PRIMITIVE/SEIFERT KNOTS WHICH ARE NOT TWISTED TORUS KNOT POSITION

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Abstract. The twisted torus knots and the primitive/Seifert knots both lie on a genus 2 Heegaard surface of S^3 . In [5], J. Dean used the twisted torus knots to provide an abundance of examples of primitive/Seifert knots. Also he showed that not all twisted torus knots are primitive/Seifert knots. In this paper, we study the other inclusion. In other words, it shows that not all primitive/Seifert knots are twisted torus knot position. In fact, we give infinitely many primitive/Seifert knots that are not twisted torus knot position.

1. Introduction

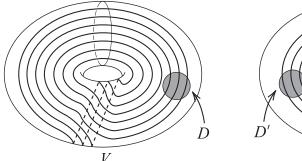
Two types of knots in S^3 , the twisted torus knots and the primitive/Seifert knots, both lie on a genus 2 Heegaard surface of S^3 . In [5], J. Dean defined primitive/Seifert knots, and to find primitive/Seifert knots he used the twisted torus knots. Furthermore he gave the criteria for twisted torus knots to be primitive/Seifert knots. Also he showed that not all twisted torus knots are primitive/Seifert knots. On the other hand, in [3] Berge and the author give the complete list of hyperbolic primitive/Seifert knots in S^3 . Thus one natural question is whether or not all hyperbolic primitive/Seifert knots belong to the twisted torus knots. This paper gives an implication for a negative answer. In other words, we provide infinitely many primitive/Seifert knots which are not the twisted torus knot position.

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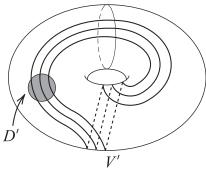


FIGURE 1. The (7,3) torus knot T(7,3) and 3 parallel copies 3T(1,1) of the (1,1) torus knot.

Since the precise definitions of the twisted torus knots and the primitive/Seifert knots can both be found in [5], we give brief explanation on how to construct them.

First regarding the twisted torus knots, let T(p,q) be the (p,q)-torus knot which lies in the boundary of the standardly embedded solid torus V in S^3 . Let rT(m,n) be the r parallel copies of T(m,n) which lies in the boundary of another standardly embedded solid torus V' in S^3 . Let D be the disk in ∂V so that T(p,q) intersects D in r disjoint parallel arcs, where $0 \le r \le p+q$, and D' the disk in $\partial V'$ so that rT(m,n) intersects D' in r disjoint parallel arcs, one for each component of rT(m, n). See Figure 1. We excise the disks D and D' from their respective tori and glue the punctured tori together along their boundaries so that the orientations of T(p,q) and rT(m,n) align correctly. The resulting one must result in a knot and is called a twisted torus knot, which is denoted by K(p,q,r,m,n). Figure 2 shows K(7,3,3,1,1). It is obvious from the construction that the twisted torus knots lie on a standard genus 2 Heegaard surface of S^3 . Let K be a simple closed curve in a genus 2 Heegaard surface Σ of S^3 . Then we say that K is a twisted torus knot position if there exists a homeomorphism of S^3 sending (Σ, K) to (F, K'), where K' is a twisted torus knot lying in a standard genus 2 Heegaard surface F of S^3 .

Now we describe primitive/Seifert knots. If H is a genus two handle-body and c is an essential simple closed curve in ∂H , H[c] will denote the 3-manifold obtained by adding a 2-handle to H along c. The curve c in ∂H is primitive in H if H[c] is a solid torus. We say c is Seifert in H if H[c] is a Seifert-fibered space and not a solid torus. Note that

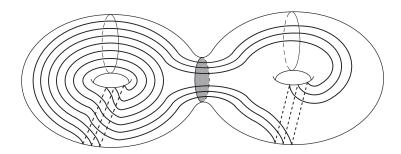


FIGURE 2. The twisted torus knot K(7,3,3,1,1).

since H is a genus two handlebody, that c is Seifert in H implies that H[c] is an orientable Seifert-fibered space over D^2 with two exceptional fibers, or an orientable Seifert-fibered space over the Möbius band with at most one exceptional fiber.

Suppose K is a simple closed curve in a genus two Heegaard surface Σ of S^3 bounding handlebodies H and H'. K in Σ is *primitive/Seifert* if it is primitive with respect to one of H or H', say H', and Seifert with respect to H.

2. Backgrounds on R-R diagrams

R-R diagrams are a type of planar diagram related to Heegaard diagrams. These diagrams were originally introduced by Osborne and Stevens in [6]. They enable us to analyze curves which lie very complicatedly on the boundary of a genus two handlebody. They are particularly useful for describing embeddings of simple closed curves in the boundary of a handlebody so that the embedded curves represent certain conjugacy classes in π_1 of the handlebody.

The basics of Heegaard diagrams and R-R diagrams of simple closed curves in the boundary of a genus two handlebody are well explained in the paper [1] of Berge. Here, we describe briefly terminologies related to R-R diagrams and show how to transform simple closed curves in the boundary of a genus two handlebody into R-R diagrams.

We start with a genus two handlebody H with a complete set of cutting disks $\{D_A, D_B\}$. Suppose C is a set of pairwise disjoint simple closed curves in the boundary Σ of H. Figure 3 shows two simple closed curves in the boundary of a genus two handlebody. Consider two parallel

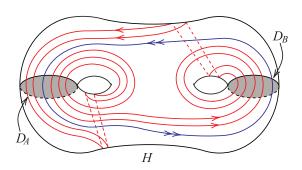


FIGURE 3. Two simple closed curves in the boundary of a genus two handlebody.

simple closed curves which separate the two cutting disks D_A and D_B . These two curves decompose Σ into two once-punctured tori F_A and F_B , and one annulus A. These two curves were originally introduced by Zieschang [7] as belt curves, and the two once-punctured tori F_A and F_B are called handles. See Figures 4 and 5 for this decomposition.

With this decomposition of Σ set, we analyze each curve in \mathcal{C} in each component of the decomposition as follows. We may assume after isotopy each curve $c \in \mathcal{C}$ is either disjoint from $\partial F_A \cup \partial F_B$, or c is cut by its intersections with $\partial F_A \cup \partial F_B$ into arcs, each properly embedded and essential in one of A, F_A , F_B . A properly embedded essential arc in F_A or F_B is called a connection. Two connections in F_A or F_B are parallel if they are isotopic in F_A or F_B via an isotopy keeping their endpoints in ∂F_A or ∂F_B . A collection of pairwise disjoint connections on a given handle can be partitioned into bands of pairwise parallel connections. Note that since each handle is a once-punctured torus, there can be at most three nonparallel bands of connections on a given handle. Figure 5 shows that there are three nonparallel bands of connections in F_A and there are two in F_B .

In each handle, we merge parallel connections in one band into a single connection. This also merges the endpoints of connections on the boundary of each handle. With these endpoints merged in each handle, now we merge properly embedded essential arcs in \mathcal{A} such that if n parallel arcs in \mathcal{A} have the same endpoints in each handle after merging connections, then we merge these arcs into one edge and label this edge by n indicating n parallel arcs and call this edge with label n as n band of width n.

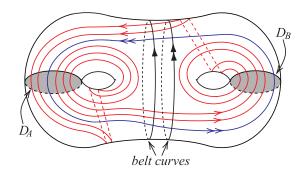


FIGURE 4. Belt curves bounding an annulus in a genus two surface.

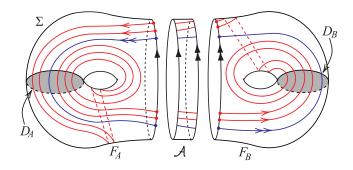


FIGURE 5. An annulus A and two handles F_A and F_B .

With all of the above information provided, we are ready to transform simple closed curves in the boundary of a genus two handlebody into R-R diagrams, which are type of a planar graph in S^2 . First, we embed the annulus A in S^2 by deleting two disks from S^2 as shown in Figure 6. Next we immerse arc components of curves lying in the two handles F_A and F_B into S^2 as follows. Since each boundary of A is also the boundary of the handles F_A and F_B , and there are at most three connections after merger, put the six endpoints of the three connections in each boundary circle of A and connect two endpoints of a connection by a diameter. Figure 6 shows this transformation. We put the capital letters A and B to indicate correspondence to the two handles F_A and F_B respectively and we call them as A-handle and B-handle respectively.

We encode the endpoints of each band of connections by integers as follows. Orient the boundaries of the cutting disks D_A and D_B and each simple closed curve in \mathcal{C} . The orientation of a simple closed curve gives

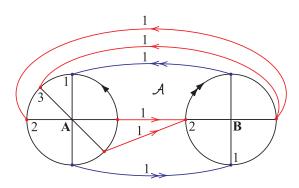


FIGURE 6. Immersion of curves of C into S^2 which becomes a corresponding R-R diagram.

the orientation of connections in a handle distinguishing its endpoints as an initial point and a terminal point. If a connection intersects a cutting disk s times positively, we label an initial point by s and a terminal point by -s, and we say the band of connections with endpoints labeled by s and -s as s-connection or (-s)-connection. Note that the labels of endpoints satisfy the following conditions:

- (1) If s and t are consecutive labels of endpoints of two connections, then gcd(s,t) = 1.
- (2) If s, t, and u are consecutive labels of endpoints of three connections, then t = s + u.

By disregarding the boundary circles of F_A and F_B in Figure 6, we finally obtain the corresponding R-R diagram. Figure 7 shows the transformation of two curves c_1 and c_2 in the boundary of a genus two handlebody into R-R diagram.

As mentioned at the beginning in this section, R-R diagram gives sufficient information about conjugacy classes of the element represented by c in $\pi_1(H)$. $\pi_1(H)$ is a free group F(A,B) which is generated by A and B dual to the cutting disks D_A and D_B respectively. In Figure 7, c_1 and c_2 represent the conjugacy classes of AB and $A^3B^2A^2B^2$ respectively in $\pi_1(H)$.

3. R-R diagrams of twisted torus knots and their properties

In this section, we describe the R-R diagram of twisted torus knots. From the construction or Figures 1 and 2, a twisted torus knot lies on

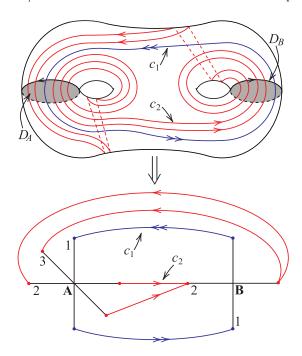


FIGURE 7. Transformation into R-R diagram.

the boundary of a standardly embedded genus two handlebody H in S^3 , which is obtained from two solid tori by gluing the disks D and D'. Let H' be the closure of $S^3 - H$, which is also a genus two handlebody, and Σ the common boundary of H and H'. Then $(\Sigma; H, H')$ is a standard genus two Heegaard splitting of S^3 .

Let Γ be a separating simple closed curve in Σ which bounds in both H and H' (in the construction of twisted torus knots, Γ can be chosen as the boundary of the disk D or D'). Let $\{D_A, D_B\}$ and $\{D_X, D_Y\}$ be complete sets of cutting disks of H and H' respectively, disjoint from Γ , with ∂D_A and ∂D_X on one side of Γ , and ∂D_B and ∂D_Y on the other side of Γ . See Figure 8. With this setup given, we can make R-R diagrams of twisted torus knots with respect to both H and H'. First, we regard Γ as the belt curve separating the boundary of H (H', respectively) into the two handles A-handle and B-handle (X-handle and Y-handle, respectively). According to the construction of twisted torus knots, since the intersection of a twisted torus knot K(p,q,r,m,n) and the B-handle in H consists of T parallel arcs, there is only one band of connections on the B-handle. Similarly, there is only one band of

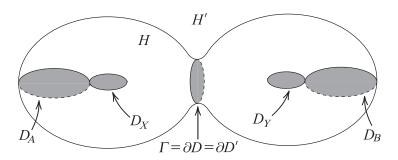


FIGURE 8. The A- and B-handles in H and the X- and Y-handles in H'.

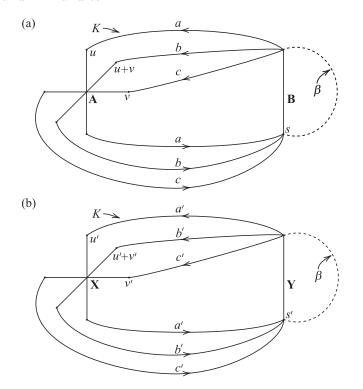


FIGURE 9. R-R diagrams of a twisted torus knot K(p,q,r,m,n) with respect to H(in (a)) and H'(in (b)).

connections on the $Y-{\rm handle}.$ Therefore we have the R-R diagram of twisted torus knots as shown in Figure 9.

Proposition 3.1. If K is a twisted torus knot which lies on a standard genus two Heegaard surface Σ of S^3 bounding two handlebodies H and H', then there exists a simple closed curve β on Σ which either bounds a disk, is primitive, or is a proper power in each handlebody.

Proof. In Figure 9(a), the dotted curve β bounds a disk if s=0, is primitive if s=1, and is a proper power if s>1 in H. Similarly in Figure 9(b), the curve β bounds a disk, is primitive, or is a proper power in H'.

That β is a proper power curve in H means that β is disjoint from a separating disk in H, does not bound a disk in H, and is not primitive in H. Equivalently, $[\beta]$ is conjugate to w^n , $n \geq 2$, of $\pi_1(H)$, where w is a free generator of $\pi_1(H)$.

Remark 3.2. If the curve β in Proposition 3.1 bounds a disk in one of the handlebody, then the twisted torus knot K is a torus knot.

The existence of the curve β in Proposition 3.1 plays a crucial role in determining if a hyperbolic primitive/Seifert knot is not a twisted torus knot. In other words, due to Berge [2] the existence of the curve β enables us to make the following procedure for the determination;

- (1) Find all candidates for β which is primitive or a proper power in H.
- (2) Check if β is also primitive or a proper power in H'. If not, it is not a twisted torus knot.
- (3) Locate the unique cutting disks D_{A^*} and D_{X^*} disjoint from β of H and H' respectively.
- (4) Check if ∂D_{A^*} and ∂D_{X^*} intersect exactly once. If not, it is not a twisted torus knot.

4. Primitive/Seifert knots which are not twisted torus knot position

In this section, we give an infinite family of primitive/Seifert knots which are not a twisted torus knot position. According to the procedure, the first two steps are to find all candidates for β which is primitive or a proper power in both H and H'. The following theorem due to Cohen, Metzler, and Zimmerman provides the necessary condition for a simple closed curve being a primitive or a proper power curve in a genus two handlebody once one knows a cyclically reduced word of the curve in a free group of rank two F(A, B), which is $\pi_1(H)$.

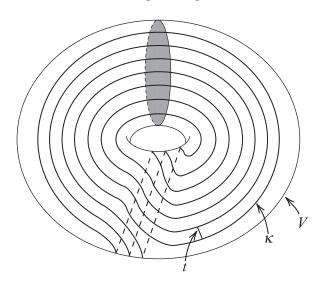


FIGURE 10. The (7,3)-torus knot and one unknotting tunnel t which lie in the boundary of a standardly embedded solid torus V in S^3 .

Theorem 4.1. ([4]) Suppose a cyclic conjugate of

$$W = A^{n_1}B^{m_1}\cdots A^{n_p}B^{m_p}$$

is a member of a basis of F(A,B) or a proper power of a member of a basis of F(A,B), where $p\geq 1$ and each indicated exponent is nonzero. Then, after perhaps replacing A by A^{-1} or B by B^{-1} , there exists e>0 such that:

$$n_1 = \dots = n_p = 1$$
, and $\{m_1, \dots, m_p\} \subseteq \{e, e + 1\}$,

or

$$\{n_1, \ldots, n_p\} \subseteq \{e, e+1\}, \text{ and } m_1 = \cdots = m_p = 1.$$

We construct an infinite family of primtivie/Seifert knots as follows. Let κ be a (h,k)-torus knot in the boundary of a standardly embedded torus V in S^3 where h,k>1, and t be an unknotting tunnel of κ as shown in Figure 10. Let $W=\overline{S^3-V}$ and $T=V\cap W$. Also we let $H'=\overline{N(\kappa\cup t)},\ H=\overline{S^3-H'}$ and $\Sigma=H\cap H'$. Then the triple of $(\Sigma;H,H')$ is a genus 2 Heegaard splitting of S^3 . With this Heegaard splitting given, consider the curves α_0,τ_1 , and τ_2 in $\partial H'(=\Sigma)$ as shown in Figure 11. Here H' has been cut open along two disks to yield a 3-cell in which the disk D_M of H' is dual to the unknotting tunnel t of κ . Let

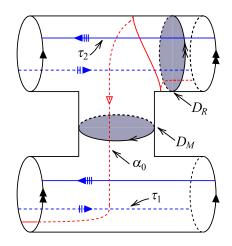


FIGURE 11. An infinite family of primitve/Seifert knots K in the genus 2 Heegaard splitting (Σ, H, H') of S^3 , where $K = \alpha_0 \mathbb{T}(\tau_1^{J_1}, \tau_2^{J_2})$ with $J_1, J_2 > 1$ and $J_1 \neq J_2$ and $J_1 \neq J_2 + 1$. Here the handlebody H' is the closure of a regular neighborhood of an (h, k) torus knot κ with h, k > 1 and an unknotting tunnel t of κ embedded in the boundary T of a standardly embedded solid torus V in S^3 as in Figure 10, and $H = \overline{S^3 - H'}$.

 D_R be the meridian of κ , which appears as in Figure 11. Note that D_M and D_R form a complete set of cutting disks of H'. Let M and R be the boundaries of D_M and D_R respectively with the orientation given as in Figure 11. Finally we let $K = \alpha_0 \mathbb{T}(\tau_1^{J_1}, \tau_2^{J_2})$ with $J_1, J_2 > 1$, $J_1 \neq J_2$ and $J_1 \neq J_2 + 1$, i.e. K is the curve obtained from α_0 twisted about τ_1 and τ_2 J_1 and J_2 times respectively.

In the following theorem, we will show that the curve K is primitive in H' and Seifert in H so that K is a primitive/Seifert knot in S^3 .

Theorem 4.2. The knot K described in Figure 11 is a hyperbolic primitive/Seifert knot in S^3 .

Proof. It follows from Figure 11 that since K intersects D_M in a single point, K is primitive in H'. In order to show that K is Seifert in H, we use R-R diagram of K with respect to H.

To find R-R diagram of K, we need to determine a complete set of cutting disks $\{D_A, D_B\}$ of H for the R-R diagram. Let $A = \overline{T - N(\kappa)}$, $D' = \overline{A \cap N(t)}$ and $D = \overline{A - D'}$. Note that ∂A consists of two copies of an

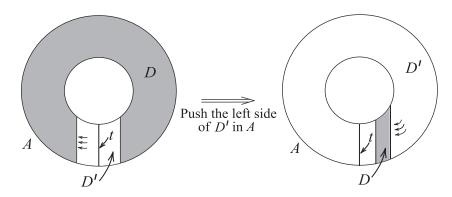


FIGURE 12. Isotopy on A.

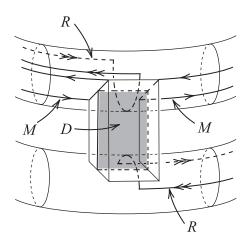


Figure 13. Local picture near D.

hk-curve on $\partial N(\kappa)$, and $t \subset D'$. To find a complete set of cutting disks of H, we perform an isotopy on A which switches the positions of D' and D. See Figure 12 for the isotopy performed. Figure 13 shows M and R after the isotopy. Here M is pushed onto $\partial N(\kappa)$.

We consider $V \cup_T W$ as $V' \cup T \times [-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}] \cup W'$, where V' and W' are solid tori inside V and W respectively such that they have the same cores. Then it follows that $H \cong V' \cup D \times [-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2}] \cup W'$, where $D = D \times \{0\}$. Let $D_{V'}$ and $D_{W'}$ be meridians of V' and W', which are induced from the meridians D_V and D_W of V and W respectively. See Figure 14.

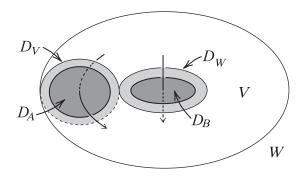


FIGURE 14. Meridians D_A and D_B in V' and W' respectively.

 $D_{V'}$ and $D_{W'}$ form a complete set of cutting disks of H and thus we take $(D_{V'}, D_{W'})$ as (D_A, D_B) of H. Now we can consider R-R diagram where A and B-handles are associated with the two once-punctured tori which are created by cutting ∂H along the separating curve ∂D and the labels on connections on both handles are induced from ∂D_A and ∂D_B with the orientation given as in Figure 14.

Now it is easy to find corresponding R-R diagrams of the curves α_0, M, R, τ_1 , and τ_2 . First for M, since M intersects D_A h times and then D_B k times, M has exactly the same R-R diagram as in Figure 15. Similarly, R intersects D_A h' times and then D_B k' times for some positive integers h' and k' with 0 < h' < h and 0 < k' < k, which satisfy the equation hk' - h'k = 1. Thus, R has R-R diagram as in Figure 15. For the curves τ_1 and τ_2 , since they do not intersect the separating disk D of H, and intersect the cutting disks D_A and D_B h and k times respectively, their R-R diagrams appear as in Figure 15. By figuring out the intersections of α_0 with the other curves M, R, τ_1 , and τ_2 we can obtain R-R diagram of α_0 as in Figure 15.

Let $\pi_1(H) = \langle A, B \rangle$ and $\pi_1(H') = \langle X, Y \rangle$, where A and B are dual to the cutting disks D_A and D_B respectively, and X and Y are dual to the cutting disks D_M and D_R respectively. From the R-R diagram in Figure 15 one has, in $\pi_1(H)$ and $\pi_1(H')$ respectively:

$$K = A^{(2J_1 - 1)h + 2h'} B^{J_2k + k'},$$

$$K = XY^{-2J_1 + J_2 + 1},$$

which shows that K is Seifert in H by Lemma 2.2 in [5] and primitive in H'. Thus K represents primitive/Seifert knots in S^3 . Furthermore, by [3] these knots are hyperbolic unless $J_1 = J_2$ or $J_1 = J_2 + 1$.

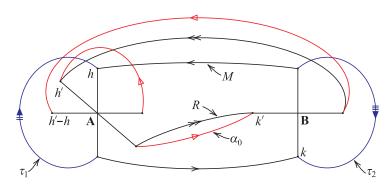


FIGURE 15. The R-R diagrams of the curves α_0, M, R, τ_1 , and τ_2 .

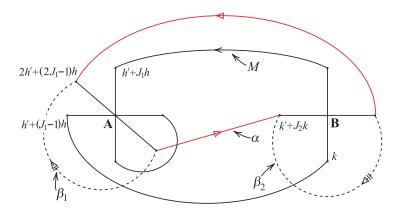


FIGURE 16. An alternative diagram of α and M obtained by performing the twists about τ_1 and τ_2 in Figure 15.

Theorem 4.3. The knot K described in Figure 11 are not a twisted torus knot position.

Proof. After applying for the twists about the curves τ_1 and τ_2 J_1 and J_2 times respectively, we obtain an alternative R-R diagram with the form of Figure 16, where the A-handle contains the bands of connections labeled by $h' + J_1h$, $2h' + (2J_1 - 1)h$, $h' + (J_1 - 1)h$, and the B-handle contains the bands of connections labeled by $k' + J_2k$, k.

Now we apply for the procedure given at the last part in Section 3. First, we try to find a primitive or proper power curve β disjoint from K in H. If β has connections on both A- and B-handles, then Theorem 4.1 implies that one of the labels of connections of β must be 1.

However, we will show that none of the labels of the possible band of connections of β is 1. In the A-handle, $h' + J_1h$, $2h' + (2J_1 - 1)h$, and $h' + J_1h + n(2h' + (2J_1 - 1)h)$, where $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, are possible labels, and in the B-handle $k, k' + J_2k$ and $k + m(k' + J_2k)$, where $m \in \mathbb{Z}$, are possible labels for β . Since 0 < h' < h, 0 < k' < k, and $J_1, J_2 > 1$, none of these labels can be equal to 1.

Since there are no bands of connections labeled by 1 on both handles, only candidates of a primitive or proper power β disjoint from K are the two regular fiber curves β_1 and β_2 as shown in Figure 16. Algebraically, in $\pi_1(H)$ β_1 and β_2 are $A^{2h'+(2J_1-1)h}$ and $B^{k'+J_2k}$ respectively.

Next, we need to check if β_1 and β_2 are primitive or a proper power in H'. However it follows from Figures 15 and 16 that $\beta_1 = Y^{-J_1}XY^{1-J_1}X$ and $\beta_2 = X^{-1}Y^{J_2}$. Thus they are primitive in H'.

According to the procedure, next test is to locate the unique cutting disks of H and H' disjoint from β_i , i = 1, 2, and check if the boundaries of the two unique cutting disks intersect exactly in a single point.

For the curve β_1 , it follows immediately from the R-R diagram that the cutting disk D_B in H is disjoint from β_1 and thus is the unique cutting disk in H disjoint from β_1 . In order to find the unique cutting disk in H', since $\beta_1 = Y^{-J_1}XY^{1-J_1}X$, we perform change of cutting disks twice, the first of which induces the automorphism $X \mapsto Y^{J_1}X$ and the second $Y \mapsto YX^{-2}$. Then after performing, $\beta_1 = Y$. So there are a set of cutting disks of H', one of which is dual to $\beta_1 = Y$ and the other, say D_{X^*} , is the unique cutting disk in H' disjoint form β_1 .

To see how many times ∂D_B intersects ∂D_{X^*} , we need to figure out to which element in $H_1(H') = \langle Y, X^* \rangle \partial D_B$ is carried under the changes of cutting disks performed above. The following explains this;

$$\partial D_B = kX + k'Y$$

$$\xrightarrow{X \mapsto J_1 Y + X} k(J_1 Y + X) + k'Y = (kJ_1 + k')Y + kX$$

$$\xrightarrow{Y \mapsto -2X + Y} (kJ_1 + k')(-2X^* + Y) + kX^*$$

$$= -((2J_1 - 1)k + 2k')X^* + (kJ_1 + k')Y.$$

Therefore ∂D_B intersects ∂D_{X^*} $((2J_1-1)k+2k')$ times, which is greater than 1.

For the curve β_2 , the similar argument applies. The cutting disk D_A in H is disjoint from β_2 and thus is the unique cutting disk in H disjoint from β_2 . In order to find the unique cutting disk in H', we perform change of cutting disks inducing the automorphism $X^{-1} \mapsto X^{-1}Y^{-J_2}$. Then after performing, $\beta_2 = X^{-1}$ and there are a set of cutting disks

of H', one of which is dual to $\beta_2 = X^{-1}$ and the other, say D_{Y^*} , is the unique cutting disk in H' disjoint form β_2 .

The following shows that ∂D_A intersects ∂D_{Y^*} (J_2h+h') times, which is greater than 1.

$$\partial D_A = hX + h'Y$$

$$\xrightarrow{X \mapsto J_2Y + X} h(J_2Y^* + X) + h'Y^*$$

$$= hX + (J_2h + h')Y^*.$$

This completes the proof.

From Theorems 4.2 and 4.3, we have the following.

Corollary 4.4. There exists an infinite family of primitive/Seifert knots which are not a twisted torus knot position.

Theorem 4.3 shows that the knot K described in Figure 11 are not a twisted torus knot position. However it does not imply that the knot K described in Figure 11 are not a twisted torus knot because they might lie in a different genus 2 Heegaard splitting of S^3 which is a twisted torus knot position. Thus it is worth to work on the following question whose answer is expected be affirmative.

Question: Are the knot K described in Figure 11 not a twisted torus knot?

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