Antimagic labeling and canonical decomposition of graphs

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Abstract

An antimagic labeling of a connected graph with m edges is an injective assignment of labels from $\{1, \dots, m\}$ to the edges such that the sums of incident labels are distinct at distinct vertices. Hartsfield and Ringel conjectured that every connected graph other than K_2 has an antimagic labeling. We prove this for the classes of split graphs and graphs decomposable under the canonical decomposition introduced by Tyshkevich.

Mathematics Subject Classification (2000): 05C78, 05C69, 05C75
Keywords: antimagic labeling, split graph, canonical decomposition

Let G be a graph with m edges. For an injective labeling of the edges of G with the labels $1, 2, \dots, m$, we define f on the vertex set of G by setting $f(v)$ to be the sum of the labels on edges containing v. If f is an injective function, then we say that both the edge labeling and G are *antimagic*. Hartsfield and Ringel [6] conjectured that every connected graph other than K_2 has an antimagic labeling. Various classes of graphs have been shown to be antimagic (see [1], [3], [4], [5], [6], [9], and [10]).

In this note we present an algorithm that produces an antimagic labeling for any graph containing a clique with special neighborhood properties. We then characterize the graphs having such cliques; these are precisely the split graphs and graphs that are decomposable under what has been termed the *canonical decomposition*.

We use $V(G)$ and $d_G(v)$ to denote the vertex set of G and the degree of vertex v in G. We define the open and closed neighborhoods of a vertex v in G to be the sets

$$N_G(v) = \{u \in V(G)\colon\ uv \in E(G)\},$$
$$N_G[v] = \{u \in V(G)\colon\ u = v \text{ or } uv \in E(G)\},$$

respectively. Given $W \subseteq V(G)$, let $G[W]$ denote the induced subgraph of G with vertex set W. A clique in a graph is a set of pairwise adjacent vertices.

Theorem 1. *If G is a connected graph with a clique B such that for every vertex v in G either $N_G(v) \subseteq B$ or $B \subseteq N_G[v]$, then G is antimagic.*

Proof. We provide an antimagic labeling of the edges of G. Let A denote the set of vertices v not in B such that $N_G(v) \subsetneq B$. Let $A = \{a_1, \ldots, a_{|A|}\}$ and $B = \{b_1, \ldots, b_{|B|}\}$, where in each set the vertices are indexed in nondecreasing order of degrees, and let $C = V(G) - A - B$. Note that A is an independent set, and each vertex of C is adjacent to every vertex of B.

To begin the labeling, order the edges of the form $a_i b_j$ lexicographically on the index pairs (i, j) and assign them the first numbers in order. Next, label all edges in $G[C]$ arbitrarily with the next smallest numbers. Define a function g on C by letting $g(v)$ denote the sum of labels on all edges incident with v in $G[C]$, and denote the vertices of C by $c_1, \ldots, c_{|C|}$, where the vertices are indexed in nondecreasing order of their values under g. Now order the edges of the form $c_i b_j$ lexicographically on the pairs (i, j), and label them with the next smallest numbers. For vertices v in B, define $g'(v)$ to be the sum of the labels on all edges joining v with a vertex outside B (at this point all such edges have been labeled). Denote the vertices of B now as $b'_1, \ldots, b'_{|B|}$, indexing them in nondecreasing order of their values under g'. Label the remaining edges $b'_i b'_j$ in lexicographic order on the pairs (i, j).

We prove now that the labeling described is antimagic. For each vertex v in G, let $f(v)$ denote the sum of the labels on edges containing v. For $c \in C$ and $a_i, a_j \in A$ with $i < j$, note that $d_G(a_i) \leq d_G(a_j) < d_G(c)$, and if ℓ_1, ℓ_2, ℓ_3 are arbitrary labels on edges incident with a_i, a_j, c, respectively, then $\ell_1 < \ell_2 < \ell_3$. It follows that $f(a_i) < f(a_j) < f(c)$, so f is injective on A, and f takes on different values for any two vertices $a \in A$ and $c \in C$.

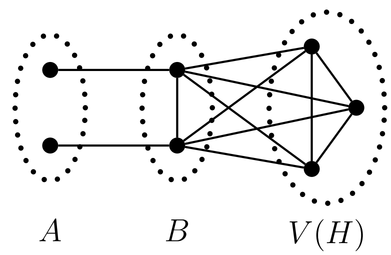
For $c \in C$, note that $f(c)$ is the sum of $g(c)$ and the labels on all edges cb for $b \in B$. For $c_i, c_j \in C$ with $i < j$, we have $g(c_i) \leq g(c_j)$, and for each $b \in B$ the edge $c_i b$ receives a label strictly less than the label on $c_j b$; hence $f(c_i) < f(c_j)$, so f is injective on C. Furthermore, for $u \in A \cup C$ and $b \in B$, if v is a neighbor of u other than b, then v is also a neighbor of b, and edge uv receives a label less than the label on bv; hence $f(u) < f(b)$. If u has no neighbors other than b, then b has a neighbor other than u (since G is connected and not K_2) and again we see that $f(u) < f(b)$.

Finally, we show that f takes on different values for all vertices of B. This is trivial if $|B| = 1$. Suppose that $|B| = 2$. In this case $A \cup C$ is nonempty, since G is not K_2. If A is nonempty, then it consists of pendant vertices adjacent to either b_1 or b_2. Since $d_G(b_1) \leq d_G(b_2)$, the contribution to $f(b_1)$ from edges joining b_1 to vertices in A is strictly less than the corresponding contribution to $f(b_2)$, by construction. Each vertex in C is adjacent to both b_1 and b_2, and the label on the edge joining it to b_1 is smaller than the label on the edge joining it to b_2. Since $A \cup C$ is nonempty, it follows that $f(b_1) < f(b_2)$.

Finally, suppose that $|B| \geq 3$. Let b'_i and b'_j be vertices of B with $i < j$; by definition, $g'(b'_i) \leq g'(b'_j)$. Since every other vertex b'_k in B is adjacent to both b'_i and b'_j, with edge $b'_i b'_k$ receiving a lesser label than $b'_j b'_k$, it is clear that $f(b'_i) < f(b'_j)$. □

In [1], Alon et al. prove that graphs with a dominating vertex are antimagic; Theorem 1 extends this result to graphs having a special dominating clique.

Following the work of Tyshkevich in [7] (see also [8]), we define a binary operation $\circ$ with two inputs. The first input is a split graph S with a given partition of the vertex set into an independent set A and and clique B (denote this by $S(A, B)$), and the second is an arbitrary graph H. The *composition* $S(A, B) \circ H$ is defined to be the graph resulting from taking the disjoint union of $S(A,B)$ and H and adding to it all edges having an endpoint in each of B and $V(H)$. For example, taking P_4 as the split graph (with the unique partition of its vertex set into a clique and an independent set) and K_3 as the second input, the composition is the following graph.



As shown in [7], each graph can be written uniquely as a composition of indecomposable elements in this way, and this representation is known as the *canonical decomposition* of a graph. Characterizations of indecomposable graphs can be found in [8] and [2].

Proposition 2. *The following are equivalent for a graph G:*

(1) *G has a clique B such that for all $v \in V(G)$ either $N_G(v) \subseteq B$ or $B \subseteq N_G[v]$;*

(2) *G is split or canonically decomposable.*

Proof. (1) $\Rightarrow$ (2): Let A be the set of vertices v not in B such that $N_G[v] \subsetneq B$, and let $C = V(G) - A - B$. Note that A is an independent set. If $C = \emptyset$, then G is a split graph. Otherwise, we may write G as the composition $G'(A,B) \circ G[C]$, where $G' = G[A \cup B]$.
(2) $\Rightarrow$ (1): If G is split, then we may partition $V(G)$ into an independent set A and a clique B. If G is decomposable in the canonical decomposition, then we may write $G = S(A,B) \circ H$ for vertex subsets A and B and induced subgraphs S and H of G. In both cases either $N_G(v) \subseteq B$ or $B \subseteq N_G[v]$ for each vertex v in G. □

Corollary 3. *Connected graphs on at least 3 vertices that are split or canonically decomposable are antimagic.*

Acknowledgements

The author gratefully acknowledges assistance from his Ph.D. advisor, Douglas B. West, in the preparation of this note.

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