

4 Meromorphic Functions satisfying some Functional Equations

In this section, we consider two non-constant meromorphic functions f and g satisfying the functional equation

$$\frac{(f')^k}{f(f-1)} = \frac{(g')^k}{g(g-1)}, \quad (4.1)$$

and study the relationship between f and g .

First, we consider the simplest case that $k = 1$.

Theorem 4.1 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.1) with $k = 1$, that is,*

$$\frac{f'}{f(f-1)} = \frac{g'}{g(g-1)}. \quad (4.2)$$

Then f and g have one of the following relations:

- (i) $f = g$;
- (ii) $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$;
- (iii) $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$ for some constant $c \neq -1, 0, 1$.

Proof. Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.2), we can write

$$\frac{f'}{f-1} - \frac{f'}{f} = \frac{g'}{g-1} - \frac{g'}{g},$$

and integrate to obtain

$$\frac{f-1}{f} = c \frac{g-1}{g},$$

where $c \neq 0$ is a const.

Case 1. If $c = 1$, $1 - \frac{1}{f} = 1 - \frac{1}{g}$, then $f = g$.

Case 2. If $c = -1$, $1 - \frac{1}{f} = -1 + \frac{1}{g}$, then $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$.

Case 3. If $c \neq -1, 1$, then $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$, for some constant $c \neq -1, 0, 1$. \square

Note that (ii) and (iii) can occur. For (ii), let f be an arbitrary given meromorphic function and $g = \frac{f}{2f-1}$. Then it is easy to see that f and g satisfy (4.2) and $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$. Similarly, for (iii), let f be an arbitrary given meromorphic function and $g = \frac{cf}{(c-1)f+1}$. Then we can see easily that f and g satisfy (4.2) and $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$.

Corollary 4.2 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.2). Then f and g have the same characteristic function, i.e., $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$. In particular, they have the same order.*

Proof. By Theorem 4.1, there are only three possibilities:

Case 1. If $f = g$, then $T(r, f) = T(r, g)$.

Case 2. If $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$, then $T(r, \frac{1}{f}) = T(r, 2 - \frac{1}{g})$, which implies that $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$.

Case 3. If $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$, then $\frac{1}{f} = 1 - c + \frac{c}{g}$, which implies that $T(r, \frac{1}{f}) = T(r, 1 - c + \frac{c}{g})$. Again, we have $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$.

Therefore, in any case, we have $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$, and f and g have the same order. \square

Corollary 4.3 *Let f and g be non-constant polynomials satisfying (4.2). Then $f = g$.*

Proof. Assume that

$$f(z) = a_n z^n + a_{n-1} z^{n-1} + \dots + a_0, \quad n \geq 1$$

and

$$g(z) = b_m z^m + b_{m-1} z^{m-1} + \dots + b_0, \quad m \geq 1$$

By Theorem 4.1, there are only three possibilities. If (ii) of Theorem 4.1 holds, then $f + g = 2fg$. By comparing their degree, we obtain a contradiction. Hence, it can not be occurred. By the same argument, so is (iii) of Theorem 4.1. Therefore, $f = g$.

□

Corollary 4.4 *Let f and g be non-constant rational functions satisfying (4.2). Then f and g have one of the following relations:*

(i) $f = g$;

(ii) $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$;

(iii) $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$ for some constant $c \neq -1, 0, 1$.

Note that (ii) and (iii) can occur. For (ii), let $f = \frac{1}{z}$ and $g = \frac{1}{2-z}$. Then it is easy to see that f and g satisfy (4.2) and $\frac{1}{f} + \frac{1}{g} = 2$. Similarly, for (iii), let $f = \frac{1}{z}$ and $g = \frac{c}{z-1+c}$. Then we can see easily that f and g satisfy (4.2) and $\frac{1}{f} - \frac{c}{g} = 1 - c$.

Theorem 4.5 *Let f and g be non-constant rational functions satisfying (4.2). If there exists a point z_0 such that $f(z_0) = g(z_0) = \infty$. Then $f = g$.*

Proof. If $f(z_1) = 0$, then by Corollary 4.4, we get $g(z_1) = 0$, and conversely. By computing the residues of both sides in (4.2), $f(z_1)$ and $g(z_1)$ have the same multiplicity at z_1 . Therefore, f and g share 0 CM. Similarly, f and g share 1 CM.

By Corollary 3.6 and the hypothesis, we get $f = g$. □

Definition 4.6 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions, a_1 and a_2 be two arbitrary complex numbers. If $f - a_1$ and $g - a_2$ have the same zeros (counting multiplicity), then we say that f and g share the pair (a_1, a_2) CM.*

Theorem 4.7 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.2). Then*

- (i) *If (ii) of Theorem 4.1 holds, then f and g share 0, 1 CM, and share the pairs $(\frac{1}{2}, \infty)$, $(\infty, \frac{1}{2})$ CM.*
- (ii) *If (iii) of Theorem 4.1 holds, then f and g share 0, 1 CM, and share the pairs $(\frac{1}{1-c}, \infty)$, $(\infty, \frac{c}{c-1})$ CM.*

Proof.

First, it follows from Theorem 4.1 that f and g share 0 and 1 CM.

Now, we claim that f and g share the pair $(\frac{1}{2}, \infty)$ CM if (ii) of Theorem 4.1 occurs. Clearly, $f(z_1) = \frac{1}{2} \Leftrightarrow g(z_1) = \infty$. Let $f(z_1) = \frac{1}{2}$ and $g(z_1) = \infty$ with multiplicities p and q , resp. Write

$$f(z) = \frac{1}{2} + (z - z_1)^p h_1(z), \quad h_1(z_1) \neq 0$$

and

$$g(z) = (z - z_1)^{-q} h_2(z), \quad h_2(z_1) \neq 0,$$

then

$$\frac{f'(z)}{f(z)(f(z) - 1)} = (z - z_1)^{p-1} \varphi_1(z), \quad \varphi_1(z_1) \neq 0,$$

and

$$\frac{g'(z)}{g(z)(g(z) - 1)} = (z - z_1)^{q-1} \varphi_2(z), \quad \varphi_2(z_1) \neq 0.$$

By the hypothesis, we get $p = q$, this implies f and g share the pair $(\frac{1}{2}, \infty)$ CM. Clearly, $f(z_1) = \infty \Leftrightarrow g(z_1) = \frac{1}{2}$, by the same argument. Therefore, f and g share the pair $(\infty, \frac{1}{2})$ CM.

Finally, we claim that f and g share the pair $(\frac{1}{1-c}, \infty)$ CM if (iii) of Theorem 4.1 occurs. Clearly, $f(z_2) = \frac{1}{1-c} \Leftrightarrow g(z_2) = \infty$. Let $f(z_2) = \frac{1}{1-c}$ and $g(z_2) = \infty$ with multiplicities p and q , resp. Write

$$f(z) = \frac{1}{1-c} + (z - z_2)^p \psi_1(z), \quad \psi_1(z_2) \neq 0$$

and

$$g(z) = (z - z_2)^{-q} \psi_2(z), \quad \psi_2(z_2) \neq 0,$$

then

$$\frac{f'(z)}{f(z)(f(z) - 1)} = (z - z_2)^{p-1} \xi_1(z), \quad \xi_1(z_2) \neq 0,$$

and

$$\frac{g'(z)}{g(z)(g(z) - 1)} = (z - z_2)^{q-1} \xi_2(z), \quad \xi_2(z_2) \neq 0.$$

By the hypothesis, we get $p = q$. Hence f and g share the pair $(\frac{1}{2-c}, \infty)$ CM. Clearly, $f(z_2) = \infty \Leftrightarrow g(z_2) = \frac{c}{c-1}$, by the same argument. Therefore, f and g share the pair $(\infty, \frac{c}{c-1})$ CM. \square

Next, we consider the case that $k = 2$ in (4.1). In the proof of a result in [11], one can find that it contains the following result. For completeness, we give a proof.

Theorem 4.8 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.1) with $k = 2$, that is,*

$$\frac{(f')^2}{f(f-1)} = \frac{(g')^2}{g(g-1)}. \quad (4.3)$$

Then f and g have one of the following relations:

- (i) $f = g$;
- (ii) $f = 1 - g$;
- (iii) $(f^2 + g^2) - (1 + c)(f + g) + 2cfg + \frac{(1+c)^2}{4} = 0$, for some constant $c \neq -1, 1$.

Proof. Put $F = 2f - 1$ and $G = 2g - 1$. Then from (4.3) we obtain

$$\frac{(F')^2}{F^2 - 1} = \frac{(G')^2}{G^2 - 1}, \quad (4.4)$$

We denote by A the common function in (4.3). Then, we have

$$\frac{(F')^2}{A} = F^2 - 1 \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{(G')^2}{A} = G^2 - 1 \quad (4.5)$$

Differentiate the functions in (4.5), we obtain

$$\frac{2F'F''A - (F')^2A'}{A^2} = 2FF' \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{2G'G''A - (G')^2A'}{A^2} = 2GG'.$$

As $F' \neq 0$, $G' \neq 0$, we have

$$\frac{2F''A - F'A'}{A^2} = 2F \quad \text{and} \quad \frac{2G''A - G'A'}{A^2} = 2G.$$

Add them side by side to obtain

$$\frac{2(F'' + G'')A - (F' + G')A'}{A^2} = 2(F + G). \quad (4.6)$$

Multiply (4.6) by $F' + G'$ to obtain

$$\frac{2(F'' + G'')(F' + G')A - (F' + G')^2A'}{A^2} = 2(F + G)(F' + G'). \quad (4.7)$$

Integrate (4.7) to get

$$\frac{(F' + G')^2}{A} = (F + G)^2 + c', \quad (4.8)$$

where c' is a constant. From (4.5) and (4.8) we have

$$\frac{F'G'}{A} = FG + c, \quad (4.9)$$

where $c = \frac{c'}{2} + 1$. Eliminating A , F' and G' from (4.5) and (4.9) we have

$$(F^2 - 1)(G^2 - 1) = (FG + c)^2,$$

that is,

$$F^2 + 2cFG + G^2 = 1 - c^2. \quad (4.10)$$

Eliminating F and G from $F = 2f - 1$, $G = 2g - 1$ and (4.10), we have

$$(f^2 + g^2) - (1 + c)(f + g) + 2cfg + \frac{(c + 1)^2}{4} = 0. \quad (4.11)$$

Now, we have the following cases:

Case 1. If $c = -1$, then $f = g$;

Case 2. If $c = 1$, then $f = 1 - g$;

Case 3. If $c \neq -1, 1$, then $(f^2 + g^2) - (1 + c)(f + g) + 2cfg + \frac{(c+1)^2}{4} = 0$. \square

Corollary 4.9 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.3). Then f and g have the same characteristic function, i.e., $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$. In particular, they have the same order.*

Proof. By Theorem 4.8, there are only three possibilities:

Case 1. If $f = g$, then $T(r, f) = T(r, g)$;

Case 2. If $f = 1 - g$, then $T(r, f) = T(r, 1 - g)$, this implies $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$;

Case 3. If $c \neq -1, 1$, we divide (4.11) by g^2 to obtain

$$\left(\frac{f}{g}\right)^2 + 1 - (1 + c)\left(\frac{f}{g^2} + \frac{1}{g}\right) + 2c\frac{f}{g} + \frac{(1 + c)^2}{4g^2} = 0.$$

We get $2T(r, g) = 2T(r, \frac{f}{g}) + O(1)$. By symmetry, divide (4.11) by f^2 , we also have

$$2T(r, f) = 2T(r, \frac{g}{f}) + O(1).$$

By Theorem 2.9, we know that $T(r, \frac{g}{f}) = T(r, \frac{f}{g}) + O(1)$, then we have $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$.

Therefore, in any case, we have $T(r, f) = T(r, g) + O(1)$. In particular, f and g have the same order. \square

Corollary 4.10 *Let f and g be non-constant polynomials satisfying (4.3). Then f and g have the same degree and satisfying:*

(i) $f = g$;

(ii) $f + g = 1$;

Proof. First, we prove that f and g have the same degree. If (i) and (ii) of Theorem 4.8 holds, then f and g have the same degree. Now, assume that (iii) of Theorem 4.8 occurs the degree of f is n and the degree of g is m , $n \neq m$. Then

$$(f^2 + g^2) - (1 + c)(f + g) + 2c\frac{fg}{g} + \frac{(1 + c)^2}{4}$$

is a non-constant polynomial of degree $\max\{2n, 2m\} \geq 2$ which is a contradiction. Therefore, (iii) of Theorem 4.8 can't be occurred.

Then, we have only the possibility $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$ by Theorem 4.8.

□

Note that (ii) can occur. Let $f(z) = z$ and $g(z) = 1 - z$. Then it is easy to see that f and g satisfy (4.3) and $f + g = 1$. For rational function, (ii) can occur. For example, let $f(z) = \frac{1}{z}$ and $g(z) := 1 - \frac{1}{z}$. Then it is easy to see that f and g satisfy (4.3) and $f + g = 1$.

Finally, we consider the case that $k \geq 3$ in (4.1).

Definition 4.11 *Let f be a non-constant meromorphic function and let S be a subset in the extended complex plane \mathbb{C}_∞ . Define*

$$E_f(S) = \bigcup_{a \in S} \{z | f(z) - a = 0\},$$

where a zero of $f - a$ with multiplicity m counts m times in $E_f(S)$. If g is another meromorphic function and $E_f(S) = E_g(S)$, then we say that f and g share the set S CM.

The main properties of such f and g is as follows.

Theorem 4.12 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.1) with $k \geq 3$, that is,*

$$\frac{(f')^k}{f(f-1)} = \frac{(g')^k}{g(g-1)}.$$

Then f and g share ∞ CM, and the set $\{0, 1\}$ CM.

Proof. Denote by

$$F = \frac{(f')^k}{f(f-1)} \quad \text{and} \quad G = \frac{(g')^k}{g(g-1)}.$$

If z_0 is a pole of f of multiplicity p , then F has a pole at z_0 of multiplicity $(k-2)p+k \geq 4$, so is G by assumption. Now, we claim that g has a pole at z_0 of multiplicity p

Assume that z_0 is a zero of g of multiplicity q . If $q = 1$, then G has a simple pole which is impossible. If $q \geq 2$, then G has a zero at z_0 of multiplicity $q(k-1)-k \geq 0$, which is also impossible. Therefore, z_0 is not a zero of g . Similarly, z_0 is not a 1-point of g . Hence g must have a pole at z_0 of multiplicity q . By the same argument as in the beginning, $p = q$. Conversely, if g has a pole at z_0 of multiplicity p , then f has a pole at z_0 of multiplicity p . So f and g share ∞ CM.

Now assume that z_0 is a zero of $f(z)$ of multiplicity p . If $p = 1$, then F has a simple pole at z_0 . If $p \geq 2$, then F has a zero at z_0 of multiplicity $p(k-1)-k \geq 0$. As in the first part of proof, g can not have a pole at z_0 . So $g(z_0) = 0$ or 1 . If z_0 is a zero of $g(z)$ with multiplicity q , as above, either G has a simple pole at z_0 or G has a zero at z_0 of multiplicity $(k-1)q-k$. Since $F = G$, it must be $p = q$. If z_0 is a 1-point of g of multiplicity q , then either G has a simple at z_0 or G has a zero at z_0 of multiplicity $(k-1)q-k$. Again, $p = q$.

Similarly, if z_1 is a 1-point of f of multiplicity p , then either z_1 is a zero of g of multiplicity p or z_1 is a 1-point of g of multiplicity p . Conversely, we can reverse the roles of f and g . Therefore, f and g share the set $\{0, 1\}$ CM.

□

Corollary 4.13 *Let f and g be non-constant meromorphic functions satisfying (4.1) with $k \geq 3$. Then $T(r, f) = O(T(r, g))$ and $T(r, g) = O(T(r, f))$. In particular, f and g have the same order.*

Proof. By Theorem 2.12 for $q = 3$, and from Theorem 4.12, we have

$$\begin{aligned} T(r, f) &\leq \overline{N}(r, f) + \overline{N}\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + \overline{N}\left(r, \frac{1}{f-1}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= \overline{N}(r, g) + \overline{N}\left(r, \frac{1}{g}\right) + \overline{N}\left(r, \frac{1}{g-1}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq 3T(r, g) + S(r, f), \end{aligned}$$

which implies that

$$T(r, f) = O(T(r, g)).$$

Similarly, we get

$$T(r, g) = O(T(r, f)).$$

Therefore, f and g have the same order. □

In the following, we consider some interesting simple cases, and obtain some results.

Theorem 4.14 *Let f and g are non-constant polynomials of degree one satisfying (4.1) with $k \geq 3$. Then either $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$.*

Proof. Assume that $f(z) = az + b$ and $g(z) = cz + d$, $a \neq 0$ and $c \neq 0$. From

$$\frac{(f')^k}{f(f-1)} = \frac{(g')^k}{g(g-1)},$$

we have

$$\frac{a^k}{(az+b)(az+b-1)} = \frac{c^k}{(cz+d)(cz+d-1)},$$

which implies that

$$A^k [c^2 z^2 + (2cd - c)z + (d^2 - d)] = [a^2 z^2 + (2ab - a)z + (b^2 - b)], \quad (4.12)$$

where $A = \frac{a}{c}$ is a non-constant. Compare the coefficients of both sides in (4.12), we get

$$A^k = A^2, \quad (4.13)$$

$$A(2d - 1) = 2b - 1, \quad (4.14)$$

and

$$A^k(d^2 - d) = (b^2 - b), \quad (4.15)$$

Now, we have two cases:

Case 1. If $d = \frac{1}{2}$, then $b = \frac{1}{2}$ by (4.14) and $A \neq 0$, and $A^2 = 1$ by (4.15) and (4.13). If $A = 1$, then $a = c$, which implies that $f = g$. If $A = -1$, then $a = -c$, which implies that $f + g = 1$. We are done.

Case 2. If $d \neq \frac{1}{2}$, then $b \neq \frac{1}{2}$ by (4.14) and $A \neq 0$,

we divide the discussion into five subcases:

Subcase 2.1. $d = 0$ and $b = 0$. Then we get $A = 1$ by (4.14), and $f = g$.

Subcase 2.2. $d = 0$ and $b = 1$. Then we get $A = -1$ by (4.14), and $f + g = 1$.

Subcase 2.3. $d = 1$ and $b = 0$. Then we get $A = -1$ by (4.14), and $f + g = 1$.

Subcase 2.4. $d = 1$ and $b = 1$. Then we get $A = 1$ by (4.14), and $f = g$.

Subcase 2.5. $d \neq 0, 1$ and $b \neq 0, 1$. Then by (4.13), (4.14) and (4.15), we have

$$\left(\frac{2b - 1}{2d - 1}\right)^2 = \frac{b^2 - b}{d^2 - d},$$

which implies that $d^2 - d = b^2 - b$. By (4.15) and (4.13), we get $A^2 = 1$. Again, we also have $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$ by case1.

Therefore, in any case, we always have $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$. □

Now, in order to get another result for non-constant rational functions f and g satisfying (4.1) with $k \geq 3$, we need some preliminaries.

Lemma 4.15 *Let f be a non-constant rational function. Then, for any positive integer n , $f^n, f^{n-1}, \dots, f^2, f, 1$ are linearly independent.*

Proof. By induction. For $n = 1$, if $f, 1$ are linearly dependent, then there exist $a, b \in \mathbb{C}$ not all zeros, such that $af + b = 0$. If $a \neq 0$, then $f = -\frac{b}{a}$ is a constant, which is a contradiction. Now, we assume that $a = 0$, then we get $b = 0$ which is impossible. Hence, $f, 1$ are linearly independent.

Assume that $f^{n-1}, f^{n-2}, \dots, f, 1$ are linearly independent for $n \geq 3$. Since $f(z)$ be a non-constant rational function, we may assume that

$$f(z) = \frac{q(z)}{p(z)}, \quad (4.16)$$

where $(p(z), q(z)) = 1$, and $p(z), q(z)$ are complex polynomials. Assume that

$$a_n f(z)^n + a_{n-1} f(z)^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 f(z) + a_0 = 0, \quad (4.17)$$

where $a_i \in \mathbb{C}$, $0 \leq i \leq n$. From (4.16) and (4.17), we have

$$a_n \left(\frac{q(z)}{p(z)}\right)^n + a_{n-1} \left(\frac{q(z)}{p(z)}\right)^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 \left(\frac{q(z)}{p(z)}\right) + a_0 = 0, \quad (4.18)$$

which implies that

$$a_n q(z)^n + a_{n-1} q(z)^{n-1} p(z) + \dots + a_1 q(z) p(z)^{n-1} + a_0 p(z)^n = 0. \quad (4.19)$$

Now, we divide the proof into three cases:

Case 1. $q(z)$ is a constant. In this case, $p(z)$ is a non-constant polynomial. Choose $z_0 \in \mathbb{C}$ such that $p(z_0) = 0$. By (4.19), we get $a_n = 0$. Hence, (4.19) becomes

$$a_{n-1} f(z)^{n-1} + \dots + a_1 f(z) + a_0 = 0.$$

By induction hypothesis, we conclude that $a_{n-1} = \dots = a_0 = 0$.

Case 2. $p(z)$ is a constant. The leading coefficient of the left-hand side in (4.19) must be zero. i.e. $a_n b^n = 0$, where b is the leading coefficient of $q(z)$. Hence, $a_n = 0$. As in Case 1, we get $a_{n-1} = \dots = a_0 = 0$.

Case 3. $p(z)$ and $q(z)$ are not constant. Choose a point z_0 such that $p(z_0) = 0$. Since $(p(z), q(z)) = 1$, then $q(z_0) \neq 0$. This implies that $a_n q(z_0)^n = 0$. Hence, $a_n = 0$. Similarly, we get $a_{n-1} = \dots = a_0 = 0$.

In any case $f^n, f^{n-1}, \dots, f, 1$ are linearly independent. \square

Theorem 4.16 *Let f and g be non-constant rational functions satisfying (4.1) with $k \geq 3$. Then either $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$.*

Proof. By Theorem 4.12, we may write

$$\frac{g(g-1)}{f(f-1)} = e^\alpha, \quad (4.20)$$

where α is an entire function. Since the left-hand side of (4.20) is a rational function. Then, e^α must be a nonzero constant, say $e^\alpha = c \neq 0$. From, (4.1) and (4.20), we have

$$\left(\frac{f'}{g'}\right)^k = \frac{f(f-1)}{g(g-1)} = \frac{1}{c}.$$

Choose $a \in \mathbb{C}$ such that $a^k = c$. We get

$$\left(\frac{af'}{g'}\right)^k = 1.$$

Let $w = \frac{af'}{g'}$, that is, $w^k = 1$, which implies that w is a constant, and we have

$$g' = \frac{a}{w} f'. \quad (4.21)$$

And integral (4.21) to obtain

$$g = Af + B,$$

where $A = \frac{a}{w}$, and B are constants. Again, from (4.1), we obtain

$$\frac{(f')^k}{f(f-1)} = \frac{(Af')^k}{(Af+B)(Af+B-1)},$$

which implies that

$$(A^2 - A^k)f^2 + (2AB - A + A^k)f + (B^2 - B) = 0.$$

By Lemma 4.15 for $n = 2$, $f^2, f, 1$ are linearly independent, hence

$$A^2 - A^k = 0,$$

$$2AB - A + A^k = 0,$$

$$B^2 - B = 0.$$

By a simple calculation, we get $B = 0$ and $A = 1$ or $B = 1$ and $A = -1$ which implies that $f = g$ or $f + g = 1$, respectively. \square