

Electronic Journal of Graph Theory and Applications

Decomposing K_{18n} and K_{18n+1} into connected unicyclic graphs with 9 edges

Grace Aspenson, Dustin Baker, Bryan Freyberg, Coy Schwieder

Department of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Minnesota Duluth, Duluth, USA aspen031@d.umn.edu, bakerd@iastate.edu, frey0031@d.umn.edu, cschwi@iastate.edu

Abstract

Other than C_9 there are 239 connected unicyclic graphs with exactly 9 edges. We use established graph labeling results to prove that every one of them decomposes the complete graph K_n if $n \equiv 0$ or 1 (mod 18).

Keywords: Graph decomposition, *ρ*-labeling Mathematics Subject Classification : 05C51, 05C78 DOI: 10.5614/ejgta.2023.11.1.22

1. Introduction

The idea of labeling graphs in order to decompose larger graphs was first introduced by Rosa and has been used extensively since its initial development [2]. First, one must understand the basic definition of graph decomposition.

Definition 1.1. Let K be a simple graph, and let $\mathcal{G} = \{G_0, G_1, \dots, G_s\}$ be a family of pairwise edge-disjoint subgraphs of K. We say that \mathcal{G} is a decomposition of K when every edge of K belongs to exactly one member of \mathcal{G} . If all $G_i \in \mathcal{G}$ are mutually isomorphic, then we say K allows a G-decomposition or a G-design.

Furthermore, a *unicyclic graph* is a simple graph containing exactly one cycle. A *bipartite graph* is a graph whose vertex set can be partitioned into two disjoint sets so that no two vertices within the same set are adjacent. A *tripartite graph* is a graph whose vertex set can be partitioned

Received: 6 July 2021, Revised: 8 January 2023, Accepted: 27 February 2023.

into three disjoint sets such that no two vertices within the same set are adjacent. In this article, we focus our attention on unicyclic graphs with nine edges.

Now, let G be a unicyclic graph on nine edges. If a G-decomposition of K_n exists, then it is necessary that $n \equiv 0, 1, 9$, or 10 (mod 18). However, we only consider complete graphs of order $n \equiv 0$ or 1 (mod 18) as our tools do not apply to complete graphs with order $n \equiv 9$ or 10 (mod 18). Furthermore, we restrict our attention to connected graphs. In Section 2, we discuss the definitions and tools that we use to find our decompositions. In Section 3, we discuss results and previous research related to this article. In Section 4, we discuss our main findings. Finally, we include an appendix of our labeled graphs used in this research.

2. Definitions and Tools

The decompositions we will be using belong to the following well-known types.

Definition 2.1. (*El-Zanati, Vanden Eynden [13]*) A *G*-decomposition of the complete graph K_n is cyclic if there exists an ordering $u_0, u_1, \ldots, u_{n-1}$ of the vertices of K_n and a permutation φ of the vertices of K_n defined by $\varphi(u_j) = u_{j+1}$ for $j = 0, 1, \ldots, n-1$ inducing an automorphism on \mathcal{G} , where the addition is performed modulo n.

Definition 2.2. (Bunge [11]) A G-decomposition of the complete graph K_n is 1-rotational if there exists an ordering $(u_0, u_1, \ldots, u_{n-1})$ of the vertices of K_n and a permutation φ of the vertices of K_n defined by $\varphi(u_j) = u_{j+1}$ for $j = 0, 1, \ldots, n-2$ and $\varphi(u_{n-1}) = u_{n-1}$ inducing an automorphism on \mathcal{G} , where the addition is performed modulo n - 1.

Rosa discovered the following labeling techniques to create cyclic graph decompositions [2].

Definition 2.3. (Rosa [2]) Consider the vertex set of a simple graph G on n edges, say V(G), and the edge set E(G). A ρ -labeling is a one-to-one function $f: V(G) \to \{0, 1, 2, ..., 2n\}$ such that the induced length function $\ell: E(G) \to \{1, 2, ..., n\}$ is used to label the edge set E(G) such that

$$\ell(uv) = \min\{|f(u) - f(v)|, 2n + 1 - |f(u) - f(v)|\},\$$

where $u, v \in V(G)$ and $uv \in E(G)$.

Definition 2.3 leads to the following theorem.

Theorem 2.1. (Rosa [2]) Let G be a graph with n edges. There exists a cyclic G-decomposition of K_{2n+1} if and only if G admits a ρ -labeling.

The next several definitions and theorems apply to bipartite graphs.

Definition 2.4. (*Rosa* [2]) A σ -labeling of a graph G is a ρ -labeling such that $\ell(uv) = |f(u) - f(v)|$ for all $uv \in E(G)$.

Definition 2.5. (*El-Zanati, Vanden Eynden* [14]) A ρ - or σ -labeling of a bipartite graph G with bipartition (A, B) is called an ordered ρ - or σ -labeling and denoted ρ^+, σ^+ , respectively, if f(a) < f(b) for each edge ab with $a \in A$ and $b \in B$.

Theorem 2.2. (El-Zanati, Vanden Eynden [14]) Let G be a graph with n edges which has a ρ^+ labeling. Then G decomposes K_{2nk+1} for all positive integers k.

Definition 2.6. (Freyberg, Tran [5]) A σ^{+-} -labeling of a bipartite graph G with n edges and bipartition (A, B) is a σ^{+} -labeling with the property that $f(a) - f(b) \neq n$ for all $a \in A$ and $b \in B$, and $f(x) \notin \{2n, 2n - 1\}$ for any $x \in V(G)$.

Theorem 2.3. (Freyberg, Tran [5]) Let G be a graph with n edges and a σ^{+-} -labeling such that the edge of length n is a pendant edge e. Then there exists a G-decomposition of both K_{2nk} and K_{2nk+1} for every positive integer k.

The next set of definitions and theorems apply to tripartite graphs.

Definition 2.7. (Bunge et al. [12]) Let G be a tripartite graph on n edges and with vertex partition A, B, C. A ρ -tripartite labeling of G is a ρ -labeling f of G such that:

- f(a) < f(v) for any edge $av \in E(G)$ where $a \in A$.
- For every edge $bc \in E(G)$ where $b \in B$, $c \in C$, there exists a complementary edge $b'c' \in E(G)$ where $b' \in B$, $c' \in C$ such that

$$|f(b) - f(c)| + |f(b') - f(c')| = 2n.$$

• For all $b \in B$, $c \in C$,

$$|f(b) - f(c)| \neq 2n.$$

This definition leads to the following useful theorem.

Theorem 2.4. (Bunge et al. [12]) Let G be a tripartite graph on n edges which admits a ρ -tripartite labeling. Then there exists a cyclic G-decomposition of K_{2nk+1} for all $k \ge 1$.

We have a similar set of definitions to help address the case of complete graphs of even order. However, we note here that the following definition and theorem only apply to graphs with a pendant vertex.

Definition 2.8. (Bunge [11]) Let G be a graph on n edges. A 1-rotational ρ -labeling of G is a one-to-one function $f: V(G) \to [0, 2n-2] \cup \{\infty\}$ such that:

- For some pendant vertex w, $f(w) = \infty$.
- f is a ρ -labeling of G w.

Theorem 2.5. (Bunge [11]) Let G be a graph with n edges. There exists a 1-rotational Gdecomposition of K_{2n} if and only if G admits a 1-rotational ρ -labeling.

Much like with ρ -labeling, Definition 2.8 and Theorem 2.5 only help us decompose the complete graph K_{18} . However, we can again tighten our restrictions on the definition and obtain a stronger theorem that applies to a wider range of cases.

Definition 2.9. (Bunge [11]) A 1-rotational ρ -tripartite labeling of a graph G is a one-to-one function $h: V(G) \rightarrow [0, 2n-2] \cup \{\infty\}$ such that:

- *h* is a 1-rotational ρ -labeling of G with $h(w) = \infty$, where w has degree of one.
- If the edge $av \in E(G) \setminus uw$, where $a \in A$, then h(a) < h(v).
- If $bc \in E(G)$ with $b \in B$, $c \in C$, then there exists an edge $b'c' \in E(G)$ with $b' \in B$, $c' \in C$ such that

$$|h(b) - h(c)| + |h(b') - h(c')| = 2n.$$

This definition prompts the following theorem.

Theorem 2.6. (Bunge [11]) Let G be a tripartite graph with n edges and a vertex of degree 1. If G admits a 1-rotational ρ -tripartite labeling, then there exists a 1-rotational G-decomposition of K_{2nk} for any integer $k \ge 1$.

3. Related Results

The decomposition spectrum of graphs with up to eight edges has been widely studied, which is what led to this study of graphs with nine edges. We direct the reader to [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], and [10] for more information on graphs with up to eight edges.

To our knowledge, graphs on nine edges are largely unexplored. It is discussed in [13] that trees with up to 20 edges permit a β^+ -labeling, and if a graph G with n edges permits a β^+ -labeling, then G decomposes K_{2nk+1} for any positive integer k. Thus, trees on nine edges decompose K_{18k+1} . It is also discussed in [10] that a graph on n edges with a σ^+ -labeling such that the edge of length n is a pendant edge decomposes K_{2nk} for any positive integer k. Therefore, we can consider any tree on nine edges, remove one pendant edge, then assign the induced eight-edged tree a β^+ labeling. Reattaching the ninth edge and assigning it length 9, we obtain a σ^+ -labeling, so the graph decomposes K_{18k} .

While there are a plethora of theorems that provide information on trees, we did not find previous research on forests with nine edges, and we thus believe forests on nine edges to be unexplored. Furthermore, there is another group of students from the University of Minnesota Duluth that is studying decompositions of complete graphs K_{18k} and K_{18k+1} into unicyclic, disconnected, bipartite graphs on nine edges [1].

4. Main Result

Let $\mathcal{F} = \{G : G \text{ is a unicyclic connected graph with 9 edges}\}$. There are 240 members of this family (see Appendix). An exceptional member of this family is C_9 which obviously does not decompose K_n if $n \equiv 0 \pmod{18}$ and is known to decompose K_n if $n \equiv 1 \pmod{18}$ [3]. Our main result shows that all of the remaining members of \mathcal{F} decompose K_n whenever $n \equiv 0$ or 1 (mod 18).

Theorem 4.1. Let $G \in \mathcal{F} \setminus \{C_9\}$. There exists a *G*-decomposition of K_n if $n \equiv 0$ or $1 \pmod{18}$.

Proof. If G is bipartite, the proof follows from Theorem 2.3 and the labelings given in Section 5.1. If G is tripartite, the proof follows from Theorem 2.5 or Theorem 2.6 and the labelings given in Section 5.2.

Acknowledgements

The authors thank Professor Dalibor Froncek for his tireless support of his students and colleague throughout this project. This work was partially supported by the University of Minnesota Office of Undergraduate Research.

References

- [1] A. Bohnert, L. Branson, and P. Otto, On decompositions of complete graphs into unicyclic disconnected graphs on nine edges, *Electron. J. Graph Theory Appl.* **11**(1) (2023), 331–343.
- [2] A. Rosa, On certain valuations of the vertices of a graph, In: Theory of Graphs (Intl. Symp. Rome 1966), Gordon and Breach, Dunod, Paris, 1967, 349–355.
- [3] B. Alspach and H. Gavlas, Cycle Decompositions of K_n and $K_n I$, J. Combin. Theory, Ser. B 81 (2001), 77–99.
- [4] B. Freyberg and D. Froncek, Decomposition of complete graphs into unicyclic graphs with eight edges, *J. Combin. Math. Combin. Comput.* **114** (2020), 113–132.
- [5] B. Freyberg and N. Tran, Decomposition of complete graphs into bipartite unicyclic graphs with eight edges, *J. Combin. Math. Combin. Comput.* **114** (2020), 133–142.
- [6] D. Froncek and B. Kubik, Decomposition of complete graphs into tricyclic graphs with eight edges, *J. Combin. Math. Combin. Comput.* **114** (2020), 143–166.
- [7] D. Froncek and J. Lee, Decomposition of complete graphs into bicyclic graphs with eight edges, *Bull. Inst. Combin. Appl.* 88 (2020), 30–49.
- [8] D. Froncek and M. Kubesa, Decomposition of complete graphs into connected unicyclic bipartite graphs with seven edges, *Bull. Inst. Combin. Appl.*, accepted.
- [9] D. Froncek and O. Kingston, Decomposition of complete graphs into connected unicyclic graphs with eight edges and pentagon, *Indonesian J. Combin.* **3**(1) (2019), 24–33.
- [10] J. Fahnenstiel and D. Froncek, Decomposition of complete graphs into connected unicyclic bipartite graphs with eight edges, *Electron. J. Graph Theory Appl.* **7**(2) (2019), 235–250.
- [11] R. Bunge, On 1-Rotational decompositions of complete graphs into tripartite graphs, *Opus-cula Math.* 39(5) (2019), 623–643.
- [12] R. Bunge, A. Chantasartrassmee, S.I. El-Zanati, and C. Vanden Eynden, On cyclic decompositions of complete graphs into tripartite graphs, J. Graph Theory 72 (2013), 90–111.

Decomposing K_{18n} and K_{18n+1} | G. Aspenson, D. Baker, B. Freyberg, and C. Schwieder

- [13] S.I. El-Zanati, C. Vanden Eynden, On Rosa-type labelings and cyclic graph decompositions, *Math. Slovaca* 59 (2009), 1–18.
- [14] S.I. El-Zanati, C. Vanden Eynden, On the cyclic decomposition of complete graphs into bipartite graphs, *Australas. J. Combin.* **24** (2001), 209–219.

5. Appendix

5.1. Bipartite graphs

The following subsection shows a σ^{+-} -labeling of every bipartite unicyclic graph with 9 edges. We use the naming convention $G_i(n; t_1, t_2, \ldots, t_n)$ to denote a unicyclic graph which contains C_n and a tree of size t_j appended to the j^{th} vertex of the cycle. We let t_1 be the size of the largest such tree. The index i is used to distinguish between non-isomorphic graphs with the same n + 1-tuple.

5.1.1. Graphs containing a 4-cycle













5.1.2. Graphs containing a 6-cycle





Figure 84. $G_1(6; 1, 0, 1, 0, 1, 0)$

5.1.3. Graphs containing an 8-cycle



Figure 85. $G_1(8; 1, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0)$

5.2. Tripartite graphs

The following subsection contains a ρ -tripartite labeling (left hand side of each figure) and a 1-rotational ρ -tripartite labeling (right hand side of each figure) of every tripartite unicyclic graph with 9 edges.

5.2.1. Graphs containing a 3-cycle



Figure 86. $G_1(3; 6, 0, 0)$





Figure 96. $G_{11}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 101. $G_{16}(3; 6, 0, 0)$





Figure 111. $G_{26}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 116. $G_{31}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 121. $G_{36}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 126. $G_{41}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 131. $G_{46}(3; 6, 0, 0)$



Figure 136. $G_3(3; 5, 1, 0)$



Figure 141. $G_8(3; 5, 1, 0)$



Figure 146. $G_{13}(3; 5, 1, 0)$





Figure 156. $G_3(3; 4, 2, 0)$



Figure 161. $G_8(3; 4, 2, 0)$



Figure 166. $G_{13}(3; 4, 2, 0)$



Figure 171. $G_{18}(3; 4, 2, 0)$



Figure 176. $G_5(3; 3, 3, 0)$



Figure 181. $G_{10}(3; 3, 3, 0)$







Figure 196. $G_6(3; 3, 2, 1)$



Figure 201. $G_3(3; 2, 2, 2)$



Figure 202. $G_4(3; 2, 2, 2)$

5.2.2. Graphs containing a 5-cycle



Figure 206. $G_4(5; 4, 0, 0, 0, 0)$





Figure 216. $G_1(5; 3, 0, 1, 0, 0)$









Figure 234. $G_1(5; 1, 1, 1, 1, 0)$

5.2.3. Graphs containing a 7-Cycle



Figure 236. $G_2(7; 2, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0)$



Figure 239. $G_1(7; 1, 0, 0, 1, 0, 0, 0)$

5.2.4. The graph C_9



Figure 240. *C*₉