



THE REMOTENESS OF THE PERMUTATION CODE OF THE GROUP U_{6n}

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ABSTRACT. Recently, a new parameter of a code, referred to as the remoteness, has been introduced. This parameter can be viewed as a dual to the covering radius. It is exactly determined for the cyclic and dihedral groups. In this paper, we consider the group U_{6n} as a subgroup of S_{2n+3} and obtain its remoteness. We show that the remoteness of the permutation code U_{6n} is $2n + 2$. Moreover, it is proved that the covering radius of U_{6n} is also $2n + 2$.

1. INTRODUCTION

Let S_n be the symmetric group acting on the set $\{1, \dots, n\}$. We can consider any element $\sigma \in S_n$ in the list form $\sigma(1) \sigma(2) \cdots \sigma(n)$. The distance between any two elements σ and τ of S_n , called the Hamming distance, is given by

$$d(\sigma, \tau) = |\{1 \leq i \leq n \mid \sigma(i) \neq \tau(i)\}|.$$

It follows that d is a metric on S_n such that $0 \leq d(\sigma, \tau) \leq n$ and $d(\sigma, \tau) \neq 1$. This metric, as we know, was first considered by Farahat [7]. The function d is invariant under left and right translation, i.e., $d(\sigma, \tau) = d(v\sigma, v\tau) = d(\sigma v, \tau v)$ for any $\sigma, \tau, v \in S_n$. Denote by $\text{Fix}(\sigma)$ the set of the fixed points of

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σ . Thus, $d(\sigma, \tau) = n - |\text{Fix}(\sigma\tau^{-1})|$. The weight $\text{wt}(\sigma)$ of a permutation σ is defined to be the number of non-fixed points of σ , i.e., $\text{wt}(\sigma) = d(1, \sigma)$, where 1 is the identity permutation. Any nonempty subset $\mathcal{C} \subseteq S_n$ is said to be a permutation code of length n over $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. The elements of \mathcal{C} are called codewords. The minimum distance $d(\mathcal{C})$ of \mathcal{C} is the minimum distance between any two distinct codewords in \mathcal{C} , i.e., $d(\mathcal{C}) = \min_{\sigma \neq \tau \in \mathcal{C}} d(\sigma, \tau)$. When \mathcal{C} is a subgroup of S_n , it is easy to see that

$$d(\mathcal{C}) = n - \max_{1 \neq \sigma \in \mathcal{C}} |\text{Fix}(\sigma)|,$$

which the right-hand side of the equality is known as the minimum degree of the group \mathcal{C} . If the permutation code \mathcal{C} is of length n that contains M codewords and has the minimum distance d , we will refer to it as an (n, M, d) -permutation code. The numbers n , M and d are called the parameters of the code. Notice that M is the size of \mathcal{C} , that is, $|\mathcal{C}| = M$. We can associate an $(M \times n)$ -array A to the any (n, M, d) -permutation code \mathcal{C} such that the rows of A are the codewords. Any symbol of $1, 2, \dots, n$ occurs exactly in one entry of every row and any two distinct rows disagree in at least d columns. The array A is also called an (n, M, d) -permutation array (PA). For example, S_n is itself an $(n, n!, 2)$ -permutation code, the alternating group A_n is an $(n, n!/2, 3)$ -permutation code and the cyclic subgroup $\langle (12 \cdots n) \rangle$ is an (n, n, n) -permutation code. For further results, see [1, 2, 5].

For any $\sigma \in S_n$ and any integer $r \geq 0$, the ball of radius r centered at σ , denoted by $B_r(\sigma)$, is the set $\{\tau \in S_n \mid d(\sigma, \tau) \leq r\}$. The diameter of \mathcal{C} is the maximum distance between any two codewords in \mathcal{C} :

$$\delta(\mathcal{C}) = \max_{\sigma, \tau \in \mathcal{C}} d(\sigma, \tau).$$

The radius of \mathcal{C} , denoted by $\rho(\mathcal{C})$, is the minimum radius of a ball centered at a codeword needed to cover \mathcal{C} :

$$\rho(\mathcal{C}) = \min_{\sigma \in \mathcal{C}} \max_{\tau \in \mathcal{C}} d(\sigma, \tau).$$

Again, if $\mathcal{C} \subseteq S_n$ is a subgroup then $\delta(\mathcal{C}) = \rho(\mathcal{C}) = n - \min_{\sigma \in \mathcal{C}} |\text{Fix}(\sigma)|$. The covering radius of the code \mathcal{C} is defined to be the minimum radius such that the balls centered around the codewords cover the whole S_n :

$$\text{cr}(\mathcal{C}) = \max_{x \in S_n} \min_{\sigma \in \mathcal{C}} d(x, \sigma).$$

For the covering radius of permutation codes, see [4]. Recently, Cameron and Gadouleau [3] introduced a new parameter of a code, called the remoteness, which can be interpreted as a dual to the covering radius. The remoteness of \mathcal{C} is the minimum radius of a single ball that covers the whole \mathcal{C} :

$$r(\mathcal{C}) = \min_{x \in S_n} \max_{\sigma \in \mathcal{C}} d(x, \sigma).$$

It is noticeable that we have the following equivalent definitions for the mentioned parameters:

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(\mathcal{C}) &= \min\{r \mid \mathcal{C} \subseteq B_r(\sigma) \text{ for any } \sigma \in \mathcal{C}\}, \\ \rho(\mathcal{C}) &= \min\{r \mid \mathcal{C} \subseteq B_r(\sigma) \text{ for some } \sigma \in \mathcal{C}\}, \\ \text{cr}(\mathcal{C}) &= \min\{r \mid S_n \subseteq \cup_{\sigma \in \mathcal{C}} B_r(\sigma)\}, \\ r(\mathcal{C}) &= \min\{r \mid \mathcal{C} \subseteq B_r(\sigma) \text{ for some } \sigma \in S_n\}. \end{aligned}$$

Moreover, there are the following inequalities [3, 8]:

$$\begin{aligned} \rho(\mathcal{C}) &\leq \delta(\mathcal{C}) \leq 2\rho(\mathcal{C}), \\ \delta(\mathcal{C})/2 &\leq r(\mathcal{C}) \leq \rho(\mathcal{C}), \\ \rho(S_n) &\leq r(\mathcal{C}) + \text{cr}(\mathcal{C}) \leq \rho(S_n) + \delta(S_n), \end{aligned}$$

and if \mathcal{C} is neither a singleton nor S_n then $r(\mathcal{C}) + \text{cr}(\mathcal{C}) \geq n + 1$. For example, if $\mathcal{C} = \{\sigma\} \subseteq S_n$ is a singleton then $\delta(\mathcal{C}) = \rho(\mathcal{C}) = r(\mathcal{C}) = 0$. Moreover, $\text{cr}(\mathcal{C})$ is 0 if $n = 1$ and n otherwise. Also, $\delta(S_n) = \rho(S_n) = r(S_n) = n$ and $\text{cr}(S_n) = 0$.

An automorphism of a code \mathcal{C} is any permutation of the coordinate positions that maps codewords to codewords. The set of all the automorphisms of \mathcal{C} is a group and is denoted by $\text{Aut}(\mathcal{C})$. Clearly, $\text{Aut}(\mathcal{C}) \leq S_n$ if the length of \mathcal{C} is n . In fact, the automorphism group of any permutation code of a group G is G .

In [3], the authors considered the cyclic and dihedral groups as permutation codes and obtained their remoteness. In this paper, motivated by [3], we consider the permutation group U_{6n} and focus on its remoteness. We show that $r(U_{6n}) = 2n + 2$ if U_{6n} is considered as a subgroup of S_{2n+3} . Moreover, it is proved that minimum distance, diameter, radius and covering radius of U_{6n} are 3, $2n + 3$, $2n + 3$ and $2n + 2$, respectively.

2. THE REMOTENESS OF SOME PERMUTATION CODES

The following results in this section deal with the remoteness of some permutation groups. Firstly, it is clear that the remoteness of a permutation code of length n is at most n . If

$$\sigma(i_1) = j_1, \sigma(i_2) = j_2, \dots, \sigma(i_k) = j_k$$

for all codewords $\sigma \in \mathcal{C}$ then by translation we can assume that $i_1 = j_1, i_2 = j_2, \dots, i_k = j_k$. So, $r(\mathcal{C})$ is unchanged by restriction to $\{1, \dots, n\} \setminus \{i_1, \dots, i_k\}$. Moreover, for computing the remoteness of any pair of permutations, it is sufficient to consider pairs of the form $\{1, \sigma\}$ by translation and it is shown that the remoteness depends on the cycle structure of σ . Notice that if $\mathcal{C} \subseteq \mathcal{D}$ then $r(\mathcal{C}) \leq r(\mathcal{D})$.

Theorem 2.1. [3, Proposition 4] *Let σ be a permutation, $d = d(1, \sigma)$ is even and $\mathcal{C} = \{1, \sigma\}$. Suppose that the cycle lengths l_1, l_2, \dots, l_k of σ , where $l_i \geq 2$, can be ordered in a way that there exists s such that $\sum_{i=1}^s l_i = \sum_{i=s+1}^k l_i = d/2$. Then $r(\mathcal{C}) = d/2$. Otherwise, $r(\mathcal{C}) = \lfloor d/2 \rfloor + 1$.*

Theorem 2.2. [3, Theorem 1] *Let $G = \langle a \rangle$. Suppose that $a \in S_n$ is a product of k distinct cycles with no fixed points. Then*

$$r(G) = \begin{cases} n - k & \text{if } a \text{ is an even permutation,} \\ n - k + 1 & \text{if } a \text{ is an odd permutation.} \end{cases}$$

It is noticeable that the parameters of a code are not intrinsic but they depend on the permutation representation. For example, the cyclic group of order six can be generated by $(1\ 2\ 3\ 4\ 5\ 6)$ or $(1\ 2)(3\ 4\ 5)$ in S_6 . By Theorem 2.2, in the first case the remoteness is 6 and in the second is 5.

Theorem 2.3. [3, Proposition 13] *Consider the dihedral group of order $2n$, i.e. D_{2n} , as a subgroup of S_n . Then*

$$r(D_{2n}) = \begin{cases} n - 1 & \text{if } n \equiv 1 \text{ or } 5 \pmod{6}, \\ n & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Theorem 2.4. [3, Proposition 4] *A transitive group G has remoteness $n - 1$ if and only if it has covering radius $n - 1$. Otherwise, the remoteness of G is n .*

A latin square of order n is an $n \times n$ array with entries from the set $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ so that each entry appears exactly once in any row and any column. A latin square is called cyclic if the first row contains $1, 2, \dots, n$ in increasing order and each row is derived from the previous one by a cyclic shift to the left. A $k \times n$ Latin rectangle ($k \leq n$) is a $k \times n$ array with entries from $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ such that each entry be exactly once in any row and at most once in any column. Notice that the rows of a latin square of order n define a code of length n and the minimum distance n .

Theorem 2.5. [3, Proposition 7] *If \mathcal{C} is a $k \times n$ latin rectangle then $r(\mathcal{C}) \geq n - \lfloor n/k \rfloor$. Moreover, if $k \equiv 0 \pmod{2}$, $n \equiv k \pmod{0}$ and \mathcal{C} consists of the first k rows of the cyclic latin square of order n then $r(\mathcal{C}) \geq n - \frac{n}{k} + 1$.*

3. REMOTENESS OF THE GROUP U_{6n}

In this section, we consider the group U_{6n} as a permutation code and study its remoteness and other parameters.

Let $n \geq 1$ be an integer. The group U_{6n} is a group of order $6n$ generated by two elements a and b in which the relations $a^{2n} = b^3 = 1$ and $a^{-1}ba = b^{-1}$ between generators are hold, i.e.

$$U_{6n} = \langle a, b \mid a^{2n} = b^3 = 1, a^{-1}ba = b^{-1} \rangle.$$

Clearly, the subgroup $\langle b \rangle$ is normal in U_{6n} and $U_{6n} = \langle b \rangle \rtimes \langle a \rangle \cong \mathbb{Z}_3 \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_{2n}$. It means that U_{6n} is the semidirect product of a cyclic group of order 3 by a cyclic group of order $2n$ and we can write

$$(1) \quad U_{6n} = \{a^r, a^r b, a^r b^2 \mid 0 \leq r \leq 2n - 1\}.$$

Notice that $U_6 \cong S_3$.

Let

$$\sigma = (1\ 2\ \dots\ 2n)(2n+1\ 2n+2)$$

and

$$\tau = (2n+1\ 2n+2\ 2n+3)$$

be two permutations in the symmetric group S_{2n+3} . It is easily seen that $\sigma^{2n} = 1$, $\tau^3 = 1$ and $\sigma^{-1}\tau\sigma\tau = 1$. Then, as noted in [6], the mappings $a \mapsto (1\ 2\ \dots\ 2n)(2n+1\ 2n+2)$ and $b \mapsto (2n+1\ 2n+2\ 2n+3)$ show that we can embed U_{6n} in S_{2n+3} . So, $U_{6n} = \langle \sigma, \tau \rangle$ and it is possible to consider U_{6n} as a subgroup of S_{2n+3} . Now, U_{6n} is a permutation code of length $2n+3$ and size $6n$.

For further works, let M be the $((6n) \times (2n+3))$ -array associated to the permutation code U_{6n} . Using (1), it is easy to see that

$$M = \left(\begin{array}{cccc|ccc} 1 & 2 & \dots & 2n & 2n+1 & 2n+2 & 2n+3 \\ 2 & 3 & \dots & 1 & 2n+2 & 2n+1 & 2n+3 \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots & \\ 2n-1 & 2n & \dots & 2n-2 & 2n+1 & 2n+2 & 2n+3 \\ 2n & 1 & \dots & 2n-1 & 2n+2 & 2n+1 & 2n+3 \\ \hline 1 & 2 & \dots & 2n & 2n+2 & 2n+3 & 2n+1 \\ 2 & 3 & \dots & 1 & 2n+1 & 2n+3 & 2n+2 \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots & \\ 2n-1 & 2n & \dots & 2n-2 & 2n+2 & 2n+3 & 2n+1 \\ 2n & 1 & \dots & 2n-1 & 2n+1 & 2n+3 & 2n+2 \\ \hline 1 & 2 & \dots & 2n & 2n+3 & 2n+1 & 2n+2 \\ 2 & 3 & \dots & 1 & 2n+3 & 2n+2 & 2n+1 \\ \vdots & \vdots & & \vdots & & \vdots & \\ 2n-1 & 2n & \dots & 2n-2 & 2n+3 & 2n+1 & 2n+2 \\ 2n & 1 & \dots & 2n-1 & 2n+3 & 2n+2 & 2n+1 \end{array} \right).$$

It is clear that

$$(2) \quad m_{ij} = \begin{cases} (i+j-2 \bmod 2n)+1 & \text{if } 1 \leq i \leq 2n, \\ (i+j-2n-2 \bmod 2n)+1 & \text{if } 2n+1 \leq i \leq 4n, \\ (i+j-4n-2 \bmod 2n)+1 & \text{if } 4n+1 \leq i \leq 6n, \end{cases}$$

for any $1 \leq i \leq 6n$ and $1 \leq j \leq 2n$. Here, the first $2n$ columns is consist of all of the cyclic shifts of the permutation $(1\ 2\ \dots\ 2n)$ in which the rows $2n+1$ through $6n$ are constructed by repetition of the

first $2n$ rows. For the last three columns, as it is seen, each of the blocks

$$\begin{pmatrix} 2n+1 & 2n+2 \\ 2n+2 & 2n+1 \\ 2n+3 & 2n+3 \end{pmatrix}^T, \begin{pmatrix} 2n+2 & 2n+1 \\ 2n+3 & 2n+3 \\ 2n+1 & 2n+2 \end{pmatrix}^T, \begin{pmatrix} 2n+3 & 2n+3 \\ 2n+1 & 2n+2 \\ 2n+2 & 2n+1 \end{pmatrix}^T,$$

are repeated n times. Set A, B and C be $(2n) \times (2n+3)$ submatrices that consist of the first, the second and the third $2n$ rows of M . Then,

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} A \\ B \\ C \end{pmatrix}.$$

In fact, $(i+1)$ -th rows of A, B and C ($0 \leq i \leq 2n-1$) are correspond to the elements $a^i, a^i b$ and $a^i b^2$ from the group U_{6n} , respectively. It is easily seen that

$$d(a^i b^j, a^k b^l) = \begin{cases} 3 & \text{if } i = k, \\ 2n+2 & \text{if } i \not\equiv k \pmod{2}, \\ 2n & \text{if } i \neq k, i \equiv k \pmod{2}, j = l, \\ 2n+3 & \text{if } i \neq k, i \equiv k \pmod{2}, j \neq l, \end{cases}$$

for any two distinct elements $a^i b^j, a^k b^l \in U_{6n}$, where $0 \leq i, k \leq 2n-1$ and $0 \leq j, l \leq 2$. So, $\delta(U_{6n}) = \rho(U_{6n}) = 2n+3$ and the minimum distance of U_{6n} is 3.

Theorem 3.1. *The remoteness of the permutation code U_{6n} is $2n+2$.*

Proof. Firstly, as noted in above, we have

$$\underbrace{\langle (1 \ 2 \ \dots \ 2n)(2n+1 \ 2n+2) \rangle}_{\sigma} \leq U_{6n} \leq S_{2n+3}.$$

On the other hand, Theorem 2.2 shows that $r(\sigma) = (2n+2) - 2 = 2n$. So,

$$2n \leq r(U_{6n}) \leq 2n+3.$$

Now, we complete the proof by the following three steps.

Step 1: Let $\pi = \pi_1 \ \pi_2 \ \dots \ \pi_{2n+3}$ be an arbitrary permutation in S_{2n+3} and recall that the rows of M are the codewords of U_{6n} . Denote by m_{ij} the entry in row i and column j of the matrix M and let m_1, m_2, \dots, m_{6n} be the rows of M . In fact, m_i is the permutation $m_{i1} \ m_{i2} \ \dots \ m_{i(2n+3)}$. Consider the sum of distances between π and the rows of M , i.e. $\sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi, m_i)$, which is equal to $\sum_{i=1}^{6n} \sum_{j=1}^{2n+3} d(\pi_j, m_{ij})$. Notice that $d(\pi_j, m_{ij})$ is 0 if $\pi_j = m_{ij}$ and 1 otherwise. We can find a lower bound for this sum by counting the number of different entries in any column. It is easy to see that if $1 \leq j \leq 2n$ then each of the numbers $1, 2, \dots, 2n$ exactly occurs 3 times at column j , and if

$2n + 1 \leq j \leq 2n + 3$ then column j contains each of the numbers $2n + 1, 2n + 2, 2n + 3$ exactly $2n$ times. Thus,

$$\sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) \geq 3(2n - 1) = 6n - 3$$

for all $1 \leq j \leq 2n$ and

$$\sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) \geq 2(2n) = 4n$$

for $j = 2n + 1, 2n + 2, 2n + 3$. Now, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi, m_i) &= \sum_{i=1}^{6n} \sum_{j=1}^{2n+3} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) \\ &= \sum_{j=1}^{2n} \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) + \sum_{j=2n+1}^{2n+3} \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) \\ &\geq 2n(6n - 3) + 3(4n) \\ (3) \qquad &= 12n^2 + 6n. \end{aligned}$$

So, there exists $1 \leq i \leq 6n$ such that $d(\pi, m_i) \geq \lceil (12n^2 + 6n)/(6n) \rceil = 2n + 1$. This implies that $r(U_{6n}) \geq 2n + 1$.

Step 2: We want to show that $r(U_{6n}) \geq 2n + 2$. Suppose to the contrary that there exists $\pi \in S_{2n+3}$ such that for all $i, d(\pi, m_i) \leq 2n + 1$. Now, (3) implies that $d(\pi, m_i) = 2n + 1$ for all i . Hence, π agrees with each m_i in exactly two positions and this means that π does not map $\{2n + 1, 2n + 2, 2n + 3\}$ to itself. So, there exists $1 \leq s \leq 3$ such that $\pi_{2n+s} = k, \pi_l = 2n + s$, where $1 \leq k, l \leq 2n$. Then, we have

$$\begin{aligned} 12n^2 + 6n &= \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi, m_i) \\ &= \sum_{i=1}^{6n} \sum_{j=1}^{2n+3} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) \\ &= \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ j \neq l}}^{2n} \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) + \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_l, m_{il}) \\ &\quad + \sum_{\substack{j=2n+1 \\ j \neq 2n+s}}^{2n+3} \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_j, m_{ij}) + \sum_{i=1}^{6n} d(\pi_{2n+s}, m_{i(2n+s)}) \\ &\geq \sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ j \neq l}}^{2n} (6n - 3) + 6n + \sum_{\substack{j=2n+1 \\ j \neq 2n+s}}^{2n+3} (4n) + 6n \\ &= (2n - 1)(6n - 3) + 6n + 2(4n) + 6n \\ &= 12n^2 + 8n + 3, \end{aligned}$$

which is desired contradiction. Thus, $r(U_{6n}) \geq 2n + 2$.

Step 3: Finally, we construct a permutation $\pi \in S_{2n+3}$ such that $d(\pi, m_i) \leq 2n+2$ for all m_i . Define $\pi_j \equiv 3j - 2 \pmod{2n}$ for any $1 \leq j \leq 2n$. Notice that π is identity on the set $\{2n+1, 2n+2, 2n+3\}$. It is sufficient to show that this permutation agrees with each row of the matrix M in at least one position. By looking to the last three columns of M , it is seen that π agrees with the rows of A , the even rows of B and the even rows of C in at least one position. On the other hand, the first $2n$ columns of B and C are the same and their $(2i-1, j)$ -th entry is $j+2i-2$, where $1 \leq i \leq n$ and $1 \leq j \leq 2n$. Now, the equation $3j-2 \equiv j+2i-2 \pmod{2n}$ gives us $j=i$ or $i+n$. In other words, π agrees with the odd rows of B and C in exactly two positions. \square

Remark 3.1. Notice that in step 3 of the proof of Theorem 3.1, we can replace σ by the permutations $\pi\tau$ and $\pi\tau^2$, because they are at distance at most $2n+2$ from all codewords. Moreover, if we define $\pi_j \equiv 3j-1 \pmod{2n}$ for any $1 \leq j \leq 2n$ then similar arguments show that the permutations $\pi(2n+1 \ 2n+2)$, $\pi(2n+1 \ 2n+3)$ and $\pi(2n+2 \ 2n+3)$ have the desired property too.

Theorem 3.2. *The covering radius of U_{6n} is $2n+2$.*

Proof. It is easily seen that for any π in S_{2n+3} there exist $1 \leq i \leq 2n$ and $1 \leq j \leq 2n+3$ such that $\pi_j = m_{ij}$, where $M = (m_{ij})$ is the array associated to U_{6n} . Hence, $\min_i d(\pi, m_i) \leq 2n+2$.

Now, we construct a permutation $\mu \in S_{2n+3}$ such that $\min_i d(\mu, m_i) = 2n+2$. We define

$$\mu(j) = \begin{cases} 2j & \text{if } 1 \leq j \leq n, \\ 2(j-n)+1 & \text{if } n+1 \leq j \leq 2n-3, \\ 2n+1 & \text{if } j = 2n-2, \\ 2n+2 & \text{if } j = 2n-1, \\ 2n+3 & \text{if } j = 2n, \\ 1 & \text{if } j = 2n+1, \\ 2n-3 & \text{if } j = 2n+2, \\ 2n-1 & \text{if } j = 2n+3. \end{cases}$$

The construction of μ and (2) show that μ is agreement with any m_i in at most one position. So, μ is at a distance of $2n+2$ and $2n+3$ from all codewords of U_{6n} . This completes the proof. \square

It is noticeable that we can construct more permutations with the property discussed in the proof of Theorem 3.2 and permutation μ is not unique. Theorems 3.1 and 3.2 show that U_{6n} is a non-transitive permutation group with the same remoteness and covering radius.

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