

A NOTE ON NEIGHBOR EXPANDED SUM DISTINGUISHING INDEX¹

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Abstract

A total k -coloring of a graph G is a coloring of vertices and edges of G using colors of the set $[k] = \{1, \dots, k\}$. These colors can be used to distinguish the vertices of G . There are many possibilities of such a distinction. In this paper, we consider the sum of colors on incident edges and adjacent vertices.

Keywords: general edge coloring, total coloring, neighbor-distinguishing index, neighbor sum distinguishing coloring.

2010 Mathematics Subject Classification: 05C15.

1. INTRODUCTION AND TERMINOLOGY

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a finite, undirected simple graph with vertex set V and edge set E .

Karoński *et al.* [4] introduced and investigated a coloring of the edges of a graph with positive integers so that adjacent vertices have different sums of incident edge colors. More precisely, let $c : E \rightarrow [k] = \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ be an edge

¹The work of the third author was partially supported by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education. The research of the fifth author was supported by the Polish National Science Center grant no. DEC-2013/09/B/ST1/01772.

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coloring of G (such a coloring is also called an edge k -coloring of G). For $x \in V$, we define

$$\sigma(x) = \sum_{e \ni x} c(e),$$

where the expression $e \ni x$ means that e contains x . An edge k -coloring c of G is called *neighbor sum distinguishing* if $\sigma(x) \neq \sigma(y)$ whenever $xy \in E$. In other words, the vertex coloring σ induced by c in the above must be proper. The minimum integer k for which there is a neighbor sum distinguishing coloring of a graph G will be denoted by $\text{gndi}_\Sigma(G)$.

In [4] Karoński *et al.* posed the following elegant problem, known as the 1-2-3 Conjecture.

Conjecture 1. *Let G be a connected graph, $G \neq K_2$. Then $\text{gndi}_\Sigma(G) \leq 3$.*

Thus far it is known that $\text{gndi}_\Sigma(G) \leq 5$ for any graph G without a connected component isomorphic to K_2 (see [3]).

In [5] the following problem related to the 1-2-3 Conjecture was introduced. Let $c : E \cup V \rightarrow \{1, 2, \dots, k\}$ be a total k -coloring of a graph G . For every vertex x , we denote by

$$t(x) := c(x) + \sum_{y \in N(x)} c(xy) = c(x) + \sigma(x),$$

where $N(x) = \{y \in V \mid xy \in E\}$ denotes an open neighborhood of x . Thus, $t(x)$ is the sum of edge colors of incident edges to x and the color of x . We say that c is a *total neighbor sum distinguishing* coloring of G if $t(x) \neq t(y)$ for all adjacent vertices x, y in G .

Similarly as above, the minimum value of k for which there exists a total neighbor sum distinguishing coloring of a graph G will be denoted by $\text{tgndi}_\Sigma(G)$.

In [5] Przybyło and Woźniak posed the following problem, known as the 1-2 Conjecture.

Conjecture 2. *Let G be a connected graph. Then $\text{tgndi}_\Sigma(G) \leq 2$.*

Thus far it is known that for every graph G , $\text{tgndi}_\Sigma(G) \leq 3$ (see [2]).

However, in the case of total coloring of G , there are also other possibilities to define the *palette* of colors i.e., the elements which we take into account. In this paper, for $x \in V$, we define

$$w(x) = \sum_{e \ni x} c(e) + \sum_{y \in N(x)} c(y),$$

where c is a total k -coloring of G . The value $w(x)$ will be called an *expanded sum at x* . A total k -coloring c of G is called *neighbor expanded sum distinguishing* (*NESD* for short) if

$$w(x) \neq w(y)$$

whenever $xy \in E$. In other words, the vertex coloring w induced by c in the above must be proper. The corresponding invariant, i.e., the minimum value of k for which such an NESD total k -coloring of G exists, is called the *neighbor expanded sum distinguishing index of G* or simply *expanded index of G* and denoted by $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(G)$.

We state the following conjecture.

Conjecture 3. *For every graph G , $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(G) \leq 2$.*

Remark 4. Another possibility would be to distinguish vertices by considering *full sums* defined for a vertex x by

$$\phi(x) = c(x) + \sum_{e \ni x} c(e) + \sum_{y \in N(x)} c(y),$$

where c is a total coloring of G . The corresponding parameter is denoted by $\text{fgndi}_\Sigma(G)$. The main reason why we consider expanded sums and not full sums is that the parameter $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(G)$ is well defined for each graph G , while the parameter $\text{fgndi}_\Sigma(G)$ does not exist for graphs containing K_2 as a component. Observe by the way that $\text{fgndi}_\Sigma(K_3) = 3$ while $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(K_3) = 2$. Thus, in general, we need three colors in order to distinguish adjacent vertices in such a way while, if the above conjecture is true, in the case of expanded sum two colors are sufficient. Therefore, in a sense, the parameter $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(G)$ is closer to $\text{tgndi}_\Sigma(G)$ than $\text{fgndi}_\Sigma(G)$.

Remark 5. As we continue to deal with only one parameter, namely $\text{egndi}_\Sigma(G)$, later on, we use the shorter notation, simply putting $\eta(G) := \text{egndi}_\Sigma(G)$.

Let G and G' be isomorphic graphs and c and c' be two total colorings of G and G' , respectively. We say that an isomorphism $\phi : V(G) \mapsto V(G')$ of G and G' is a *total isomorphism*, respect to c and c' , if $c'(\phi(x)) = c(x)$ for any $x \in V(G)$ and $c'(\phi(xy)) = c(xy)$ for any $xy \in E$.

If $a < b$, where a, b are natural numbers, then by $[a, b]$ we mean the integer interval of ends a and b , i.e., the set $\{a, a + 1, \dots, b\}$. Remind that $[n] = [1, n]$. We use Bondy and Murty's book [1] for terminologies and notations not defined here.

2. PATHS, CYCLES AND COMPLETE GRAPHS

The proof of the following proposition is left to the reader.

Proposition 6. *If P_m is the path of order $m \geq 2$, then $\eta(P_m) = 2$, if $m \neq 3$ and $\eta(P_3) = 1$.*

Proposition 7. For $m \geq 3$, $\eta(C_m) = 2$.

Proof. Let $C_m = x_1, \dots, x_m, x_1$ be the cycle of order $m \geq 4$. Put

$$c(x_{2i-1}) = 1, \text{ if } 1 \leq 2i - 1 \leq m;$$

$$c(x_{2i}) = 2, \text{ if } 2 \leq 2i \leq m;$$

$$c(x_i x_{i+1}) = 1, \text{ if } i = 1, \dots, m \text{ and } m \text{ even (indices of a cycle } C_m \text{ are taken modulo } m);$$

$$c(x_i x_{i+1}) = 1, \text{ if } i = 1, \dots, m, i \neq m - 1 \text{ and } m \text{ odd, } c(x_{m-1} x_m) = 2.$$

It can be easily seen that the above function is a neighbor expanded sum distinguishing total 2-coloring of C_m . For $m = 3$, the result follows from the next theorem. \blacksquare

Theorem 8. For every $n \geq 2$, $\eta(K_n) = 2$.

Proof. Denote by x_1, \dots, x_n the vertices of the complete graph K_n and let c_n be a total k -coloring of K_n . Let $w(c_n) = \{a \in \mathbb{N} \mid \text{there is an } i \in [n] \text{ such that } w(x_i) = a\}$ and let $f(c_n) = \sum_{i=1}^n c_n(x_i)$.

We claim that for every $n \geq 2$ there is an NESD total 2-coloring c_n of K_n such that

$$(1) \quad w(c_n) = \begin{cases} \left[\frac{5n-5}{2}, \frac{7n-7}{2} \right], & \text{if } n \text{ is odd,} \\ \left[\frac{5n-6}{2}, \frac{7n-8}{2} \right], & \text{if } n \text{ is even,} \end{cases}$$

and

$$(2) \quad f(c_n) = \begin{cases} \frac{3n-1}{2}, & \text{if } n \text{ is odd,} \\ \frac{3n}{2}, & \text{if } n \text{ is even.} \end{cases}$$

Note that for each $n \geq 2$ the set $w(c_n)$ contains exactly n different values, so if there exists a coloring c_n satisfying (1), then it is NESD.

Now, let c_2 be the total coloring of K_2 defined as follows: $c_2(x_1) = 1$, $c_2(x_2) = 2$ and $c_2(x_1 x_2) = 1$. Obviously, c_2 is an NESD total 2-coloring, where $w(c_2) = [2, 3] = \left[\frac{5n-6}{2}, \frac{7n-8}{2} \right]$ and $f(c_2) = 3 = \frac{3n}{2}$. The coloring c_n will be defined recursively as follows.

Suppose that there exists a total coloring c_{n-1} verifying the conditions (1) and (2) and color the subgraph of K_n induced by the set $\{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{n-1}\}$ using the coloring c_{n-1} . If n is odd use 1 to color the vertex x_n , and 2 to color all $n-1$ edges incident to x_n . For n even use 2 to color x_n and 1 for all edges incident to x_n . We will denote by c_n the total coloring of K_n obtained in this way.

Observe that in the coloring c_n the weights $w(x_i)$ for $i = 1, \dots, n-1$ increase by 3 (with respect to the weights for c_{n-1}), and $w(x_n)$ is equal to $f(c_{n-1}) + 2(n-1)$ for n odd and $f(c_{n-1}) + (n-1)$ for n even. So, if n is odd, then

$$w(c_n) = \left[\frac{5(n-1)-6}{2} + 3, \frac{7(n-1)-8}{2} + 3 \right] \cup \{f(c_{n-1}) + 2(n-1)\}$$

$$= \left[\frac{5n-5}{2}, \frac{7n-9}{2} \right] \cup \left\{ \frac{3(n-1)}{2} + 2n - 2 \right\} = \left[\frac{5n-5}{2}, \frac{7n-7}{2} \right],$$

and

$$f(c_n) = \frac{3(n-1)}{2} + 1 = \frac{3n-1}{2}.$$

If n is even, then we have

$$\begin{aligned} w(c_n) &= \left[\frac{5(n-1)-5}{2} + 3, \frac{7(n-1)-7}{2} + 3 \right] \cup \{f(c_{n-1}) + (n-1)\} \\ &= \left[\frac{5n-4}{2}, \frac{7n-8}{2} \right] \cup \left\{ \frac{3(n-1)-1}{2} + n - 1 \right\} = \left[\frac{5n-6}{2}, \frac{7n-8}{2} \right] \end{aligned}$$

and

$$f(c_n) = \frac{3(n-1)-1}{2} + 2 = \frac{3n}{2}.$$

It follows that c_n is an NESD total 2-coloring of K_n . ■

Corollary 9. *There exist exactly two (up to total isomorphism) NESD total 2-colorings of K_n .*

Proof. We will use the notation of the proof of Theorem 8. Consider another NESD total 2-coloring c'_n of K_n defined recursively as follows. For $n = 2$ let $c'_2(x_1) = 1$, $c'_2(x_2) = 2$ and $c'_2(x_1x_2) = 2$. Suppose the coloring c'_{n-1} is given. Now color the subgraph of K_n induced by the set $\{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_{n-1}\}$ using the coloring c'_{n-1} . If n is odd use 2 to color the vertex x_n , and 1 to color all $n-1$ edges incident to x_n . A vertex x which is colored by 2 and such that its incident edges are colored by 1 will be called the *edge monochromatic vertex of type 2*.

For n even use 1 to color x_n and 2 for all edges incident to this vertex. Such a vertex is called the *edge monochromatic vertex of type 1*.

We denote the total coloring of K_n obtained in this way by c'_n . Note that, in each coloring c_n or c'_n of K_n there is exactly one edge monochromatic vertex of type 1 or 2, and if the coloring c_n contains one edge monochromatic vertex of type 1, then c'_n has one edge monochromatic vertex of type 2 and viceversa. Applying the method described in the proof of Theorem 8 one can easily show that c'_n is an NESD total 2-coloring of K_n .

Let l_n be another NESD total 2-coloring of K_n , $n \geq 2$. Let $d^n(x_i) = \sum_{e \ni x_i} l_n(e)$, $i = 1, \dots, n$.

Put $m = \min_i d^n(x_i)$, $M = \max_i d^n(x_i)$. We claim that $m = n-1$ or $M = 2n-2$ and there is exactly one edge monochromatic vertex of type 1 or 2 (so exactly one of these two equalities is true). Suppose for the sake of contradiction that $d^n(x_i) \geq n$ and $d^n(x_i) \leq 2n-3$ for all i . Without loss of generality, we may

assume that $d^n(x_1) = m \geq n$ and $d^n(x_2) = M \leq 2n - 3$. Therefore, the expanded sum associated to l_n , say w , satisfies

$$w(x_1) = d^n(x_1) + b \geq n + b,$$

where $b = \sum_{i \neq 1} l_n(x_i)$.

Moreover,

$$w(x_2) \leq d^n(x_2) + (b + 1) \leq b + 2n - 2,$$

so $w(x_2) - w(x_1) \leq n - 2$ and we cannot distinguish all the vertices of K_n by expanded sums $w(x_i)$, a contradiction.

Thus, we may assume that (for example) $d^n(x_1) = n - 1$, i.e., all edges incident to x_1 are painted using the color 1. It follows that $M \leq 2n - 3$ and $w(x_2) - w(x_1) \leq n - 1$. Therefore, $w(x_2) = b + 2n - 2 = \sum_{i \neq 2} l_n(x_i) + d^n(x_2) = \sum_{i \neq 1} l_n(x_i) + l_n(x_1) - l_n(x_2) + d^n(x_2) = b + l_n(x_1) - l_n(x_2) + d^n(x_2)$. Thus, $d^n(x_2) = l_n(x_2) - l_n(x_1) + 2n - 2 \leq 2n - 3$ and this implies $l_n(x_1) > l_n(x_2)$, so $l_n(x_1) = 2$. Hence, x_1 is the only vertex satisfying $d^n(x_1) = n - 1$ (the second one would have the same color so the same weight as x_1) and this is the edge monochromatic vertex of type 2. The proof of the case when $d^n(x_2) = M = 2n - 2$ is analogous, so our claim is true.

Now applying the induction on n , we will show that every NESD total 2-coloring l_n of K_n ($n \geq 2$) is identical with c_n or c'_n (up to total isomorphism). Clearly, this assertion is evident for $n = 2$. Assume that it is true for $n' < n$ and consider an NESD total 2-coloring l_n of K_n . Deleting an unique edge monochromatic vertex of type 2 (type 1, respectively), we get the graph K_{n-1} together with an NESD total 2-coloring c_{n-1} or c'_{n-1} having edge monochromatic vertex of type 1 (type 2, respectively), so our assertion is true. ■

3. BIPARTITE GRAPHS

Theorem 10. *Let T be a tree of order $n \geq 2$. Then $\eta(T) \leq 2$.*

Proof. The proof is by induction on n . Observe that the theorem is trivial if T is a star $K_{1,n-1}$, hence, in particular, for every tree of order $n \in \{2, 3\}$, $\eta(T) \leq 2$.

Suppose our assertion is true for all trees of order $n - 1 \geq 3$ and let T be a tree of order n . We may assume that T is not isomorphic to $K_{1,n-1}$. Let x be an end-vertex of a longest path $P = xyz \cdots$ in T and let T' denote the tree $T \setminus \{x\}$. By the choice of x and T , z is the only neighbor of y having the degree greater than or equal to 2 in T . Let $d_{T'}(t) = d'(t)$ for any vertex $t \in V(T')$. The degree in T' of any vertex t is the same as in T , except for $t = y$ for which $d'(y) = d_T(y) - 1$.

By induction hypothesis, there is an NESD total 2-coloring c' of T' . We will color the edge xy and the vertex x by a and b , respectively, $a, b \in \{1, 2\}$, so that the coloring c of T defined as follows

$$(3) \quad c(\alpha) = \begin{cases} c'(\alpha), & \text{if } \alpha \in V(T') \cup E(T'), \\ a, & \text{if } \alpha = xy, \\ b, & \text{if } \alpha = x, \end{cases}$$

would be an NESD total 2-coloring of T . We prove that this is always possible.

Let $w'(v)$ denote the expanded sum at $v \in V(T')$ with respect to the coloring c' .

Suppose now that the degree $d_T(y)$ of y in T is at least three and observe that for any total 2-coloring c of T and for any $t \in N_T(y) \setminus \{z\}$, we have $w(t) = c(y) + c(yt) \leq 4$ and $w(y) \geq 6$, so the vertices t and y are distinguished. Therefore, we can choose a and b such that $w(z) = w'(z) \neq w'(y) + a + b = w(y)$ and the new total coloring c of T defined by (3) will distinguish all vertices of T .

If $d_T(y) = 2$, we can also choose a and b such that $w(x) = a + c'(y) \neq w'(y) + a + b = w(y)$ and $w(z) = w'(z) \neq w'(y) + a + b = w(y)$, so the total coloring c distinguishes all vertices of T . ■

Proposition 11. *Let $G = (X, Y, E)$ be a connected bipartite graph with bipartition classes X and Y such that $|X|$ is even or G has a vertex of odd degree. Then $\eta(G) \leq 2$.*

Proof. Suppose that $|X|$ is even. We will follow the idea presented in [4] and show that there exists a coloring of vertices and edges of G with the elements of the group \mathbb{Z}_2 such that all vertices of X have expanded sums 1 and the expanded sum at any vertex of Y is 0. Let $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_{2k}\}$ and let P_j denote a path of end-vertices x_{2j-1} and x_{2j} , $j = 1, \dots, k$. Clearly, each P_j is of even length. Begin now with color 0 on all vertices and edges of G and modify this coloring along the consecutive paths P_j in the following way: start with P_1 and add 1 (in \mathbb{Z}_2) to the color of every edge of P_1 , then add 1 to the color of every edge of P_2 and so on. Obviously, in j -th step this operation maintains the expanded sums at internal vertices of P_j , so that of Y , and change the expanded sums at end-vertices of P_j . After k steps we obtain the desired coloring with the elements of \mathbb{Z}_2 .

Replacing the color 0 by 2 and applying the addition in \mathbb{N} we get an NESD total 2-coloring of G .

Now, assume that $|X|$ and $|Y|$ are odd (otherwise we could apply the first part of the proof), $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_{2k}, x_{2k+1}\}$, and $d(x_{2k+1}) = 2l + 1$ is odd. Color the edges and the vertices of G with the elements of \mathbb{Z}_2 using the same method as in the first part of the proof, taking the set $X' = \{x_1, \dots, x_{2k}\}$ as the set of end-vertices of paths P_j . Perhaps some paths P_j contain the vertex x_{2k+1} . Now the weight of every vertex of $Y \cup \{x_{2k+1}\}$ is 0 and all remaining weights are equal

to 1. Put 1 on the vertex x_{2k+1} and add 1 to the color of each edge incident to the vertex x_{2k+1} . Now the weights of vertices which are not adjacent to x_{2k+1} remain unchanged, we add 1+1 to the weight of every neighbor of x_{2k+1} and $(2l+1) \cdot 1$ to the weight of the vertex x_{2k+1} . Thus the weight of every vertex of X is 1 and all weights of vertices of Y are equal to 0. Now we change the color 0 for 2, apply the addition in \mathbb{N} and get an NESD total 2-coloring of G . ■

The following proposition is obvious.

Proposition 12. *If every two adjacent vertices of G have different degrees, then $\eta(G) = 1$.*

In some cases, the value of $\eta(G)$ can be determined exactly.

Corollary 13. *For any integers $n, p \geq 1$, $\eta(K_{n,p}) = 2$ for $n = p$ and $\eta(K_{n,p}) = 1$ for $n \neq p$.*

Proof. Suppose that $K_{n,n}$ has bipartition (X, Y) . If we color the vertices of X by 1 and other vertices and edges of $K_{n,n}$ by 2, we get an NESD total 2-coloring. For $n \neq p$ our result follows from Proposition 12. ■

4. SOME OTHER RESULTS

In [4] Karoński *et al.* proved the following result.

Theorem 14. *Let Γ be a finite abelian group of odd order k and let G be a k -colorable graph on $n \geq 3$ vertices. Then there exists a coloring c of the edges of G with the elements of Γ such that the resulting vertex coloring σ induced by c is a proper coloring of G .*

Corollary 15. *Let k be an odd integer and let G be a connected k -colorable graph. Then $\eta(G) \leq k$.*

Proof. If we color the edges of G using the method described in [4] with the elements of $\mathbb{Z}_k = \mathbb{Z}_{2l+1}$ and put 0 on the vertices of G , then we get an NESD total coloring of G with the elements of $\Gamma = \mathbb{Z}_k$. Now we can obtain an NESD total k -coloring of G by replacing 0 by k and applying the addition in \mathbb{N} . ■

Thus the following corollary is true.

Corollary 16. *If G is a connected k -colorable graph, then $\eta(G) \leq k + 1$.*

As already mentioned, in [3], Kalkowski *et al.* showed that for every graph G without components isomorphic to K_2 there exists a coloring of the edges of G with the elements of $\{1, \dots, 5\}$ such that the resulting vertex weighting is a proper vertex coloring of G . This implies at once the following corollary.

Corollary 17. *If G is a connected regular graph, then $\eta(G) \leq 5$.*

Proof. Color the edges of G with 5 colors in such a way that the obtained vertex coloring is proper. Afterwards put 1 on the vertices of G . All weights will increase by a constant. ■

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Received 26 June 2015

Revised 1 February 2016

Accepted 1 February 2016