FS_n e_{T_\lambda}$  is an irreducible  $S_n$ -module with character  $\chi_\lambda$ . Moreover, if  $M$  is an  $FS_n$ -module and

$$\chi(M) = \sum_{\lambda \vdash n} m_\lambda \chi_\lambda,$$

then  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  if and only if  $e_{T_\lambda} M \neq 0$ .

Now, let  $f$  be a multilinear polynomial of degree  $n$  generating an irreducible  $FS_n$ -submodule  $M$  in  $P_n$  with character  $\chi_\lambda$ . We can assume that  $e_{T_\lambda} f \neq 0$  for some Young tableau  $T_\lambda$ . Then the polynomial  $g = C(T_\lambda)f$  generates  $M$  as an  $R$ -module as well. The variables of  $g$  are divided into  $m$  disjoint subsets as

$$\{x_1, \dots, x_n\} = X_1 \cup \dots \cup X_m,$$

where  $m$  is the number of columns in the Young diagram  $D_\lambda$  and each  $X_j$  is the set of variables whose numbers are written in the  $j$ th column. Moreover,  $g$  is alternating with respect to each of the sets  $X_1, \dots, X_m$ . In other words, any irreducible  $FS_n$ -submodule of  $P_n$  with character  $\chi_\lambda$  is generated by a multilinear polynomial depending on  $m$  disjoint skew-symmetric sets of variables of cardinalities  $\lambda'_1, \dots, \lambda'_m$ , where  $\lambda' = (\lambda'_1, \dots, \lambda'_m)$  is the partition conjugate to  $\lambda$  (i.e.,  $\lambda'_1, \dots, \lambda'_m$  are the heights of the columns of  $D_\lambda$ ).

To obtain stronger (than  $\lambda_5 = 0$ ) constraints on the cocharacter of  $W$ , we introduce yet another numerical characteristic of partitions. Let  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_k) \vdash n$ . We write  $-1$  in all boxes of the first row,  $0$  in all boxes of the second, etc., so that all boxes of the  $k$ th row are filled in with  $k - 2$ . We define the *weight of the diagram  $D_\lambda$*  as the sum of all numbers in  $D_\lambda$ . We also refer to this number as the *weight of the partition  $\lambda$*  and denote it by  $wt(\lambda)$ . In other words,

$$wt(\lambda) = \sum_{i=1}^k (i - 2)\lambda_i.$$

**Lemma 3.** *If  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in the decomposition (6), then*

- $\lambda_5 = 0$ ;
- $wt(\lambda) \leq 2$ , i.e.,  $\lambda_1 - \lambda_3 - 2\lambda_4 \geq -2$ .

**Proof.** We have already proved the equality  $\lambda_5 = 0$ . Let us prove the second assertion. Suppose that  $m_\lambda \neq 0$ , i.e., there exists an irreducible  $FS_n$ -submodule in  $P_n$  with character  $\chi_\lambda$  which is not contained in the ideal of identities of  $W$ . As mentioned above, this means that there exists a multilinear polynomial  $g = g(x_1, \dots, x_n)$  which is alternating with respect to the variables from each of the columns  $T_\lambda$  and does not vanish identically on  $W$ . Hence there exists a permutation  $\varphi: X \rightarrow \{e_{-1}, e_0, e_1, e_2\}$  for which  $\varphi(g) \neq 0$ . By virtue of the antisymmetry of  $g$ , instead of variables from one column, we must substitute different basis elements of the algebra  $W$ . In particular, if  $x_{i_1}, \dots, x_{i_4}$  are variables from the same column of height 4, then the total weight of the elements  $\varphi(x_{i_1}), \dots, \varphi(x_{i_4})$  in the  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading of  $W$  is equal to  $-1 + 0 + 1 + 2 = 2$ . Therefore, the least possible weight of  $\varphi(g)$  in the  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading is

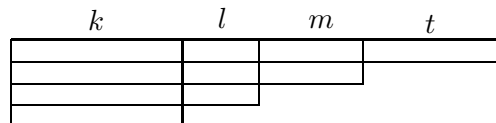
$$wt(\lambda) = -\lambda_1 + \lambda_3 + 2\lambda_4.$$

Since all components of the algebra  $W_k$  with  $k \geq 3$  are zero, it follows that  $-\lambda_1 + \lambda_3 + 2\lambda_4 \leq 2$ , which proves the lemma. □

In what follows, we need a sufficient condition for the multiplicity  $m_\lambda$  to not vanish. Consider a partition  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \lambda_3, \lambda_4)$ . Let us rewrite it in the form

$$\lambda = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k).$$

The diagram of this partition has the form



Here  $n = 4k + 3l + 2m + t$ , the weight of the partition  $\lambda$  is equal to  $-m - t + 2k$ , and the necessary condition for  $m_\lambda$  to be nonzero will be

$$m + t \geq 2k - 2.$$

**Lemma 4.** *If  $m + t \geq 2k$  and  $m \leq 2k$ , then  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in the decomposition (6).*

**Proof.** To prove the lemma, it suffices to construct a multilinear polynomial  $f$  of degree  $n$  depending on

- $k$  alternating sets of variables  $\{x_1^{(i)}, \dots, x_4^{(i)}\}$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq k$ ;
- $l$  alternating sets  $\{y_1^{(i)}, y_2^{(i)}, y_3^{(i)}\}$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq l$ ;
- $m$  alternating sets  $\{z_1^{(i)}, z_2^{(i)}\}$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq m$ ;
- $t$  variables  $u_1^{(i)}$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq t$ ,

and such that the symmetrization of this polynomial with respect to the sets

$$\{x_1^{i_1}, y_1^{i_2}, z_1^{i_3}, u_1^{i_4}\}, \quad \{x_2^{i_1}, y_2^{i_2}, z_2^{i_3}\}, \quad \{x_3^{i_1}, y_3^{i_2}\}, \quad \{x_4^{i_1}\},$$

where  $1 \leq i_1 \leq k$ ,  $1 \leq i_2 \leq l$ ,  $1 \leq i_3 \leq m$ , and  $1 \leq i_4 \leq t$ , yields a polynomial not vanishing identically on  $W$ .

It is convenient to label variables in alternating sets by the same mark over the symbols of these variables. For example,

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{x}_1 \bar{x}_2 \bar{x}_3 &= \sum_{\sigma \in S_3} (\text{sgn } \sigma) x_{\sigma(1)} x_{\sigma(2)} x_{\sigma(3)}, \\ \bar{a}_1 \bar{b}_1 \bar{a}_2 \bar{b}_2 &= a_1 b_1 a_2 b_2 - a_1 b_2 a_2 b_1 - a_2 b_1 a_1 b_2 + a_2 b_2 a_1 b_1, \\ (\bar{x}\bar{x})(\bar{y}\bar{y}) &= (xx)(yy) - (yx)(xy) - (xy)(yx) + (yy)(xx). \end{aligned}$$

We use this convention not only for variables but also for elements of the algebra  $W$ . For instance,

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{e}_{-1}(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2) &= e_{-1}(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2) - e_1(\bar{e}_{-1} \bar{e}_2) - e_2(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_{-1}) = 0 - e_1(e_{-1} e_2) + e_2(e_{-1} e_1) \\ &= -e_1^2 + e_2 e_0 = -e_2 + e_2 = 0. \end{aligned}$$

First, we construct an expression alternating with respect to  $e_{-1}$ ,  $e_0$ ,  $e_1$ , and  $e_2$  and contains two occurrences of the basis element  $e_{-1}$ . We set

$$f_1 = e_{-1}[\bar{e}_{-1}((\bar{e}_0 e_{-1})(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2))].$$

This element is the polynomial

$$x_{-1}[\bar{x}_{-1}((\bar{x}_0 x_{-1})(\bar{x}_1 \bar{x}_2))]$$

in the variables  $x_{-1}$ ,  $x_0$ ,  $x_1$ , and  $x_2$ , which is equal to

$$\begin{aligned} f_1 &= e_{-1}[\bar{e}_{-1}((e_0 e_{-1})(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2))] = e_{-1}[\bar{e}_{-1}(e_{-1}(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2))] \\ &= e_{-1}[e_{-1}(e_{-1}(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_2)) - e_1(e_{-1}(\bar{e}_{-1} \bar{e}_2)) - e_2(e_{-1}(\bar{e}_1 \bar{e}_{-1}))] \\ &= e_{-1}[0 - e_1(e_{-1}(e_{-1} e_2)) + e_2(e_{-1}(e_{-1} e_1))] \\ &= e_{-1}[-e_1(e_{-1} e_1) + e_2(e_{-1} e_0)] \\ &= e_{-1}[-e_1 e_0 + e_2 e_{-1} = e_{-1}[-e_1 + 0] = -e_0. \end{aligned}$$

Let

$$g(x_{-1}, x_0, x_1, x_2, y, z) = y[\bar{x}_{-1}((\bar{x}_0 z)(\bar{x}_1 \bar{x}_2))].$$

Then the left-normed degree  $f_1^k$  is the value of a symmetrization of the polynomial

$$g(x_{-1}^{(1)}, x_0^{(1)}, x_1^{(1)}, x_2^{(1)}, y_1^{(1)}, z_1^{(1)}) \cdots g(x_{-1}^{(k)}, x_0^{(k)}, x_1^{(k)}, x_2^{(k)}, y_1^{(k)}, z_1^{(k)}),$$

which is alternating with respect to  $\{x_{-1}^{(i)}, x_0^{(i)}, x_1^{(i)}, x_2^{(i)}\}$ ,  $i = 1, \dots, k$ . The symmetrization is over the four sets

$$\{x_{-1}^{(1)}, \dots, x_{-1}^{(k)}, y_1^{(1)}, z_1^{(1)}, \dots, y_1^{(k)}, z_1^{(k)}\}, \quad \{x_0^{(1)}, \dots, x_0^{(k)}\},$$

$$\{x_1^{(1)}, \dots, x_1^{(k)}\}, \quad \{x_2^{(1)}, \dots, x_2^{(k)}\}.$$

Similarly, the 3-alternated polynomial takes the value

$$f_2 = \bar{e}_{-1}\bar{e}_0\bar{e}_1 = (\bar{e}_{-1}\bar{e}_0)e_1 + (\bar{e}_0\bar{e}_1)e_{-1} + (\bar{e}_1\bar{e}_{-1})e_0 = 0 + 0 - e_{-1}e_1e_0 = -e_0.$$

We also set

$$f_3 = e_{-1}[\bar{e}_{-1}((\bar{e}_0\tilde{e}_{-1})(\bar{e}_1\bar{e}_2))]\tilde{e}_0.$$

This expression contains the alternating set  $e_{-1}, e_0, e_1, e_2$  labeled by an overbar and the alternating set  $e_{-1}, e_0$  labeled by a tilde. Since  $W_{+e_{-1}} = 0$ , where  $W_+ = W_1 \oplus W_2$ , it follows that

$$f_3 = f_1e_0 = f_1 = -e_0.$$

Finally, let

$$f_4 = \bar{e}_{-1}[\bar{e}_{-1}((\bar{e}_0\tilde{e}_{-1})(\bar{e}_1\bar{e}_2))]\tilde{e}_0\bar{e}_0.$$

Here we have one alternating set  $\{e_{-1}, e_0, e_1, e_2\}$  and two alternating sets  $\{e_{-1}, e_0\}$ . Let

$$a = [\bar{e}_{-1}((\bar{e}_0\tilde{e}_{-1})(\bar{e}_1\bar{e}_2))]\tilde{e}_0.$$

Then the degree of  $a$  in the  $\mathbb{Z}$ -grading is 1; therefore, it follows from the condition  $W_{+e_{-1}} = 0$  and the calculations performed above for  $f_1$  that  $a = -e_1$  and

$$f_4 = e_{-1}(ae_0) - e_0(ae_{-1}) = e_{-1}a = -e_0.$$

First, consider the special case where  $m = 2k, t = 0$ . We set

$$f = f(\underbrace{e_{-1}, \dots, e_{-1}}_{\alpha}, \underbrace{e_0, \dots, e_0}_{\beta}, \underbrace{e_1, \dots, e_1}_{\gamma}, \underbrace{e_2, \dots, e_2}_{\delta}) = (f_2^l)(f_4)^k. \tag{7}$$

In the expression for  $f$ , the element  $e_{-1}$  occurs in  $k$  alternating sets of order 4, in  $2k = m$  alternating sets of order 2, and in  $l$  alternating sets of order 3. There are no occurrences of  $e_{-1}$  of nonalterable type in  $f$ . The total degree  $\alpha$  of  $f$  in  $e_{-1}$  is equal to  $k + l + m$ . The element  $e_0$  occurs  $k$  times in 4-alternated sets,  $m = 2k$  times in 2-alternated sets, and  $l$  times in 3-alternated sets; thus, the total number of occurrences of  $e_0$  is  $k + l + m$ . Finally,  $e_1$  occurs in  $k$  alternating sets of order 4 and in  $l$  alternating sets of order 3, and  $e_2$  occurs in  $k$  alternating sets of order 4. This means that  $f$  is a value of the polynomial generating the irreducible module corresponding to the partition

$$\lambda = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k), \quad \text{where } m = 2k, \quad t = 0.$$

Therefore,  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  for this partition, because  $f = (-e_0)^{k+l} = \pm e_0$ .

Consider the more general case in which  $m = 2k$  and  $t > 0$ . We set  $n_0 = n - t$  and construct the polynomial  $f$  specified in (7) for the partition

$$\lambda_0 = (k + l + m, k + l + m, k + l, k) \vdash n_0.$$

We have

$$g = f(\underbrace{e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0}_{\alpha}, e_0, \dots, e_2) \underbrace{(e_{-1} + e_0) \cdots (e_{-1} + e_0)}_t$$

$$= f(e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0, e_0, \dots, e_2) + f',$$

where  $f' = tf(e_{-1}, \dots, e_{-1}, e_0, \dots, e_2)e_{-1} \in W_{-1}$ , because  $(W_{-1} \oplus W_1 \oplus W_2)e_{-1} = 0$ . Moreover,

$$f(e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0, e_0, \dots, e_2) = f(e_{-1}, \dots, e_{-1}, e_0, \dots, e_2) + f'',$$

where  $f'' \in W_1 \oplus W_2$ . It follows that  $g = \pm e_0 + f' + f'' \neq 0$ , and  $g$  is a value of the polynomial generating the irreducible  $FS_n$ -module with character  $\chi_\lambda$ . Therefore,  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in (6).

Now, suppose that  $m = 2q < 2k$  and  $t \neq 0$ . Consider the product

$$(f_1)^{k-q}(f_2)^l(f_4)^q = f_0 = f_0(\underbrace{e_{-1}, \dots, e_{-1}}_\alpha, \underbrace{e_0, \dots, e_0}_\beta, \underbrace{e_1, \dots, e_1}_\gamma, \underbrace{e_2, \dots, e_2}_\delta).$$

As above, we have  $\delta = k$ ,  $e_2$  occurs in the alternating sets of order 4,  $\gamma = k + l$ ,  $\beta = k + l + m$ , and  $e_1$  and  $e_0$  occur in alternating sets; moreover,  $e_1$  occurs  $k$  times in sets of order 4 and  $l$  times in sets of order 3. The numbers of occurrences of  $e_0$  in sets of orders 4, 3, and 2 are  $k$ ,  $l$ , and  $m$ , respectively. The element  $e_{-1}$  occurs in alternating sets of orders 4, 3, and 2 as well, and the numbers of occurrences are  $k - q + q = k$ ,  $l$ , and  $2q = m$ , respectively. In addition, this element  $e_{-1}$  also occurs  $2(k - q)$  times outside alternating sets at the expense of the factor  $f_1^{k-q}$ . In particular,

$$\alpha = k + l + m + t_0,$$

where  $t_0 = 2(k - q)$ , i.e.,  $m + t_0 = 2k$ .

Consider the expressions

$$f'_0 = f_0(\underbrace{e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0}_\alpha, \underbrace{e_0, \dots, e_0}_{\beta=k+l+m}, \underbrace{e_1, \dots, e_1}_{\gamma=k+l}, \underbrace{e_2, \dots, e_2}_{\delta=k}),$$

and

$$f = f_0^l \underbrace{(e_{-1} + e_0) \dots (e_{-1} + e_0)}_{t-t_0}.$$

As in the preceding case, we have

$$f = f_0 + f' + f'',$$

where  $f_0 = \pm e_0$ ,  $f' \in W_{-1}$ , and  $f'' \in W_+$ , i.e.,  $f \neq 0$ . The element  $f$  is a nonzero value of the polynomial corresponding to the partition

$$\lambda = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k) \quad \text{with} \quad m = 2q < 2k.$$

Therefore, for such partitions  $\lambda$ , the multiplicity in (6) does not vanish either.

Finally, for odd  $m = 2q + 1 < 2k$ , we take the product

$$f_0 = f_1^{k-q-1} f_2^l f_3 f_4^q,$$

replace  $e_{-1}$  by  $e_{-1} + e_0$  in this product, and set

$$f = f_0(e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0, e_0, \dots, e_0, \dots, e_2, \dots, e_2) \underbrace{(e_{-1} + e_0) \dots (e_{-1} + e_0)}_{t-t_0},$$

where  $t_0 = 2(k - q) - 1$ . In the expression for  $f_0$ , the element  $e'_{-1} = e_{-1} + e_0$  occurs in  $k$  four-element alternating sets,  $l$  three-element sets, and  $m = 2q + 1$  two-element sets; outside the alternated sets, this element occurs  $t$  times. For  $e_0$ ,  $e_1$ , and  $e_2$ , the same conditions as in the preceding case hold. Since  $f_0 = \pm e_0$  and  $f = f_0 + f'$ , where  $f' \in W_{-1} \oplus W_1 \oplus W_2$ , it follows that  $f \neq 0$ . In other words, the multiplicity  $m_\lambda$  is also nonzero for  $\lambda = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k)$  with odd  $m < 2k$ , provided that  $m + t \geq 2k$ . This proves the lemma for  $k \neq 0$ .

If  $k = 0$ , then  $m = 0$ , and the partition  $\lambda$  has the form  $\lambda = (l + t, l, l)$ . For this partition, the multilinear polynomial is constructed in a similar way. First, we take the polynomial

$$f = f_2^l = f(e_{-1}, \dots, e_{-1}, e_0, \dots, e_0, e_1, \dots, e_1)$$

of degree  $l$  in each of the basis elements  $e_{-1}$ ,  $e_0$ ,  $e_1$ . Then, we set

$$f' = f(e_{-1} + e_0, \dots, e_{-1} + e_0, e_0, \dots, e_1) \underbrace{(e_{-1} + e_0) \dots (e_{-1} + e_0)}_t.$$

As previously,  $f'$  is not an identity in  $W$  and generates an  $S_n$ -module with character  $\chi_\lambda$ . □



4. ESTIMATES OF THE PI-EXPONENT

The simplicity of the algebra  $W$  implies the existence of its PI-exponent (see [13, Theorem 3]). To estimate the PI-exponent and, in particular, prove that it is noninteger, we introduce the following quantity.

Let  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_4) \vdash n$ , and let  $m_\lambda$  be the multiplicity of  $\lambda$  in the cocharacter (6). We set

$$a_n = \max\{\Phi(\lambda) \mid m_\lambda \neq 0\}.$$

By virtue of Lemma 1, we have

$$\overline{\exp(A)} = \overline{\lim}_{n \rightarrow \infty} a_n, \quad \underline{\exp(A)} = \underline{\lim}_{n \rightarrow \infty} a_n \tag{8}$$

for any four-dimensional algebra.

Consider the sequence  $\{a_n\}$  for the algebra  $W$ . According to (8) and [13, Theorem 3], the sequence  $\{a_n\}$  has a limit as  $n \rightarrow \infty$ . We need one more property of this sequence.

**Lemma 5.** *Let  $a_n = \Phi(\lambda^{(0)})$ . Then the partition  $\lambda^{(0)}$  can be chosen so that  $wt(\lambda^{(0)}) \geq 0$  for sufficiently large  $n$ .*

**Proof.** Let  $\lambda^{(0)}$  be one of the points of maximum of the function  $\Phi(\lambda)$  which determine  $a_n$ . It can be assumed that, for all such  $\lambda \vdash n$  with  $\Phi(\lambda) = a_n$ , this partition is of maximum weight. As above, we write  $\lambda^{(0)}$  in the form

$$\lambda^{(0)} = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k).$$

Suppose that  $wt(\lambda^{(0)}) = -m - t + 2k < 0$ , i.e.,  $m + t > 2k$ .

First, note that  $k \neq 0$  for  $\lambda^{(0)}$ . Indeed, it is easy to see that  $\Phi(\lambda^{(0)}) \leq 3$  for  $k = 0$ . At the same time, for the partition  $\lambda = (3p, p, p, p)$ , we have

$$\Phi(\lambda) = \left( \left( \frac{1}{2} \right)^{1/2} \left( \frac{1}{6} \right)^{3/6} \right)^{-1} = \sqrt{12} > 3.4.$$

Since the sequence  $\{a_n\}$  converges and, for any  $n$ , there exists a  $p$  with  $|n - 6p| \leq 5$ , it follows that  $a_n > 3$  for all sufficiently large  $n$ , and  $k \neq 0$ .

Now, note that, transferring one box in the diagram  $D_\lambda$  from the second row to the third, we obtain  $D_\mu$ , where

$$\mu = (k' + l' + m' + t', k' + l' + m', k' + l', k') \quad \text{with} \quad k' = k, \quad t' = t + 1, \quad m' = m - 2.$$

Therefore, either  $m' - 2k' > 0$  (in which case  $m' + t' - 2k' > 0$ ),  $m' - 2k' = 0$ , or  $-1$ . In the last two cases, we have  $m' + t' - 2k' \geq 0$ . Thus, for  $m \geq 2$ , pushing down one or several boxes, we obtain a partition  $\mu$  of higher weight for which  $\Phi(\mu) \geq \Phi(\lambda^{(0)})$  by Lemma 2. Moreover,  $\mu$  satisfies the assumptions of Lemma 4 and, therefore,  $m_\mu \neq 0$  in (6). The maximality of the weight of  $\lambda^{(0)}$  implies  $m \leq 1$ .

Thus,  $t \geq 2k \geq 2$ , and, moving one box of  $D_{\lambda^{(0)}}$  from the first row to the second, we obtain a diagram  $D_\mu$  for which  $\Phi(\mu) \geq \Phi(\lambda^{(0)})$  and  $wt(\mu) > wt(\lambda^{(0)})$ . Moreover,  $\mu$  again satisfies the conditions of Lemma 4, and  $m_\mu \neq 0$ . It follows that  $m + t - 2k \leq 0$  for  $\lambda^{(0)}$ , which completes the proof of the lemma. □

We have already mentioned that if a diagram  $D_\mu$  is obtained from a diagram  $D_\lambda$  by pushing down one box, then  $\Phi(\mu) \geq \Phi(\lambda)$ . Now we estimate this deviation.

**Lemma 6.** *Let  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_q)$  and  $\mu = (\mu_1, \dots, \mu_{q'})$  be two partitions of  $n$  with  $q' = q$  or  $q + 1$ . Suppose that  $D_\mu$  is obtained from  $D_\lambda$  by pushing down one box. Then*

$$\Phi(\lambda) \geq \frac{1}{n^{(q^2+3q+4)/n}} \Phi(\mu).$$

**Proof.** The procedure of pushing down a box can be performed in two steps. First, we cut out a box from  $D_\lambda$  and obtain  $D_{\lambda'}$ , where  $\lambda' \vdash n - 1$ ; then, attaching one box to  $D_{\lambda'}$ , we obtain  $D_\mu$ . According to Lemma 6.2.4 in [2], we have

$$\deg \chi_{\lambda'} \leq \deg \chi_\lambda \leq n \deg \chi_{\lambda'}, \quad \deg \chi_{\lambda'} \leq \deg \chi_\mu \leq n \deg \chi_{\lambda'},$$

which readily implies

$$\deg \chi_\lambda \geq \frac{1}{n} \deg \chi_\mu. \tag{9}$$

Using (9) and (4), we obtain

$$\Phi(\lambda)^n \geq \frac{1}{n} \deg \chi_\lambda \geq \frac{1}{n^2} \deg \chi_\mu \geq \frac{1}{n^{(q+1)^2+q+1+2}} \Phi(\mu)^n,$$

which proves the lemma. □

Below we prove yet another relation between the values of the function  $\Phi$  at various partitions.

**Lemma 7.** *Suppose that the Young diagram of a partition*

$$\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_d) \vdash (n - 1)$$

*is obtained from a diagram  $D_\mu$  by deleting one box. Then*

$$\Phi(\lambda) \leq n^{(d^2+d+2)/n} \Phi(\mu)$$

*for  $n \geq d$ .*

**Proof.** By virtue of (4), we have

$$\Phi(\lambda)^{n-1} \leq (n - 1)^{d^2+d} \deg \chi_\lambda \leq n^{d^2+d} \deg \chi_\lambda, \quad \deg \chi_\mu \leq n \Phi(\mu)^n.$$

On the other hand,  $\deg \chi_\lambda \leq \deg \chi_\mu$  according to [2, Lemma 6.2.4]. Since the maximum value of  $\Phi(\lambda)$  is  $d$ , it follows that

$$\Phi(\lambda) \leq n^{(d^2+d+2)/n} \Phi(\mu). \quad \square$$

Let us define one more sequence related to  $W$ . For  $n \geq 6$ , we set

$$b_n = \max\{\Phi(\lambda) \mid \lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_4) \vdash n, m_\lambda \neq 0, \lambda_1 - \lambda_3 = 2\lambda_4\}$$

if  $n$  has a partition  $\lambda$  with  $\lambda_1 - \lambda_3 = 2\lambda_4$  for which  $m_\lambda \neq 0$  in (6). Otherwise, we set  $b_n = \min\{b_{n-1}, a_n\}$ . Note that, according to Lemma 4, if  $n = 6k$ , then the partition  $\lambda = (3k, k, k, k)$  satisfies the required conditions.

**Lemma 8.** *The following relations hold:*

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} b_n = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} a_n = \exp(W).$$

**Proof.** According to [13, Theorem 3], the PI-exponent of any finite-dimensional simple algebra exists; therefore, the limit  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} a_n = \exp(W)$  exists as well, as follows from (8). Thus, to prove the lemma, it suffices to find a function  $\psi = \psi(n)$  such that  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \psi(n) = 1$  and

$$\psi(n)a_n \leq b_n \leq a_n \tag{10}$$

for all sufficiently large  $n$ .

Fix  $n$  and take a partition  $\lambda \vdash n$  for which  $\Phi(\lambda) = a_n$ . By Lemma 5, we can choose  $\lambda$  so that  $wt(\lambda) \geq 0$ ; by Lemma 3,  $wt(\lambda)$  is then equal to 0, 1, or 2.

If  $wt(\lambda) = 0$ , then  $b_n = a_n$ . Suppose that  $wt(\lambda) = 1$ . Let us write  $\lambda$  as

$$\lambda = (k + l + m + t, k + l + m, k + l, k).$$

Then  $m + t = 2k - 1$ . If  $m \neq 0$ , then we can transfer one box from the second to the first row in the diagram  $D_\lambda$  and obtain a diagram  $D_\mu$  for  $\mu = (k + l + m' + t', k + l + m', k + l, k)$ ,  $m' = m - 1$ ,  $t' = t + 2$ , with  $wt(\mu) = 0$ . Then, by Lemma 4, the multiplicity of  $\mu$  in  $\chi_n(W)$  is nonzero. As mentioned in the proof of Lemma 5, the partition  $\lambda$  has a nonzero component  $k$ . Therefore, by virtue of Lemma 6, we have

$$b_n \geq \Phi(\mu) \geq \frac{\Phi(\lambda)}{n^{32/n}} = \frac{a_n}{n^{32/n}}. \tag{11}$$

If  $m = 0$  but  $l > 0$  and  $t > 0$ , then a partition  $\mu$  with weight zero can be obtained by moving one box of  $D_\lambda$  from the third to the second row, and we again obtain inequality (11) for  $b_n$ . The case where  $m = 0$ ,  $l > 0$ , and  $t = 0$  is impossible, because  $m + t = 2k - 1$ .

The only partition  $\lambda$  with  $wt(\lambda) = 1$  for which the transfers specified above cannot be done is  $(3k - 1, k, k, k)$ . But Lemma 7 implies that, for this  $\lambda$ , we have

$$\Phi(\lambda) \leq n^{22/n} \Phi(\mu), \tag{12}$$

where  $\mu = (3k, k, k, k)$ . Since  $\Phi(\mu) = \sqrt{12} < 3.48$ , we obtain

$$\Phi(\lambda) < n^{22/n} \cdot 3.48.$$

Note that any partition of the form  $\rho = (3q, 3q, q, q)$  satisfies the assumptions of Lemma 4, and

$$\Phi(\rho) = \frac{8}{\sqrt[4]{27}} > 3.5;$$

hence  $\Phi(\lambda)$  cannot satisfy inequality (12) for sufficiently large  $n$ , i.e.,  $\lambda \neq (3k - 1, k, k, k)$ , and if  $wt(\lambda) = 1$ , then inequality (11) holds.

Now, suppose that  $wt(\lambda) = 2$ . Then we twice move a box one row upward in the diagram  $D_\lambda$ . This cannot be done only if either  $\lambda = (3k - 2, k, k, k)$ ,  $\lambda = (q, q, q, 1)$ , or the first transfer of one box upward results in the partition  $\mu = (3k - 1, k, k, k)$ . The first and the third possibility are excluded for the same reason as in the case of  $wt(\lambda) = 1$ , namely, because such partitions cannot maximize  $\Phi(\lambda)$ ; the second possibility cannot occur because if  $\lambda = (q, q, q, 1) \vdash n$ ,  $\mu = (q, q, q) \vdash (n - 1)$ , and  $\Phi(\mu) = 3$ , then  $\deg \chi_\lambda \leq n \deg \chi_\mu$ .

In the remaining cases, twice applying Lemma 6, we obtain

$$b_n \geq \frac{a_n}{n^{64/n}}. \tag{13}$$

Relations (11) and (13) imply the required condition (10), which proves the lemma. □

To state and prove the main results of this paper, we extend the domain of the function  $\Phi$ . For any  $0 \leq x_1, \dots, x_4 \leq 1$ , we set

$$\Phi(x_1, \dots, x_4) = \frac{1}{x_1^{x_1} \dots x_4^{x_4}}. \tag{14}$$

Inside the domain of  $\Phi$ , consider the closed subset  $T$  determined by the conditions

$$\begin{cases} x_1 \geq x_2 \geq x_3 \geq x_4, \\ x_1 + x_2 + x_3 + x_4 = 1, \\ x_1 - x_3 = 2x_4. \end{cases} \tag{15}$$

**Theorem 1.** *The PI-exponent of the algebra  $W$  exists and is equal to*

$$\exp(W) = \max\{\Phi(x_1, \dots, x_4) \mid (x_1, \dots, x_4) \in T\}. \tag{16}$$

*In particular,  $\exp(W) \approx 3.610718614$ .*

**Proof.** The existence of the exponent has already been mentioned and follows from the simplicity of  $W$ . We have

$$\exp(W) = b = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} b_n$$

by Lemma 8. It remains to show that  $b = M$ , where

$$M = \max\{\Phi(x_1, \dots, x_4) \mid (x_1, \dots, x_4) \in T\}.$$

Let  $Z = (z_1, \dots, z_4)$  be a point of maximum of  $\Phi$  on  $T$ . Clearly, we can choose a point  $A = (a_1, \dots, a_4) \in T$  with rational coefficients arbitrarily close to  $Z$ . Let  $m$  denote the common denominator of the rational numbers  $a_1, \dots, a_4$ . Then  $\lambda_1 = a_1 m, \dots, \lambda_4 = a_4 m$  are nonnegative integers, and  $\lambda_1 \geq \dots \geq \lambda_4$ . In other words,  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_4)$  is a partition of  $m$  satisfying the condition  $\lambda_1 - \lambda_3 = 2\lambda_4$ . Moreover, for any  $t = 1, 2, \dots$ , the partition  $t\lambda = (t\lambda_1, \dots, t\lambda_4)$  of  $n_t = tm$  satisfies the same condition. It follows that

$$b_{n_t} \geq \Phi(t\lambda) = \Phi(\lambda). \quad (17)$$

Since the sequence  $\{b_i\}$  converges and  $\Phi(\lambda)$  in (17) can be made arbitrarily close to  $M$ , it follows that  $b \geq M$ . The reverse inequality is obvious. Thus, we have proved the relation  $b = M$ .

To fully complete the proof, we must justify the approximate estimate of  $\exp(W)$ . In [11], an example of an infinite-dimensional Lie algebra  $L$  for which

$$3.1 < \underline{\exp(L)} \leq \overline{\exp(L)} < 3.9$$

was constructed. In the recent paper [12], it was proved that the ordinary PI-exponent of  $L$  exists, i.e.,  $\underline{\exp(L)} = \overline{\exp(L)}$ . Moreover, it turned out that

$$\exp(L) = \max\{\Phi(x_1, \dots, x_4) \mid (x_1, \dots, x_4) \in T\},$$

where  $\Phi$  is the function defined by (14) and the domain  $T$  is determined by (15). It was also shown in [12] that

$$M = \Phi(\beta_1, \dots, \beta_4),$$

where  $\beta_4$  is a positive root of the equation  $16t^3 - 24t^2 + 11t - 1 = 0$ ,  $\beta_4 \approx 0.276953179$ , and

$$\beta_3 = 2\beta_4 - 4\beta_4^2, \quad \beta_2 = \frac{\beta_3^2}{\beta_4}, \quad \beta_1 = \frac{\beta_3^3}{\beta_4^2}.$$

This implies

$$\exp(W) = \exp(L) \approx 3.610718614,$$

which completes the proof of the theorem.  $\square$

**Corollary 1.** *There exist finite-dimensional simple unitary algebras with fractional exponent strictly less than their dimension.*

**Corollary 2.** *The least dimension of a unitary algebra with fractional PI-exponent is 4.*

**Proof.** Theorem 1 implies the existence of four-dimensional unitary algebras with fractional PI-exponent. The nonexistence of such algebras in dimensions 2 and 3 follows from results of [17].  $\square$

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