ON GENERALIZED BALANCING SEQUENCES

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Abstract. Let \( R_i = R(A, B, R_0, R_1) \) be a second order linear recurrence sequence. In the present paper we prove that any sequence \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, R_1) \) with \( D = A^2 + 4B > 0, (A, B) \neq (0, 1) \) is not a balancing sequence.

1. Introduction

In 1999, A. Behera and G. K. Panda \cite{3} defined the notion of balancing numbers. A positive integer \( n \) is called a balancing number if

\[
1 + 2 + \cdots + (n - 1) = (n + 1) + (n + 2) + \cdots + (n + k)
\]

for some \( k \in \mathbb{N} \). Then \( k \) is called the balancer of \( n \). It is easy to see that 6, 35, and 204 are balancing numbers with balancers 2, 14, and 84, respectively. In \cite{3} the authors proved that balancing numbers fulfill the following recurrence relation

\[
B_{n+1} = 6B_n - B_{n-1} \quad (n > 1),
\]

where \( B_0 = 1 \) and \( B_1 = 6 \). In \cite{5}, R. Finkelstein studied “The house problem” and introduced the notion of first-power numerical center which coincides with the notion of balancing numbers except for the number 1 which is a first-power numerical center but not a balancing number.

In \cite{8}, the authors defined the notion of \((k, l)\)-power numerical center or \((k, l)\)-balancing number. More precisely let \( y, k, l \) be fixed positive integers with \( y > 1 \). We call the positive integer \( x, (x \leq y) \), a \((k, l)\)-power numerical center or \((k, l)\)-balancing number for \( y \) if

\[
x^k + 2^k + \cdots + (x - 1)^k = (x + 1)^l + \cdots + (y - 1)^l.
\]

In \cite{5}, R. Finkelstein proved that there are no second-power numerical centers (in this case \( k = l = 2 \)). Later on R. Steiner \cite{13}, proved that there are no third-power numerical centers (in this case \( k = l = 3 \)). (Here we mention that R. Finkelstein and R. Steiner is the same person.) In the case \( k = 4 \) and \( k = 5 \) he conjectured a negative answer. Later on P. Ingram in \cite{6} using the explicit lower bounds on linear forms in elliptic logarithms, proved that there are no nontrivial fifth-power numerical centers. In the same paper he proved that there are only finitely many \( n \)th power numerical centers.

K. Liptai, F. Luca, Á. Pintér, and L. Szalay \cite{8} obtained certain effective and ineffective finiteness theorems for \((k, l)\) numerical centers. Their results are based on Baker’s theory and a result of Cs. Rakaczki \cite{11}, respectively. Furthermore, they proved that there exists no \((k, l)\) numerical center with \( l > k \).

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MAY 2010 121
In [7], K. Liptai searched for those balancing numbers which are Fibonacci numbers, too. Using the results of A. Baker and G. Wüstholz [2] he proved that there are no Fibonacci balancing numbers. Using another method L. Szalay [14] proved that there are no Lucas balancing numbers.

Later G. K. Panda and P. K. Ray [9] slightly modified the definition of a balancing number and introduced the notion of a cobalancing number. A positive integer \( n \) is called a \textit{cobalancing number} if

\[
1 + 2 + \cdots + (n - 1) + n = (n + 1) + (n + 2) + \cdots + (n + K)
\]

for some \( K \in \mathbb{N} \). In this case \( K \) is called the cobalancer of \( n \).

They also proved that the cobalancing numbers fulfill the following recurrence relation

\[
b_{n+1} = 6b_n - b_{n-1} + 2 \quad (n > 1),
\]

where \( b_0 = 1 \) and \( b_1 = 6 \). Moreover they found that every balancer is a cobalancing number and every cobalancer is a balancing number.

In [10], G. K. Panda gave another possible generalization of balancing numbers. Let \( \{a_m\}_{m=0}^\infty \) be a sequence of real numbers. We call an element \( a_n \) of this sequence a \textit{sequence-balancing number} if

\[
a_1 + a_2 + \cdots + a_{n-1} = a_{n+1} + a_{n+2} + \cdots + a_{n+k}
\]

for some \( k \in \mathbb{N} \). Similarly, one can define the notion of \textit{sequence cobalancing numbers}. In [10] it was proved that there does not exist any sequence balancing number in the Fibonacci sequence. The sequence \( R = \{R_i\}_{i=0}^\infty = R(A, B, R_0, R_1) \) is called a second order linear recurrence sequence if the recurrence relation

\[
R_i = AR_{i-1} + BR_{i-2} \quad (i \geq 2)
\]

holds, where \( A, B \neq 0, R_0, R_1 \) are fixed rational integers and \( |R_0| + |R_1| > 0 \). The polynomial \( f(x) = x^2 - Ax - B \) is called the companion polynomial of the sequence \( R = R(A, B, R_0, R_1) \). Let \( D = A^2 + 4B \) be the discriminant of \( f \). The roots of the companion polynomial will be denoted by \( \alpha \) and \( \beta \). Using this notation if \( D \neq 0 \), as it is well-known, we may write

\[
R_i = \frac{a\alpha^i - b\beta^i}{\alpha - \beta}
\]

for \( i \geq 2 \), where \( a = R_1 - R_0\beta \) and \( b = R_1 - R_0\alpha \).

As a generalization of the notion of a balancing number, we will call a binary recurrence \( R_i = R(A, B, R_0, R_1) \) a balancing sequence if

\[
R_1 + R_2 + \cdots + R_{n-1} = R_{n+1} + R_{n+2} + \cdots + R_{n+k}
\]

holds for some \( k \geq 1 \) and \( n \geq 2 \).

In the present paper we prove that any sequence \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, R_1) \) with \( D = A^2 + 4B > 0 \) is not a balancing sequence.

\[
A \neq 0, B \neq 0
\]

\[
(D = A^2 + 4B > 0 \text{ except for } (A, B) = (0, 1) \text{ in which case } (1) \text{ has infinitely many solutions } (n, k) = (n, n - 1) \text{ and } (n, k) = (n, n) \text{ for } n \geq 2).
\]

2. Results

Theorem 1. There is no balancing sequence of the form \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, R_1) \) with \( D = A^2 + 4B > 0 \) except for \( (A, B) = (0, 1) \) in which case \( (1) \) has infinitely many solutions \((n, k) = (n, n - 1)\) and \((n, k) = (n, n)\) for \( n \geq 2\).
As a consequence of Theorem 1 above, we consider the question of Lucas-sequences. As it is well-known, a sequence

\[ R_i = R(A, B, 0, 1) = \frac{\alpha^i - \beta^i}{\alpha - \beta} \]

is called a Lucas-sequence, if \( \frac{\alpha}{\beta} \) is not a root of unity and \( \gcd(A, B) = 1 \).

**Corollary 1.** Let \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, 1) \) be a Lucas-sequence with \( A^2 + 4B > 0 \). Then \( R_i \) is not a balancing sequence.

3. **Auxiliary Results**

**Lemma 1.** Let \( n \geq 2 \) and \( k \geq 1 \) be integers and consider the function \( F : \mathbb{R} \setminus \{1\} \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \),

\[ F(x) = \frac{x^{n+k+1} - x^{n+1} - x^n + x}{x - 1}. \]

Then \( F \) is strictly increasing on the interval \((-\infty, -1] \) if \( n + k \) is odd and \( F \) is strictly decreasing on the interval \((-\infty, -1] \) if \( n + k \) is even.

**Proof.** The derivative \( F' \) of \( F \) is

\[ F'(x) = \frac{(n+k)x^{n+k+1} - (n+k+1)x^{n+k} - nx^{n+1} + 2x^n + nx^{n-1} - 1}{(x-1)^2}. \]

We may suppose that \( x \leq -1 \). Hence we have \( x = -|x| \). Therefore \( F'(x) \) can be rewritten in the form

\[ F'(x) = \frac{|x|^{n+k}g(x) - |x|^{n+1}h(x)}{(x-1)^2}, \]

where

\[ g(x) = (-1)^{n+k}(-n-k-1-(n+k)|x|) \quad \text{and} \quad h(x) = n(-1)^{n+1} - \frac{2(-1)^n}{|x|} - \frac{n(-1)^n}{|x|^2} + \frac{1}{|x|^{n+1}}. \]

Now, if \( n + k \) is odd, then since \( |x| \geq 1 \) and since \( n + 1 \) and \( n - 1 \) have the same parity, by (2) one gets

\[ g(x) \geq 2n + 2k + 1 \quad \text{and} \quad h(x) < n + 2 + 1 = n + 3. \]

Hence,

\[ F'(x) > \frac{(n+2k-2)|x|^{n+1}}{(x-1)^2}, \]

so for \( k \geq 1 \) and \( n \geq 2 \) this leads to \( F'(x) > 0 \) for \( x \leq -1 \) and the lemma follows.

Finally, if \( n + k \) is even and \( |x| \geq 1 \) we have

\[ g(x) \leq -2n - 2k - 1 \quad \text{and} \quad h(x) > -n - 2 + 1 = -n - 1, \]

so for \( k \geq 1 \) we get

\[ F'(x) < \frac{(-n-2k)|x|^{n+1}}{(x-1)^2}. \]

Since \( n \geq 2 \) and \( k \geq 1 \) one observes that \( F'(x) < 0 \) holds for \( x \leq -1 \), so the lemma follows. \( \square \)
4. Proof of Theorem 1

Consider the sequence \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, R_1) \) with \( R_1 \neq 0 \), companion polynomial \( f(x) = x^2 - Ax - B \), and positive discriminant \( D = A^2 + 4B > 0 \). Since \( R(A, B, 0, R_1) = R_1 \cdot R(A, B, 0, 1) \) one can observe that \( R(A, B, 0, R_1) \) is a balancing sequence (i.e. \( 1 \) holds) if and only if \( R(A, B, 0, 1) \) is a balancing sequence. Thus we may assume that \( R_1 = 1 \) that is, in what follows we may deal without loss of generality with the sequence \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, 1) \).

We distinguish several subcases according to \( A = 0 \) or to the signs of \( A \) and \( B \), respectively.

Case 1: \( A = 0 \).

Since \( 0 < D = A^2 + 4B \) it follows that \( B > 0 \). The roots of the companion polynomial \( f(x) = x^2 - B \) are \( \alpha = \sqrt{B} \) and \( \beta = -\alpha = -\sqrt{B} \). Thus we have the sequence

\[
R_i = \frac{\sqrt{B}^i - (-\sqrt{B})^i}{2\sqrt{B}}, \quad i \geq 0.
\]

Now, if \( B = 1 \) then \( R_i \) is of the form

\[
R_i = \frac{1^i - (-1)^i}{2}, \quad i \geq 0
\]

which is obviously a balancing sequence. Further, the resulting equation (1) in this case has infinitely many solutions \( (n, k) \), namely \( (n, k) = (n, n - 1) \) and \( (n, n) \) for \( n \geq 2 \).

If \( B > 1 \) then for \( i \geq 0 \) we have

\[
R_i = \begin{cases} 
0, & \text{if } i \text{ is even}, \\
B^{\frac{i}{2}}, & \text{if } i \text{ is odd}.
\end{cases}
\]

Suppose that (1) holds with \( n \geq 2 \) odd. Since in this case \( R_{n-1} = R_{n+1} = 0 \) and the left hand side of (1) is \( B^{\frac{n+1}{2}} \), we may obviously assume that \( k \geq 2 \). Now, for the right hand side of (1) we have

\[
R_{n+1} + R_{n+2} + \cdots + R_{n+k} \geq R_{n+2} = B^{\frac{n+1}{2}}.
\]

But this leads to a contradiction in view of (1), \( B > 1, \ n \geq 2 \) and

\[
\frac{B^{\frac{n+1}{2}} - 1}{B - 1} < B^{\frac{n+1}{2}}.
\]

Finally, if equation (1) holds with \( n \geq 2 \) even then \( R_{n-1} = B^{\frac{n-2}{2}} \) and \( R_{n+1} = B^{\frac{n}{2}} \). Hence the left hand side of (1) is \( \frac{B^{\frac{n+1}{2}}}{B^{\frac{n}{2}}} \) while for the right hand side we have the lower bound \( B^{\frac{n}{2}} \).

This is impossible by (1), \( B > 1, \ n \geq 2 \) and

\[
\frac{B^{\frac{n}{2}} - 1}{B - 1} < B^{\frac{n}{2}}.
\]

Hence, in this case there is no balancing sequence apart from \( B = 1 \).
Case 2: $A > 0$.

Let $\alpha$ and $\beta$ be the roots of the companion polynomial $f(x) = x^2 - Ax - B$. One observes that $f$ has a dominant root which we will denote by $\alpha$. (Note that $\alpha$ is a dominant root of $f$ if $|\alpha| > |\beta|$). In this case we have

$$\alpha = \frac{A + \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}}{2}, \quad \beta = \frac{A - \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}}{2}.$$ 

Since $A \geq 1$ and $D = A^2 + 4B > 0$ we obviously have $\alpha > 1$. Further, since $R_i = \frac{a_i - \beta^i}{\alpha - \beta} \ (i \geq 0)$ and $|\beta| < \alpha$ we get that $R_i > 0$ for $i \geq 1$. Suppose that (1) holds for some $n \geq 2$ and $k \geq 1$. We derive an upper bound for the left hand side of (1). Since

$$R_i = \frac{\alpha^i - \beta^i}{\alpha - \beta} < \frac{2\alpha^i}{\alpha - \beta},$$

we get

$$R_1 + R_2 + \cdots + R_{n-1} < \frac{2}{\alpha - \beta} \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} \alpha^i = \left( \frac{2\alpha}{\alpha - \beta} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha^{n-1} - 1}{\alpha - 1} \right).$$

Further, since $R_i > 0$ for all $i \geq 1$ we get for the right hand side of (1) the lower bound

$$R_{n+1} + R_{n+2} + \cdots + R_{n+k} \geq \frac{\alpha^{n+1} - \beta^{n+1}}{\alpha - \beta}. \quad (3)$$

Suppose first that $\beta^{n+1} < 0$. Then

$$R_{n+1} + R_{n+2} + \cdots + R_{n+k} > \frac{\alpha^{n+1}}{\alpha - \beta}. \quad (4)$$

Further, we see that $\beta^{n+1} < 0$ holds if and only if $\beta < 0$ (and $n + 1$ odd). Hence, we may assume that $B > 0$. Now, by (1), (3), and (4) we obtain

$$\frac{\alpha^{n+1}}{\alpha - \beta} < \left( \frac{2\alpha}{\alpha - \beta} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha^{n-1} - 1}{\alpha - 1} \right),$$

which leads to

$$\alpha^2 - \alpha - 2 < -\frac{2}{\alpha^{n+1}}. \quad (5)$$

Thus (5) implies that $\alpha = \frac{A + \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}}{2} < 2$ and since $A > 0$ and $B > 0$ this can occur only if $A = B = 1$. In this case the resulting sequence is the Fibonacci sequence and for it

$$R_1 + \cdots + R_{n-1} = F_1 + \cdots + F_n = F_{n+1} - 1 < F_{n+1} = R_{n+1}. \quad (6)$$

Thus (6) shows that there is no balancing sequence if $\beta^{n+1} < 0$.

Suppose now that $\beta^{n+1} > 0$ and assume that (1) holds for some $n \geq 2$ and $k \geq 1$. In this case the upper bound (3) for the left hand side of (1) remains valid. Since $\alpha > |\beta|$ for $R_{n+1}$ we get the following lower bound

$$R_{n+1} = \frac{\alpha^{n+1} - \beta^{n+1}}{\alpha - \beta} = \frac{\alpha^{n+1} - |\beta|^{n+1}}{\alpha - \beta} = \frac{(\alpha - |\beta|)(\alpha^n + \cdots + |\beta|^n)}{\alpha - |\beta|} > \frac{\Delta \alpha^n}{\alpha - |\beta|}, \quad (7)$$

where $\Delta = \alpha - |\beta| = \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}$. Hence, using (1), (3), and (7) we get

$$\frac{\Delta \alpha^n}{\alpha - |\beta|} < \left( \frac{2\alpha}{\alpha - \beta} \right) \left( \frac{\alpha^{n-1} - 1}{\alpha - 1} \right).$$

MAY 2010 125
which leads to
\[ \Delta \alpha^{n+1} - (\Delta + 2)\alpha^n < -2\alpha. \] (8)
But (8) is a contradiction if \( \alpha \geq \frac{\Delta + 2}{\Delta} = 1 + \frac{2}{\Delta}. \) Finally, if \( \alpha < 1 + \frac{2}{\Delta} \) then since \( \Delta \geq 1 \) we get that \( \alpha < 3. \) Thus, those values of the pair \((A, B)\) for which \( \alpha = \frac{\Delta + \sqrt{\Delta^2 + 4B}}{2} < 3 \) and \( A^2 + 4B > 0 \) are the following
\[ (A, B) \in \{(1,1), (1,2), (1,3), (1,4), (1,5), (2,1), (2,2), (3,-2), (3,-1)\}. \]
Now, if \((A, B) \in \{(1,1), (1,2), (1,3), (1,4), (1,5), (2,1), (2,2), (3,-1)\}\) we see that \( \Delta \geq \sqrt{5} \) and hence
\[ \alpha < 1 + \frac{2}{\sqrt{5}}. \] (9)
which implies that the only value of \( \alpha = \frac{\Delta + \sqrt{\Delta^2 + 4B}}{2} \) for which (9) holds is \( A = B = 1, \) i.e. \( \alpha = \frac{1 + \sqrt{5}}{2}. \) But in this case the resulting sequence is again the Fibonacci sequence for which we have already checked that (1) cannot hold.

Finally, if \((A, B) = (3, -2)\) the resulting sequence is \( R_i = 2^i - 1 \) for \( i \geq 0. \) Assume that (1) holds for this sequence. One can easily see that the left hand side of (1) in this case is \( 2^n - n - 1. \) Further, for the right hand side of (1) we have the lower bound \( R_{n+1} = 2^{n+1} - 1. \) But for \( n \geq 2 \)
\[ 2^{n+1} - 1 > 2^n - n - 1 \]
which shows that the sequence \( R_i = 2^i - 1 \) cannot be a balancing sequence. So there is no balancing sequence with \( A > 0 \) and \( D = A^2 + 4B > 0. \)

Case 3: \( A < 0 \) and \( B < 0. \)

We work as in the previous case. Let \( \alpha \) denote the dominant root of the companion polynomial \( f(x) = x^2 - Ax - B. \) Since \( A < 0 \) and \( A^2 + 4B > 0 \) we have
\[ \alpha = \frac{A - \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad \beta = \frac{A + \sqrt{A^2 + 4B}}{2}. \]
Since \( -B = \alpha \beta \) we see that \( \beta < 0. \) Now, if \( R_i \) is a balancing sequence then by (1) and \( R_i = \frac{\alpha^n - \beta^n}{\alpha - \beta} \) we get
\[ \frac{\alpha^{n+k+1} - \alpha^{n+1} - \alpha^n + \alpha}{\alpha - 1} = \frac{\beta^{n+k+1} - \beta^{n+1} - \beta^n + \beta}{\beta - 1}, \] (10)
where \( n \geq 2 \) and \( k \geq 1. \) Thus from (10) we have
\[ F(\alpha) = F(\beta), \] (11)
where \( F \) is the function defined in Section 3. Now, if \( \beta \leq -1 \) then by \( \alpha < \beta \) we get by Lemma 1 that \( F(\alpha) < F(\beta) \) if \( n + k \) is odd and \( F(\alpha) > F(\beta) \) if \( n + k \) is even. But this contradicts (11). Hence, we may assume that \( -1 < \beta < 0 \) and we may suppose without loss of generality that \( \alpha \leq \alpha_0 = \frac{3 - \sqrt{5}}{2}. \) By \( k \geq 1, n \geq 2, \) and \( |\alpha| \geq |\alpha_0| \) we have
\[ |1 - 1/\alpha^k - 1/\alpha^{k+1} + 1/\alpha^{n+k}| > 0.4. \] (12)
Since \( -1 < \beta < 0 \) we have \( |\beta| < 1 \) and \( |\beta - 1| > 1. \) Hence we get by (10), (11), and (12)
\[ \frac{0.4|\alpha|^{n+k+1}}{|\alpha| + 1} < |F(\alpha)| = |F(\beta)| < \frac{4}{|\beta - 1|} < 4. \] (13)
But (13) is a contradiction in view of \( n \geq 2, k \geq 1, \) and \( |\alpha| \geq |\alpha_0| = \frac{\sqrt{5} + 1}{2} . \) Hence there are no balancing sequences with \( A < 0, B < 0 \) and \( A^2 + 4B > 0 . \)

**Case 4: \( A < 0 \) and \( B > 0 . \)**

Let us now consider the sequence \( R_i = R(A, B, 0, 1) \) with \( A < 0 \) and \( B > 0 . \) We also consider the corresponding sequence \( Q_i := R(|A|, B, 0, 1) . \) We clearly have \( R_i = (-1)^{i-1}Q_i \) (\( i \geq 1 \)) and thus \( |R_i| = |Q_i| = Q_i . \) Further, by induction on \( i \) it is easily seen that

\[
Q_1 + Q_2 + \cdots + Q_{i-1} < Q_{i+1} \quad \text{for} \quad i = 2, 3, \ldots .
\]

First we suppose \( A \leq -2 . \) Now the absolute value of the left hand side of (1) is

\[
|R_1 + \cdots + R_{n-1}| \leq Q_1 + \cdots + Q_{n-1} .
\]

Further, by \( Q_{i+1} = |A(Q_i + BQ_{i-1})| \geq 2Q_i \) we have \( Q_{i+1} - Q_i \geq Q_i \) for \( i \in \mathbb{N} \) and the absolute value of the right hand side of (1) is

\[
|R_n + \cdots + R_{n+k}| = |Q_{n+1} - Q_{n+2} + \cdots + (-1)^{k+1}Q_{n+k}|
\]

and this is one of the following:

\[
Q_{n+1}, \quad Q_{n+2} - Q_{n+1} \geq Q_{n+1}, \quad Q_{n+3} - Q_{n+2} + Q_{n+1} \geq Q_{n+1}, \ldots .
\]

This together with (14) and (15) concludes the proof of Case 4 if \( A \leq -2 . \)

Finally, if \( A = -1 \) then \( Q_{i+1} - Q_i = BQ_{i-1} \) for \( i \in \mathbb{N} \). Now the absolute value of the left hand side of (1) is

\[
|R_1 + \cdots + R_{n-1}| = |Q_{n-1} - Q_{n-2} + Q_{n-3} - Q_{n-4} + \cdots | \\
\leq (Q_{n-1} - Q_{n-2}) + (Q_{n-3} - Q_{n-4}) + \cdots \\
\leq B(Q_{n-3} + Q_{n-2} + \cdots + Q_1) < BQ_{n-1} .
\]

On the other hand, the right hand side of (1) is again one of the following:

\[
Q_{n+1} > BQ_{n-1}, \quad Q_{n+2} - Q_{n+1} > BQ_{n-1}, \quad Q_{n+3} - Q_{n+2} + Q_{n+1} > BQ_{n-1}, \ldots .
\]

This together with (14) and (16) concludes the proof of our Theorem 1.

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**References**


MAY 2010

127


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