

# Permutation Polynomials modulo $p^n$

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## Abstract

A polynomial  $f$  over a finite ring  $R$  is called a *permutation polynomial* if the mapping  $R \rightarrow R$  defined by  $f$  is one-to-one. In this paper we consider the problem of characterizing permutation polynomials; that is, we seek conditions on the coefficients of a polynomial which are necessary and sufficient for it to represent a permutation. We also present a new class of permutation binomials over finite field of prime order.

**Keywords:** Permutation polynomials, Finite rings, Combinatorial problem, Cryptography

## 1 Introduction

A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is said to be a permutation polynomial over a finite ring  $R$  if  $f$  permutes the elements of  $R$ . That is,  $f$  is a one-to-one map of  $R$  onto itself. A natural question to ask is: given a polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$ , what are necessary and sufficient conditions on the coefficients  $a_0, a_1, \dots, a_d$  for  $f$  to be permutation? Permutation polynomials have been extensively studied; see Lidl and Niederreiter [7] Chapter 7 for a survey. Permutation polynomials have been used in Cryptography and Coding [4, 8, 10]. Most studies have assumed that  $R$  is a finite field. See, for example, the survey of Lidl and Mullen [5, 6]. It is well-known that many problems on permutation polynomials over finite fields are still open [5, 6]. Similarly there are a few work on permutation polynomials modulo integers [2]. Rivest [11] considered the case where  $R$  is the ring  $(Z_m, +, \cdot)$  where  $m$  is a power of 2:  $m = 2^n$ . Such permutation polynomials have also been used in Cryptography recently, such as in RC6 block cipher [13], a simple permutation polynomials  $f(x) = 2x^2 + x$  modulo  $2^d$  is used, where  $d$  is the word size of the machine. In this paper, we consider the case that  $R$  is the ring  $(Z_m, +, \cdot)$  where  $m$  is a prime power:  $m = p^n$  and give an exact characterization of permutation polynomials modulo  $p^n$ , for  $p = 2, 3, 5$ , in terms of their coefficients. Although permutation polynomials over finite fields have been a subject of study for over 140 years, only a handful of specific families of permutation polynomials of finite fields are known so far. The construction of special types of permutation polynomials becomes interesting research problem. Here we present a new class of permutation binomials over finite field of prime order.

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## 2 Congruences to a prime-power modulus

In this section we recall some results from [2] that we need to formally present our results. Consider the congruences

$$f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^a} \tag{1}$$

and

$$f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^{a-1}} \tag{2}$$

where  $f(x)$  is any integral polynomial,  $p$  is prime and  $a > 1$ . Then Theorem 123 of [2] states that

**Theorem 2.1** (*Hardy & Wright [2]*) *The number of solutions of (1) corresponding to a solution  $\xi$  of (2) is*

(a) *none, if  $f'(\xi) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$  and  $\xi$  is not a solution of (1);*

(b) *one, if  $f'(\xi) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ ;*

(c)  *$p$ , if  $f'(\xi) \equiv 0 \pmod{p}$  and  $\xi$  is a solution of (1).*

*The solutions of (1) corresponding to  $\xi$  may be derived from  $\xi$ , in case (b) by the solution of a linear congruence, in case (c) by adding any multiple of  $p^{a-1}$  to  $\xi$ .*

As a consequence of this theorem we obtain the following result. If  $p$  is a prime, then  $Z_p$  denotes the finite field with  $p$  elements.

**Corollary 2.1** *Let  $p$  be a prime. Then  $f(x)$  permutes the elements of  $Z_{p^n}$ ,  $n > 1$ , if and only if it permutes the elements of  $Z_p$  and  $f'(a) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}$  for every integer  $a \in Z_p$ .*

**Proof:** Suppose  $f(x)$  permutes the elements of  $Z_{p^n}$ ,  $n > 1$ . That is  $f(x)$  is a one-to-one map of  $Z_{p^n}$  onto itself. Thus the congruence

$$f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^n} \tag{3}$$

has exactly one root, say  $x$ . Then  $x$  satisfies

$$f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p} \tag{4}$$

and is of the form  $\xi + sp$ , ( $0 \leq s < p^{n-1}$ ), where  $\xi$  is the root of (4) for which  $0 \leq \xi < p$ .

Next, suppose that  $\xi$  is the root of (4) satisfying  $0 \leq \xi < p$  and  $f'(\xi) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}$ . Then, according to Theorem 3.1,  $f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^2}$  has exactly one root corresponding to the solution  $\xi$  of (4). Repeating the argument we obtain  $f(x) \equiv 0 \pmod{p^n}$  has exactly one root corresponding to the solution  $\xi$  of (4) for every  $n > 1$ .

### 3 Permutation polynomials modulo a prime-power

In this section we give necessary and sufficient conditions on the coefficients  $a_0, a_1, \dots, a_d$  for  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  to be permutation polynomial modulo  $p^n$ , for  $p = 2, 3, 5$ . A characterization of permutation polynomials modulo  $2^n$  was given in [11]. Rivest [11] proved that  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial if and only if  $a_1$  is odd,  $(a_2 + a_4 + a_6 + \dots)$  is even, and  $(a_3 + a_5 + a_7 + \dots)$  is even. We first give a very short and simple proof of the above characterization. We also give new characterization of permutation polynomials modulo  $p^n$  for  $p = 3, 5$ , and  $n > 1$ .

#### 3.1 Characterizing permutation polynomials modulo $2^n$

A simple characterization of permutation polynomial modulo  $2^n$ ,  $n > 1$ , is presented in this section. We need the following lemma in the proof of Theorem 3.1

**Lemma 3.1** *A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo 2 if and only if  $(a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_d)$  is odd.*

**Proof:** Since  $0^i = 0$  and  $1^i = 1$  modulo 2 for  $i \geq 1$ , we can write  $f(x) = a_0 + (a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_d)x \pmod{2}$ . Clearly  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo 2 if and only if  $(a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_d) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{2}$ , that is,  $(a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_d)$  is odd.

**Theorem 3.1** (Rivest [11]) *A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo  $2^n$ ,  $n > 1$ , if and only if  $a_1$  is odd,  $(a_2 + a_4 + a_6 + \dots)$  is even, and  $(a_3 + a_5 + a_7 + \dots)$  is even.*

**Proof:** The proof given here is different from that of Rivest [11] and is relevant to the proof of theorems to follow. The theorem is proved by making use of Corollary 2.1 and Lemma 3.1. By Corollary 2.1,  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo  $2^n$  if and only if it is a permutation polynomial modulo 2 and  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{2}$  for every integer  $x \in \mathbb{Z}_2$ . By Lemma 3.1,  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo 2 if and only if  $(a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_d)$  is odd. It is easy to check that  $f'(x) = a_1 + (a_3 + a_5 + \dots)x \pmod{2}$ . The condition  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{2}$  with  $x = 0$  gives  $a_1$  is odd. The condition  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{2}$  with  $x = 1$  gives  $(a_1 + a_3 + a_5 + \dots)$  is odd. Hence the theorem follows.

**Example 3.1** The following are all permutation polynomials modulo  $2^2$  of degree atmost 3 and the coefficients are from  $\mathbb{Z}_4$ :  $x, 3x, x + 2x^2, 3x + 2x^2, x + x^3, 3x + 2x^3, x + 2x + 2x^3$  and  $3x + 2x^2 + 2x^3$ .

#### 3.2 Characterizing permutation polynomials modulo $3^n$

This section starts with a proposition regarding permutations of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  that is needed later on.

**Proposition 3.1** [7] *If  $d > 1$  is a divisor of  $p-1$ , then there exists no permutation polynomial of  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  of degree  $d$ .*

The proof of Proposition 3.1 is given in [7]. As an easy consequence of this proposition we get, if  $p$  is an odd prime, no permutation over  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  can have degree  $p-1$ .

**Lemma 3.2** *A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo 3 if and only if  $(a_1 + a_3 + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  and  $(a_2 + a_4 + \dots) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ .*

**Proof:** Since  $x^{2k+1} = x \pmod{3}$  and  $x^{2k} = x^2 \pmod{3}$  for  $k \geq 1$ , we can write  $f(x) = a_0 + (a_1 + a_3 + \dots)x + (a_2 + a_4 + \dots)x^2 \pmod{3}$ . Letting  $A = (a_1 + a_3 + \dots) \pmod{3}$  and  $B = (a_2 + a_4 + \dots) \pmod{3}$ , we can write  $f(x)$  more compactly as  $f(x) = a_0 + Ax + Bx^2$ . Since, for odd prime  $p$ , no permutation polynomial over  $Z_p$  can have degree  $p-1$ , we have  $B \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . Thus  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo 3 if and only if  $(a_1 + a_3 + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  and  $(a_2 + a_4 + \dots) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ .

**Theorem 3.2** *A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo  $3^n$ ,  $n > 1$ , if and only if*

(a)  $a_1 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ ,

(b)  $(a_1 + a_3 + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ ,

(c)  $(a_2 + a_4 + \dots) \equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ ,

(d)  $(a_1 + a_4 + a_7 + a_{10} + \dots) + 2(a_2 + a_5 + a_8 + a_{11} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ , and

(e)  $(a_1 + a_2 + a_7 + a_8 + \dots) + 2(a_4 + a_5 + a_{10} + a_{11} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ .

**Proof:** By Corollary 2.1,  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo  $3^n$  if and only if it is a permutation polynomial modulo 3 and  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  for every integer  $x \in Z_3$ . It is easy to verify that  $f'(x) = a_1 + (2a_2 + a_4 + 2a_8 + a_{10} + 2a_{14} + a_{16} + \dots)x + (2a_5 + a_7 + 2a_{11} + a_{13} + 2a_{17} + a_{19} + \dots)x^2 \pmod{3}$ . The condition  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  with  $x = 0$  gives  $a_1 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . The condition  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  with  $x = 1$  gives  $a_1 + (2a_2 + a_4 + 2a_8 + a_{10} + 2a_{14} + a_{16} + \dots) + (2a_5 + a_7 + 2a_{11} + a_{13} + 2a_{17} + a_{19} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . The condition  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$  with  $x = 2$  gives  $a_1 + (a_2 + 2a_4 + a_8 + 2a_{10} + a_{14} + 2a_{16} + \dots) + (2a_5 + a_7 + 2a_{11} + a_{13} + 2a_{17} + a_{19} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ . Now the theorem directly follows by combining above conditions and Lemma 3.2.

**Example 3.2** *The following are some permutation polynomials modulo 9 of degree 5 and the coefficients are from  $Z_9$ :  $7x + x^3 + 8x^5$ ,  $x + x^2 + 8x^3 + 8x^4 + 7x^5$ ,  $7x + 6x^2 + 8x^3 + 8x^5$  and  $x + 7x^2 + 8x^3 + 8x^4 + 7x^5$ . There are total 3888 permutation polynomials modulo 9 of degree atmost 5 and the coefficients are from  $Z_9$ .*

### 3.3 Characterizing permutation polynomials modulo $5^n$

Let  $p$  be a prime and  $\mathbf{F}_p = GF(p)$  be the Galois field of  $p$  elements. The following result is from [9].

**Theorem 3.3** (Mollin & Small [9]) Let  $GF(p)$  have characteristic different from 3. Then  $f(x) = ax^3 + bx^2 + cx + d$  ( $a \neq 0$ ) permutes  $GF(p)$  if and only if  $b^2 = 3ac$  and  $p \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$ .

We need the following lemma in the proof of Theorem 3.4.

**Lemma 3.3** A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo 5 if and only if  $(a_4 + a_8 + a_{12} \dots) \equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  and  $(a_2 + a_6 + a_{10} + \dots)^2 \equiv 3(a_1 + a_5 + a_9 + \dots)(a_3 + a_7 + a_{11} + \dots) \pmod{5}$ .

**Proof:** Since  $x^{4k+1} = x \pmod{5}$ ,  $x^{4k+2} = x^2 \pmod{5}$ ,  $x^{4k+3} = x^3 \pmod{5}$ , and  $x^{4k} = x^4 \pmod{5}$  for  $k \geq 1$ , we can write  $f(x) = a_0 + (a_1 + a_5 + \dots)x + (a_2 + a_6 + \dots)x^2 + (a_3 + a_7 + \dots)x^3 + (a_4 + a_8 + \dots)x^4 \pmod{5}$ . Letting  $A = (a_1 + a_5 + \dots)$ ,  $B = (a_2 + a_6 + \dots)$ ,  $C = (a_3 + a_7 + \dots)$  and  $D = (a_4 + a_8 + \dots)$  we can write  $f(x) = a_0 + Ax + Bx^2 + Cx^3 + Dx^4 \pmod{5}$ . Since no polynomial of degree 4 can be a permutation polynomial modulo 5, we have  $D \equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ . Now  $f(x) = a_0 + Ax + Bx^2 + Cx^3 \pmod{5}$  and we are in the situation of Theorem 3.3. Hence,  $f$  is a permutation if and only if  $B^2 = 3AC$ .

**Example 3.3** The permutation binomials modulo 5 of degree at most 3 are:  $x, x^3, 2x + x^2 + x^3, 3x + 2x^2 + x^3, 3x + 3x^2 + x^3$ , and  $2x + 4x^2 + x^3$ .

**Theorem 3.4** A polynomial  $f(x) = a_0 + a_1x + a_2x^2 + \dots + a_dx^d$  with integral coefficients is a permutation polynomial modulo  $5^n$  if and only if

(a)  $a_1 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ,

(b)  $(a_4 + a_8 + a_{12} \dots) \equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ,

(c)  $(a_2 + a_6 + a_{10} + \dots)^2 \equiv 3(a_1 + a_5 + a_9 + \dots)(a_3 + a_7 + a_{11} + \dots) \pmod{5}$ ,

(d)  $(a_1 + a_6 + a_{11} + \dots) + 2(a_2 + a_7 + a_{12} + \dots) + 3(a_3 + a_8 + a_{13} + \dots) + 4(a_4 + a_9 + a_{14} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ,

(e)  $(a_1 + 2a_6 + 4a_{11} + 3a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(2a_2 + 4a_7 + 3a_{12} + a_{17} + 2a_{22} + \dots) + 3(4a_3 + 3a_8 + a_{13} + 2a_{18} + 4a_{23} + \dots) + 4(3a_4 + a_9 + 2a_{14} + 4a_{19} + 3a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ,

(f)  $(a_1 + 3a_6 + 4a_{11} + 2a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(3a_2 + 4a_7 + 2a_{12} + a_{17} + 3a_{22} + \dots) + 3(4a_3 + 2a_8 + a_{13} + 3a_{18} + 4a_{23} + \dots) + 4(2a_4 + a_9 + 3a_{14} + 4a_{19} + 2a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ , and

(g)  $(a_1 + 4a_6 + a_{11} + 4a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(4a_2 + a_7 + 4a_{12} + a_{17} + 4a_{22} + \dots) + 3(a_3 + 4a_8 + a_{13} + 4a_{18} + a_{23} + \dots) + 4(4a_4 + a_9 + 4a_{14} + a_{19} + 4a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ .

**Proof:** By Corollary 2.1,  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial modulo  $5^n$  if and only if it is a permutation polynomial modulo 5 and  $f'(x) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  for every integer  $x \in Z_5$ . We obtain

$$\begin{aligned}
f'(x) &= a_1 + \sum_k (4k+2)a_{4k+2}x + \sum_k (4k+3)a_{4k+3}x^2 + \sum_k (4k)a_{4k}x^3 \\
&\quad + \sum_k (4k+1)a_{4k+1}x^4 \\
&\equiv a_1 + (2a_2 + a_6 + 4a_{14} + 3a_{18} + 2a_{22} + \dots)x \\
&\quad + (3a_3 + 2a_7 + a_{11} + 4a_{19} + 3a_{23} + \dots)x^2 \\
&\quad + (4a_4 + 3a_8 + 2a_{12} + a_{16} + 4a_{24} + \dots)x^3 \\
&\quad + (4a_9 + 3a_{13} + 2a_{17} + a_{21} + 4a_{29} + \dots)x^4 \pmod{5}
\end{aligned}$$

Observe that  $f'(0) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  means  $a_1 \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ;

$f'(1) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  means  $(a_1 + a_6 + a_{11} + \dots) + 2(a_2 + a_7 + a_{12} + \dots) + 3(a_3 + a_8 + a_{13} + \dots) + 4(a_4 + a_9 + a_{14} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ;

$f'(2) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  means  $(a_1 + 2a_6 + 4a_{11} + 3a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(2a_2 + 4a_7 + 3a_{12} + a_{17} + 2a_{22} + \dots) + 3(4a_3 + 3a_8 + a_{13} + 2a_{18} + 4a_{23} + \dots) + 4(3a_4 + a_9 + 2a_{14} + 4a_{19} + 3a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ;

$f'(3) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  means  $(a_1 + 3a_6 + 4a_{11} + 2a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(3a_2 + 4a_7 + 2a_{12} + a_{17} + 3a_{22} + \dots) + 3(4a_3 + 2a_8 + a_{13} + 3a_{18} + 4a_{23} + \dots) + 4(2a_4 + a_9 + 3a_{14} + 4a_{19} + 2a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ ; and

$f'(4) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$  means  $(a_1 + 4a_6 + a_{11} + 4a_{16} + a_{21} + \dots) + 2(4a_2 + a_7 + 4a_{12} + a_{17} + 4a_{22} + \dots) + 3(a_3 + 4a_8 + a_{13} + 4a_{18} + a_{23} + \dots) + 4(4a_4 + a_9 + 4a_{14} + a_{19} + 4a_{24} + \dots) \not\equiv 0 \pmod{5}$ . Now the theorem directly follows by combining above conditions and Lemma 3.3. However the situation becomes complicated for  $p = 7, 11, 13, \dots$ . Thus, in the following section we consider the problem of characterizing only permutation binomials modulo prime  $p$ .

## 4 A new class of permutation binomials over finite field $F_p$

Let  $p$  be a prime and  $\mathbf{F}_p = GF(p)$  be the Galois field of  $p$  elements. In [5], the open problem P2 states: Find new classes of permutation polynomials of  $\mathbf{F}_q$ ,  $q = p^n$ ,  $n$  is a positive integer. Recently some classes of permutation binomials are presented in [1, 3]. Here we present a new class of permutation binomials of  $\mathbf{F}_p$ . We now recall the definition and some properties of quadratic residue.

**Definition 4.1** Suppose  $p$  is an odd prime and  $a$  is an integer.  $a$  is defined to be a *quadratic residue* modulo  $p$  if  $a \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}$  and the congruence  $y^2 \equiv a \pmod{p}$  has a solution  $y \in \mathbf{F}_p$ .  $a$  is defined to be a *quadratic non-residue* modulo  $p$  if  $a \not\equiv 0 \pmod{p}$  and  $a$  is not a quadratic residue modulo  $p$ .

Euler's Criteria states that  $a$  is a quadratic residue modulo  $p$  if and only if  $a^{\frac{p-1}{2}} \equiv 1 \pmod{p}$  and  $a$  is a quadratic non-residue modulo  $p$  if and only if  $a^{\frac{p-1}{2}} \equiv -1 \pmod{p}$ .

**Theorem 4.1** Let  $p$  be a prime and  $f(x) = x^u(x^{\frac{p-1}{2}} + a)$  where  $u$  is an integer such that  $(u, p-1) = 1$  and  $a$  is a non-zero element in  $\mathbf{F}_p$ . Then  $f(x)$  is a permutation binomial over  $\mathbf{F}_p$  if and only if  $(a^2 - 1)^{\frac{p-1}{2}} = 1 \pmod{p}$ .

**Proof:** It is known that the monomial  $x^u$  is a permutation polynomial of  $\mathbf{F}_p$  if and only if  $\gcd(u, p-1) = 1$ . Using Euler's criteria we can rewrite

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} 0, & \text{if } x = 0; \\ x^u(a+1), & \text{if } x \text{ is quadratic residue;} \\ x^u(a-1), & \text{if } x \text{ is quadratic non-residue.} \end{cases}$$

There are  $\frac{1}{2}(p-1)$  residues and  $\frac{1}{2}(p-1)$  non-residues of an odd prime  $p$ . The product of two residues, or of two non-residues, is a residue, while the product of a residue and a non-residue is a non-residue. Since  $u$  is odd,  $x^u$  is residue (resp. non-residue) if  $x$  is residue (resp. non-residue). If both  $a+1$  and  $a-1$  are residues, then  $f(x)$  maps residues to residues and non-residues to non-residues and if both  $a+1$  and  $a-1$  are non-residues, then  $f(x)$  maps residues to non-residues and non-residues to residues. On the other hand, if  $a+1$  is residue and  $a-1$  is non-residue then  $f(x)$  maps all the non-zero elements to residues and if  $a+1$  is non-residue and  $a-1$  is residue then  $f(x)$  maps all the non-zero elements to non-residues. Since  $x^u$  is a permutation polynomial, therefore  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial if and only if both  $a+1$  and  $a-1$  are either quadratic residues or quadratic non residues. In other words,  $f(x)$  is a permutation polynomial over  $\mathbf{F}_p$  if and only if  $(a^2-1)^{\frac{p-1}{2}} = 1 \pmod p$ . In Theorem 4.1, if the degree  $u + \frac{p-1}{2}$  of binomial  $f(x)$  is greater than  $p-1$  for some values of  $u$  then the polynomial is reduced modulo  $x^p - x$ . In the following, as an application of Theorem 4.1, we give some examples of permutation binomials of  $\mathbf{F}_p$ .

**Example 4.1** Let  $p = 7$ . Then  $u = 1, 5$ . Thus  $x(x^3 + a)$  and  $x^5(x^3 + a) \pmod{x^7 - x}$  are permutation binomials over  $\mathbf{F}_7$  if and only if  $(a^2 - 1)^3 \equiv 1 \pmod 7$ . That is,  $x(x^3 + a)$  and  $x^5(x^3 + a)$  are permutation binomials over  $\mathbf{F}_7$  for  $a = 3, 4$ . We can write  $x^5(x^3 + a) \equiv x^2 + ax^5 \equiv ax^2(x^3 + a^{-1}) \pmod{x^7 - x}$ . Hence the permutation binomials over  $\mathbf{F}_7$  are  $x(x^3 + 3)$ ,  $x(x^3 + 4)$ ,  $x^2(x^3 + 2)$ , and  $x^2(x^3 + 5)$ .

**Example 4.2** Let  $p = 11$ . Then  $x^u(x^5 + a)$  is a permutation binomial of  $\mathbf{F}_{11}$  for  $u = 1, 3, 7, 9$  and  $a = 2, 4, 7, 9$ . Therefore  $x(x^5 + 2)$ ,  $x(x^5 + 4)$ ,  $x(x^5 + 7)$ ,  $x(x^5 + 9)$ ,  $x^3(x^5 + 2)$ ,  $x^3(x^5 + 4)$ ,  $x^3(x^5 + 7)$ ,  $x^3(x^5 + 9)$ ,  $x^2(x^5 + 3)$ ,  $x^2(x^5 + 5)$ ,  $x^2(x^5 + 6)$ ,  $x^2(x^5 + 8)$ ,  $x^4(x^5 + 3)$ ,  $x^4(x^5 + 5)$ ,  $x^4(x^5 + 6)$ ,  $x^4(x^5 + 8)$  are permutation binomials of  $\mathbf{F}_{11}$ .

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