

DISTANCE TWO LABELING ON THE SQUARE OF A CYCLE

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ABSTRACT. An $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of a graph G is a function f from the vertex set $V(G)$ to the set of all non-negative integers such that $|f(u) - f(v)| \geq 2$ if $d(u, v) = 1$ and $|f(u) - f(v)| \geq 1$ if $d(u, v) = 2$. The λ -number of G , denoted $\lambda(G)$, is the smallest number k such that G admits an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling with $k = \max\{f(u) | u \in V(G)\}$. In this paper, we consider the square of a cycle and provide exact value for its λ -number. In addition, we also completely determine its edge span.

1. Introduction

The notion of $L(2, 1)$ -labeling was proposed by Griggs and Yeh [6], which arose from a variation of the channel assignment problem introduced by Hale [8]. Suppose we are given a number of transmitters or stations. The $L(2, 1)$ -labeling problem is to assign frequencies (non-negative integers) to the transmitters so that “close” transmitters must receive different frequencies and “very close” transmitters must receive frequencies that are at least two frequencies apart.

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To formulate the problem in graphs, the transmitters are represented by the vertices of a graph; two vertices are “very close” if they are adjacent in the graph and “close” if they are of distance two in the graph. More precisely, an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of a graph G is a function f from the vertex set $V(G)$ to the set of all non-negative integers such that $|f(u) - f(v)| \geq 2$ if $d(u, v) = 1$ and $|f(u) - f(v)| \geq 1$ if $d(u, v) = 2$. The λ -number of G , denoted $\lambda(G)$, is the smallest number k such that G admits an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling with $k = \max\{f(u) | u \in V(G)\}$. If an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling uses labels in the set $\{0, 1, \dots, k\}$, it will be called an k - $L(2, 1)$ -labeling.

The $L(2, 1)$ -labeling problem has been widely studied over the past decades [4, 5, 16]. Griggs and Yeh showed that the general problem of determining λ -number of a graph is NP-complete; Moreover, this problem remains NP-complete even for graphs with diameter two [6]. So it is not possible to compute λ -number of a graph in polynomial time unless $P = NP$. Therefore, the problem has been studied for many special classes of graphs, such as regular grids [1, 2], product graphs [10, 14], trees [4, 18], planar graphs [17], generalized flowers [11], permutation and bipartite permutation graphs [15] and so on. For more details, one may refer to the surveys [3, 19].

The r -th power of a graph G , denoted G^r , is a graph on the same vertex set such that two vertices are joined by an edge if and only if their distance in G is at most r . In particular, we also call the 2-th power as the square. In [13], Kohl studied the $L(d, 1)$ -labeling of r -th power of a cycle for all $r \in \mathbb{N}^+$ and $d \geq 3$. However, he did not obtain the exact λ -number of r -th power of a cycle even for $r = 2$. Hence the problem of determining λ -number of r -th power of a cycle is clearly welcome.

A lot of variants other than $L(2, 1)$ -labeling problem have been also introduced, e.g., optimize the number of effectively used colors [8], consider the color set as a cyclic interval [9], use a more general model in which the labels and separations are real numbers [7], minimize the edge span [20], and so on. The $L(2, 1)$ edge span of a graph G , denoted $\beta(G)$, is defined to be the minimum of $\beta(G, f)$ over all the $L(2, 1)$ -labelings f of G , where $\beta(G, f) = \max\{|f(u) - f(v)| : uv \in E(G)\}$.

In this paper, we provide exact λ -number for the square of a cycle. In addition, we also completely determine its edge span. The main results are the following two theorems, which will be proved in Sections 2 and

3 respectively.

THEOREM 2.6 *Let $n \geq 4$. We have*

$$\lambda(C_n^2) = \begin{cases} 6, & \text{if } n = 4 \text{ or } n \equiv 0 \pmod{7}, \\ 8, & \text{if } n \in \{5, 9, 10, 11, 17\}, \\ 7, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

THEOREM 3.3 *Let $n \geq 4$. Then $\beta(C_n^2) = 5$ if and only if the system of equations and an inequality has a non-negative integer solution. Otherwise, $\beta(C_n^2) = 6$.*

$$\begin{cases} 5x_3 = 2x_1 + 3x_2, \\ n = x_1 + x_2 + x_3, \\ x_1 \geq x_2 + x_3 + 2. \end{cases}$$

2. The λ -number of the square of a cycle

Let $C_n = v_1v_2 \cdots v_nv_1$ be a cycle of length n and C_n^2 be the square of C_n . Throughout this article, we always think that subscripts are taken modulo n . For simplicity, we refer to $v_{(i+k) \pmod n}$ as $v_{(i+k)}$.

The following result constitutes a useful lower bound.

LEMMA 2.1. [6] *Let G be a k -regular graph with $k \geq 2$. Then $\lambda(G) \geq k + 2$.*

Given an k - $L(2, 1)$ -labeling f of C_n^2 , let $L_i = \{v \in V(C_n^2) \mid f(v) = i\}$ and l_i be the cardinality of L_i . It is not hard to see that $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{5} \rfloor$ for $0 \leq i \leq k$ and $\sum_{i=0}^k l_i = n$.

LEMMA 2.2. *Let $n \in \{5, 9, 10, 11, 17\}$. Then $\lambda(C_n^2) = 8$.*

Proof. Clearly, $\lambda(C_5^2) = \lambda(K_5) = 8$, where K_5 is a complete graph with 5 vertices.

For the case $n = 9$, the labels on $V(C_9^2)$ are pairwise distinct since $d(u, v) \leq 2$ for $u, v \in V(C_9^2)$. This gives that $\lambda(C_9^2) \geq 8$. Furthermore, $[0, 4, 6, 8, 3, 1, 5, 7, 2]$ is an 8- $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_9^2 , which implies $\lambda(C_9^2) \leq 8$. Therefore $\lambda(C_9^2) = 8$.

For the case $n = 10$, let f be an $7-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{10}^2 .

Firstly, we find that $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{10}{5} \rfloor = 2$ for each label i . Next, if $l_i = 2$, then $l_{i-1} = l_{i+1} = 0$ (if $i - 1$ or $i + 1$ exist). Thus we have $l_i + l_{i+1} \leq 2$ for $0 \leq i \leq 6$. So $\sum_{i=0}^7 l_i \leq 8$, which is a contradiction to $\sum_{i=0}^7 l_i = 10$. This shows that $\lambda(C_{10}^2) \geq 8$. On the other hand, $[0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 0, 2, 4, 6, 8]$ is an $8-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{10}^2 . Hence $\lambda(C_{10}^2) = 8$.

Now we consider the case $n = 11$. Let f be an $7-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{11}^2 .

Then $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{11}{5} \rfloor = 2$ for each label i . Furthermore, if $l_i = 2$ for $1 \leq i \leq 6$, then $l_{i-1} + l_{i+1} \leq 1$; And if $l_i = 2$ and $l_{i\pm 1} = 1$, then $l_{i\pm 2} \leq 1$. Thus $l_{i-1} + l_i + l_{i+1} \leq 3$ for $1 \leq i \leq 6$; $l_0 + l_1 + l_2 \leq 4$ and $l_5 + l_6 + l_7 \leq 4$. So $\sum_{i=0}^7 l_i \leq 10$, which is again a contradiction. Therefore $\lambda(C_{11}^2) \geq 8$. Since $[0, 2, 5, 7, 3, 0, 8, 5, 1, 3, 6]$ is an $8-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{11}^2 , this implies $\lambda(C_{11}^2) \leq 8$. Therefore $\lambda(C_{11}^2) = 8$.

Finally, we treat the case when $n = 17$. Let f be an $7-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{17}^2 .

Now, it is straightforward to check that the following facts hold:

Fact 1. $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{17}{5} \rfloor = 3$ for each label i .

Fact 2. If $l_i = 3$, then $l_{i-1} \leq 2$ and $l_{i+1} \leq 2$ (if $i - 1$ or $i + 1$ exist).

Fact 3. If $l_i = 3$ for $1 \leq i \leq 6$, then $l_{i-1} + l_{i+1} \leq 2$.

Fact 4. If $l_i = 3$ and $l_{i\pm 1} = 2$, then $l_{i\pm 2} \leq 1$.

By Fact 1 and Fact 2, we have $|\{i : l_i = 3\}| \leq 4$.

Now let $|\{i : l_i = 3\}| = 4$. Then $\{i : l_i = 3\} \cap \{0, 7\} \neq \emptyset$ and there must exist some label $i \in \{0, 1, \dots, 7\} \setminus \{i : l_i = 3\}$ such that $l_i = 2$. Otherwise, $\sum_{i=0}^7 l_i \leq 4 \cdot 3 + 4 \cdot 1 = 16$. Without loss of generality, we assume that $0 \in \{i : l_i = 3\}$. The only possible cases are $\{i : l_i = 3\} = \{0, 2, 4, 6\}$, $\{0, 2, 4, 7\}$, $\{0, 2, 5, 7\}$ or $\{0, 3, 5, 7\}$. According to Fact 3 and Fact 4, we can check that it is impossible for $\{0, 2, 4, 6\}$ or $\{0, 2, 5, 7\}$. Now if $\{i : l_i = 3\} = \{0, 2, 4, 7\}$ or $\{0, 3, 5, 7\}$, then we leave $(l_0, l_1, \dots, l_7) = (3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 2, 3)$ or $(l_0, l_1, \dots, l_7) = (3, 2, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3)$. Now, we will prove that above two cases are impossible.

For $(l_0, l_1, \dots, l_7) = (3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 2, 3)$, without loss of generality, let $f(v_1) = 7$. Then $f(v_6) = f(v_{11}) = 7$ or $f(v_6) = f(v_{12}) = 7$. But $l_6 = 2$, so $f(v_1) = f(v_6) = f(v_{12}) = 7$ and $f(v_9) = f(v_{15}) = 6$. Since $l_4 = 3$, we have $f(v_2) = 5$ or $f(v_4) = 5$. Actually, $f(v_2) = 5$ and $f(v_4) = 5$ are symmetrical in this case. So we only need to consider $f(v_2) = 5$. Thus, $f(v_5) = f(v_{10}) = f(v_{16}) = 4$, $f(v_{13}) = 3$ or $f(v_5) = f(v_{11}) = f(v_{16}) =$

4, $f(v_8) = 3$. Now there are no proper positions for the label 2 due to $l_2 = 3$. Therefore, it is impossible for $(l_0, l_1, \dots, l_7) = (3, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 2, 3)$. An similar argument can be made for $(l_0, l_1, \dots, l_7) = (3, 2, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1, 3)$.

This implies $|\{i : l_i = 3\}| \leq 3$. On the other hand, $|\{i : l_i = 3\}| \geq 1$, otherwise $\sum_{i=0}^7 l_i \leq 2 \cdot 8 = 16$. Now, let x_k be the cardinality of $\{i : l_i = k\}$. Then we have

$$(1) \quad \begin{cases} x_0 + x_1 + x_2 + x_3 = 8, \\ x_1 + 2x_2 + 3x_3 = 17, \\ 1 \leq x_3 \leq 3. \end{cases}$$

Thus the system of equations and an inequality in (1) have the following solutions: $(x_0, x_1, x_2, x_3) = (0, 0, 7, 1), (1, 0, 4, 3), (0, 1, 5, 2)$ or $(0, 2, 3, 3)$. It follows from Fact 3 and Fact 4 that all the solutions are impossible. Hence $\lambda(C_{17}^2) \geq 8$. On the other hand, $[0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 0, 2, 4, 6, 1, 3, 5]$ is an 8- $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_{17}^2 . Therefore, $\lambda(C_{17}^2) = 8$. \square

LEMMA 2.3. *Let f be an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_n^2 . Then the following two statements will not occur:*

- (i) *There are three consecutive labels or two pairs of consecutive labels on four consecutive vertices on C_n .*
- (ii) *There are five consecutive labels on five consecutive vertices on C_n .*

Proof. (i) Suppose that there are four consecutive vertices, say $v_i, v_{(i+1)}, v_{(i+2)}$ and $v_{(i+3)}$, such that $\{a, a + 1, a + 2\} \subseteq \{f(v_i), f(v_{(i+1)}), f(v_{(i+2)}), f(v_{(i+3)})\}$, where $a \in \mathbb{N}$. If $f(v_i) = a$, this implies $f(v_{(i+3)}) = a + 1$. But there is no proper position for $a + 2$ on $v_{(i+1)}$ and $v_{(i+2)}$, a contradiction. If $f(v_{(i+1)}) = a$, then there is no proper position for $a + 1$ on $v_i, v_{(i+2)}$ and $v_{(i+3)}$, again a contradiction. By the symmetry of v_i and $v_{(i+3)}$, $v_{(i+1)}$ and $v_{(i+2)}$, we have the result follow.

Similarly, let $a, a + 1$ and $b, b + 1$ be two pairs of consecutive labels. And $\{f(v_i), f(v_{(i+1)}), f(v_{(i+2)}), f(v_{(i+3)})\} = \{a, a + 1, b, b + 1\}$. In this case, if $f(v_i) = a$, then $f(v_{(i+3)}) = a + 1$, but we leave $\{f(v_{(i+1)}), f(v_{(i+2)})\} = \{b, b + 1\}$, a contradiction. If $f(v_{(i+1)}) = a$, then there is no proper position for $a + 1$, a contradiction.

(ii) Suppose that there are five consecutive vertices, say $v_i, v_{(i+1)}, v_{(i+2)}, v_{(i+3)}$ and $v_{(i+4)}$, such that $\{a, a + 1, a + 2, a + 3, a + 4\} = \{f(v_i), f(v_{(i+1)}),$

$f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+3}), f(v_{i+4})\}$, where $a \in \mathbb{N}$. By the symmetry of v_i and v_{i+4} , v_{i+1} and v_{i+3} , we only need to consider the following cases.

Case 1. $f(v_i) = a$, then we derive $f(v_{i+3}) = a + 1$ or $f(v_{i+4}) = a + 1$. Now, if $f(v_{i+3}) = a + 1$, then there is no proper position for $a + 2$. If $f(v_{i+4}) = a + 1$, then $f(v_{i+2}) = a + 2$, thus we leave $\{f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+3})\} = \{a + 3, a + 4\}$, a contradiction.

Case 2. $f(v_{i+1}) = a$, then $f(v_{i+4}) = a + 1$. But now there is no proper position for $a + 2$, a contradiction.

Case 3. $f(v_{i+2}) = a$, then there is no proper position for $a + 2$, a contradiction.

Therefore we complete the proof. \square

LEMMA 2.4. *Let f be an $6-L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_n^2 such that $f(v_i) = f(v_j) = k$, where $0 \leq k \leq 6$. Then $|i - j| \geq 7$.*

Proof. Notice that $|i - j| \geq 5$ by the definition of $L(2, 1)$ -labeling.

If $|i - j| = 5$, we may assume $j = i + 5$. In the case, if $k = 0$ or 6 , then $\{(f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+3}), f(v_{i+4}))\} \subseteq \{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$ or $\{0, 1, 2, 3, 4\}$. If $k \in \{1, 2, 3, 4, 5\}$, then $\{f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+3}), f(v_{i+4})\} = \{0, 1, \dots, 6\} \setminus \{k - 1, k, k + 1\}$. For the two cases, there always exist three consecutive labels or two pairs of consecutive labels on $v_{i+1}, v_{i+2}, v_{i+3}$ and v_{i+4} . But this is impossible in view of Lemma 2.3. Therefore, we have $|i - j| \geq 6$.

Next, if $|i - j| = 6$, suppose that $j = i + 6$. We have the following three cases.

Case 1. $k = 0$. In the case, if $f(v_{i+3}) = 1$, then we obtain a labeling $[0, 5, 3, 1, 6, 4, 0]$ on $v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+6}$. Thus $f(v_{i+7}) = 2$ and $f(v_{i+8}) = 5$, but now no label can be assigned to the vertex v_{i+9} . If $f(v_{i+3}) \neq 1$, then $\{f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+3}), f(v_{i+4}), f(v_{i+5})\} = \{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$. According to Lemma 2.3, it is impossible. By symmetry, we can show for $k = 6$.

Case 2. $k = 1$. If $f(v_{i+3}) = 0$, then we have a labeling $[1, 5, 3, 0, 6, 4, 1]$ on $v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+6}$, but now no label can be assigned to the vertex v_{i+7} . If $f(v_{i+3}) \neq 0$, then $\{f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+3}), f(v_{i+4}), f(v_{i+5})\} = \{2, 3, 4, 5, 6\}$, again a contradiction to Lemma 2.3. By symmetry, it is proved similarly for $k = 5$.

Case 3. $k \in \{2, 3, 4\}$. If $f(v_{i+3}) = k - 1$ or $k + 1$, then $\{f(v_{i+1}), f(v_{i+2}), f(v_{i+4}), f(v_{i+5})\} \subseteq \{0, 1, \dots, 6\} \setminus \{k, k - 1, k, k + 1\}$ or

$\{0, 1, \dots, 6\} \setminus \{k-1, k, k+1, k+2\}$. Otherwise, $\{f(v_{(i+1)}), f(v_{(i+2)}), f(v_{(i+3)}), f(v_{(i+4)}), f(v_{(i+5)})\} \subseteq \{0, 1, \dots, 6\} \setminus \{k-1, k, k+1\}$. Both of the cases are impossible.

Hence $|i - j| \geq 7$. \square

Given an 6- $L(2, 1)$ -labeling f of C_n^2 , then by Lemma 2.4, it is easy to see that $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{7} \rfloor$ for $0 \leq i \leq 6$.

THEOREM 2.5. *If $n \not\equiv 0 \pmod{7}$ and $n \geq 8$, then $\lambda(C_n^2) \geq 7$.*

Proof. Without loss of generality, we assume that $n = 7k + i$, where $1 \leq i \leq 6$.

Suppose for contradiction that there is an 6- $L(2, 1)$ -labeling f of C_n^2 . Then by Lemma 2.4, $l_i \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{7} \rfloor = k$ for $0 \leq i \leq 6$. This implies $7k + i \leq 7k$, a contradiction.

Hence $\lambda(C_n^2) \geq 7$ when $n \not\equiv 0 \pmod{7}$ and $n \geq 8$. \square

THEOREM 2.6. *Let $n \geq 4$. We have*

$$\lambda(C_n^2) = \begin{cases} 6, & \text{if } n = 4 \text{ or } n \equiv 0 \pmod{7}, \\ 8, & \text{if } n \in \{5, 9, 10, 11, 17\}, \\ 7, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Proof. For $n = 4$, $\lambda(C_4^2) = \lambda(K_4) = 6$, where K_4 is a complete graph with 4 vertices. If $n = 0 \pmod{7}$, without loss of generality, let $n = 7k$. Then we can repeat the sequence $[4, 2, 0, 5, 3, 1, 6]$ k times. This implies that $\lambda(C_n^2) \leq 6$. On the other hand, $\lambda(C_n^2) \geq 6$ due to Lemma 2.1, by the fact that C_n^2 is a 4-regular graph. Thus we conclude that $\lambda(C_n^2) = 6$, if $n = 4$ or $n = 0 \pmod{7}$.

If $n \not\equiv 0 \pmod{7}$, we may assume $n = 7k + i$, where $1 \leq i \leq 6$. We have two cases as follows.

Case 1. If $k \geq i$, then we take the sequence $[4, 2, 0, 5, 7, 3, 1, 6]$ i times and follow by the sequence $[4, 2, 0, 5, 3, 1, 6]$ $(k - i)$ times repeated. Thus $\lambda(C_n^2) \leq 7$. Furthermore, $\lambda(C_n^2) \geq 7$ follows by Theorem 2.5. Therefore $\lambda(C_n^2) = 7$.

Case 2. If $k < i$, we can rewrite $n = 7k + i = 6k + (k + i) = j \pmod{6}$, where $0 \leq j \leq 5$.

Subcase 2.1. If $k + i \geq 6$, then $j \leq k$. We repeat the sequence $[1, 3, 7, 0, 4, 6]$ $(k - j + 1)$ times and $[1, 3, 5, 7, 0, 4, 6]$ j times. Again by Theorem 2.5, this gives that $\lambda(C_n^2) = 7$.

For all $n \geq 4$	the label pattern
$n \equiv 0(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A
$n \equiv 1(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A_1
$n \equiv 2(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A_2
$n \equiv 3(\text{mod } 7)$	B, \dots, B, A_3
$n \equiv 4(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A_4
$n \equiv 5(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A_5
$n \equiv 6(\text{mod } 7)$	A, \dots, A, A_6

TABLE 1. The $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_n^2 with edge span 6 for different cases of n .

Subcase 2.2. If $k + i < 6$, then we have $n \in \{4, 5, 9, 10, 11, 17\}$. When $n \in \{5, 9, 10, 11, 17\}$, the result is already proved in Lemma 2.2.

This completes the proof of Theorem 2.6. \square

3. The $L(2, 1)$ edge span of the square of a cycle

The main objective of this section is to determine the $L(2, 1)$ edge span of the square of a cycle. Firstly, we establish the lower and upper bound.

LEMMA 3.1. $5 \leq \beta(C_n^2) \leq 6$ for all $n \geq 4$.

Proof. It is clear that $\beta(C_n^2) \geq \beta(C_3) = 4$ since C_3 is an induced subgraph of C_n^2 . Now suppose that C_n^2 admits an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling f with edge span 4. Without loss of generality, let $f(v_1) = 0$. In this case, if $f(v_2) = 2$, then $f(v_n) = 4$. However, no label can be assigned to the vertex v_{n-1} , a contradiction. An similar argument can be made for $f(v_2) = 4$. If $f(v_2) = 3$, then no label can be assigned to the vertex v_n . Hence $\beta(C_n^2) \geq 5$.

Next, we show that $\beta(C_n^2) \leq 6$.

Firstly, let $A = [0, 2, 4, 6, 1, 3, 5]$, $B = [4, 2, 0, 5, 3, 8, 6]$,
 $A_1 = [8, 10, 14, 12, 9, 7, 3, 5]$, $A_2 = [8, 10, 13, 15, 11, 9, 7, 3, 5]$, $A_3 = [11, 9, 7]$,
 $A_4 = [8, 10, 12, 15, 17, 13, 11, 9, 7, 3, 5]$,
 $A_5 = [8, 10, 12, 14, 18, 16, 13, 11, 9, 7, 3, 5]$,
 $A_6 = [8, 10, 12, 14, 17, 19, 15, 13, 11, 9, 7, 3, 5]$.

Now we give an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling of C_n^2 with edge span 6, as shown in Table 1.

Therefore the lemma is proved. \square

To determine the exact value of $\beta(C_n^2)$, we need to use a consequence in [21]. Firstly, we give some notations in the following.

Let G be an undirected simple graph. An *orientation* \vec{G} of G is an assignment of directions to each edge of G . In this sense, we also call G the *underlying graph* of \vec{G} . Let \vec{G} be an orientation of a graph G and let $W = u_1u_2 \cdots u_l$ be a trail in G . For an edge $e_i = u_iu_{i+1}$ ($i = 1, 2, \dots, l-1$), we call e_i a *forward edge* (resp., *backward edge*) of W if the direction of e_i in \vec{G} is from u_i to u_{i+1} (resp., u_{i+1} to u_i). Denote by W^+ and W^- the set of the forward edges and backward edges of W , respectively.

A k -*tension* [12] on G is an ordered pair (\vec{G}, ϕ) , where \vec{G} is an orientation of G and $\phi : E(\vec{G}) \mapsto \{0, 1, \dots, k-1\}$ is a map such that $\sum_{e \in C^+} \phi(e) = \sum_{e \in C^-} \phi(e)$ for every cycle C in G . In particular, if ϕ is an integer-valued function then (\vec{G}, ϕ) is called an *integer tension*. An integer tension (\vec{G}, ϕ) is a *nowhere-zero k -tension* if $0 < \phi(e) < k$ for every $e \in E(\vec{G})$.

The authors in [21] established a connection between the $L(2, 1)$ -labeling and integer tension of a graph. This connection provides us with an effective way to minimize the edge span.

LEMMA 3.2. [21] *Let G be a simple graph and let k be a positive integer. Then G admits an $L(2, 1)$ -labeling with edge span $k-1$ if and only if G admits a k -tension (\vec{G}, ϕ) satisfying the following conditions:*

- (i) *For any edge e of G , $2 \leq \phi(e) \leq k-1$;*
- (ii) *For any two adjacent arcs $e_1 = ux$ and $e_2 = xv$ where u and v are not adjacent, if x is the common head or the common tail of e_1 and e_2 , then $|\phi(e_1) - \phi(e_2)| \geq 1$; and if x is the head of one in $\{e_1, e_2\}$ and the tail of the other, then $\phi(e_1) + \phi(e_2) \geq 1$.*

In view of Lemma 3.2, we have the following main result.

THEOREM 3.3. *Let $n \geq 4$. Then $\beta(C_n^2) = 5$ if and only if the system of equations and an inequality in (2) has a non-negative integer solution. Otherwise, $\beta(C_n^2) = 6$.*

$$(2) \quad \begin{cases} 5x_3 = 2x_1 + 3x_2, \\ n = x_1 + x_2 + x_3, \\ x_1 \geq x_2 + x_3 + 2. \end{cases}$$

Proof. Firstly, we prove the necessity. Let (\vec{C}_n^2, ϕ) be a 6-tension of C_n^2 satisfying the two conditions of Lemma 3.2.

Claim 1. $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) \neq 4$ for $i = 1, 2, \dots, n$.

Suppose to the contrary that there exists some i such that $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = 4$. Then $\phi(v_{(i-1)} v_{(i+1)}) = \phi(v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}) = 2$ and the two adjacent arcs $v_{(i-1)} v_{(i+1)}$ and $v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}$ have $v_{(i+1)}$ as their common head or tail, a contradiction to Lemma 3.2.

Claim 2. There do not exist two adjacent arcs $v_i v_{(i+1)}$ and $v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}$ with weight 3 and 5, respectively.

If $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = 3, \phi(v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}) = 5$, then $\phi(v_{(i+k)} v_{(i+k+1)}) = 3$ for $k = 0, 2, \dots$ and $\phi(v_{(i+k)} v_{(i+k+1)}) = 5$ for $k = 1, 3, \dots$. Moreover, those arcs with weight 3 and 5 have the same orientation respectively. Therefore, $\sum_{e \in C_n^+} \phi(e) \neq \sum_{e \in C_n^-} \phi(e)$, where $C_n = v_1 v_2 \cdots v_n$, a contradiction to the definition of tension.

Claim 3. If $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = 5$ and $\phi(v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}) = 2$, then $\phi(v_{(i+2)} v_{(i+3)}) \neq 3$.

Let $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = 5, \phi(v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)}) = 2$ and $\phi(v_{(i+2)} v_{(i+3)}) = 3$. Then we know that $\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = \phi(v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+3)}) = 5$ and the two adjacent arcs $v_i v_{(i+1)}$ and $v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+3)}$ have $v_{(i+1)}$ as their common head or tail. This contradicts with Lemma 3.2.

Let x_1, x_2, x_3 be the number of arcs in $\{v_i v_{(i+1)} | i = 1, 2, \dots, n\}$ with weight 2, 3 and 5, respectively. Thus Claim 1 implies that $5x_3 = 2x_1 + 3x_2$ and $n = x_1 + x_2 + x_3$. Furthermore, we have $x_1 \geq x_2 + x_3 + 2$ by Claim 2 and Claim 3.

Secondly, we prove the sufficiency. Suppose that the system of equations and an inequality in (2) has a non-negative integer solution. Then we can give an ordered pair (\vec{C}_n^2, ϕ) by the following three steps:

Step 1.

$$\phi(v_i v_{(i+1)}) = \begin{cases} 3, & \text{if } i \in \{2x_3 + 2, 2x_3 + 4, \dots, 2x_3 + 2x_1\}, \\ 5, & \text{if } i \in \{1, 3, \dots, 2x_3 - 1\}, \\ 2, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Step 2. We assign each edge $v_i v_{(i+1)}$ an orientation such that the orientations on those edges with weight 5 have the same orientation which are opposite to those edges with weight 2 and 3.

Step 3. For those edges $v_i v_{(i+2)}$ ($i = 1, 2, \dots, n$), we assign the weight and the orientation to each edge such that $\sum_{e \in C_i^+} \phi(e) = \sum_{e \in C_i^-} \phi(e)$, where $C_i = v_i v_{(i+1)} v_{(i+2)} v_i$.

Obviously, ϕ is well-defined since the system of equations and an inequality in (2) holds. Moreover, we can check that the ordered pair (\vec{C}_n^2, ϕ) is a 6-tension satisfying the two conditions of Lemma 3.2. Therefore the result follows. \square

COROLLARY 3.4 *Let $n \geq 37$. Then $\beta(C_n^2) = 5$.*

Proof. Let $a \in \mathbb{Z}$ such that $0 \leq a \leq 6$ and $a \equiv 5n \pmod{7}$. Since $5n - 8a \equiv 0 \pmod{7}$ and $5n - 8a \geq 5 \cdot 37 - 8 \cdot 6 > 0$, $5n - 8a = 7b$ for some $b \in \mathbb{Z}^+$. Let $x_1 = b, x_2 = a$ and $x_3 = n - a - b$. Then $x_1, x_2 \geq 0$, $x_3 = n - a - b = n - a - \frac{5n-8a}{7} = \frac{2n+a}{7} \geq 0$. Also

$$5x_3 = 5n - 5a - 5b = 8a + 7b - 5a - 5b = 2b + 3a = 2x_1 + 3x_2,$$

$$n = b + a + n - a - b = x_1 + x_2 + x_3$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} x_1 = b &= \frac{5n - 8a}{7} = \frac{2n}{7} + \frac{3n - 8a}{7} \geq \frac{2n}{7} + \frac{111 - 48}{7} \geq \frac{2n}{7} + \frac{63}{7} \\ &> \frac{2n}{7} + \frac{43}{7} + 2 = n - \frac{5n - 8a}{7} + 2 = n - b + 2 = x_2 + x_3 + 2. \end{aligned}$$

Thus the system of equations and an inequality in Theorem 3.3 has a non-negative integer solution if $n \geq 37$. Hence $\beta(C_n^2) = 5$ if $n \geq 37$. \square

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