

DRIVEN SINE-GORDON EQUATION ON METRIC GRAPHS: A MODEL FOR BRANCHED JOSEPHSON JUNCTION

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Abstract. We consider driven sine-Gordon equation on a metric star graph (Y-junction) by choosing driving potential in the form of periodic monochromatic function. Solutions of the problems are obtained numerically. Transmission of sine-Gordon solitons through the branching point of the graph is analyzed using the contour plots of the solution. Obtained solutions are used for modeling of soliton dynamics electronic properties of branched Josephson junction. Current profile and current-voltage characteristics are plotted and analyzed. The approach used for the case of the star-branched Josephson junction can be extended to arbitrary branching architectures.

Keywords: Josephson junction, sine-Gordon solitons, metric graphs.

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1. Introduction

Fabrication of the functional materials having high resource saving properties and maximum of device optimization and miniaturization, is a key priority for modern condensed matter physics and material science. Solving such a task requires deep understanding and manipulation by underlying fundamental phenomena. An important task in this context is reducing the dimension, or using low-dimensional functional materials for device fabrication. Remarkable feature of such dimensional reduction is possibility for tuning of material and device properties. Especially, such a reduction is effective in case of quasi-one-dimensional branched structures and networks. Playing with the device branching (architecture) topology is a powerful tool for tuning of the electronic, optical, thermal and mechanical properties in low-dimensional functional materials having branched structure. Transmission quasiparticles and waves through the branching points (nodes) of the structure and providing minimum of backscattering in such transmission allows to reduce energy and signal loss in utilization of branched low-dimensional materials in different devices. Among other devices fabricated on the basis of low-dimensional functional materials, Josephson junctions attracted much attention during past few decades. Potential use of Josephson junctions as the basic functional unit of SQUID, practical applications in creating of qubits and other possible applications in

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nanoelectronics in quantum technology, made them one of the central elements of the emerging technologies. Different versions of Josephson junction based devices have been considered during the past few decades. Modeling solitons in terms of sine-Gordon equation is discussed in the (Barone & Paternò, 1982; Askerzade *et al.*, 2017; Maraver *et al.*, 2014; Likharev, 1986). One of the interesting versions of such device is so called branched Josephson junction or Josephson junction network (Susanto *et al.*, 2004; Matrasulov *et al.*, 2020; Burioni *et al.*, 2006; Burioni *et al.*, 2005). Such devices provide powerful tool for tuning of different quantum and topological phenomena underlying Josephson junction physics (Askerzade & Salati, 2022; Askerzade, 2015; Askerzade & Kornev, 1994). In particular, by choosing proper device branching architecture one can achieve needed regime of sine-Gordon soliton dynamics, Josephson current and current-voltage characteristics. In this paper we address the problem of periodically driven branched Josephson junction which can appear, e.g., in multiterminal Josephson junctions (Amin *et al.*, 2002a; Amin *et al.*, 2002b; Amin *et al.*, 2001; Heck *et al.*, 2014; Golikova *et al.*, 2014; Riwar *et al.*, 2016; Zazunov *et al.*, 2017; Nowak *et al.*, 2019; Pankratova *et al.*, 2020; Melin, 2022; Amet *et al.*, 2022; Gavensky *et al.*, 2023). Dynamics of solitons in such structures can be modelled in terms of a sine-Gordon equation on metric graphs, where the kink-solitons appear as the phase difference in Josephson junction branches. It should be noted that modeling solitons using the metric graph based approach attracted much interest in the literature during the past two decades (Susanto *et al.*, 2004; Sobirov *et al.*, 2016; Sabirov *et al.*, 2018; Babajanov *et al.*, 2018; Matrasulov *et al.*, 2020; Caputo & Dutykh, 2014). Discussion of the sine-Gordon equation on metric graphs describing the phase difference in a $0-\pi$ and the specific case of a tricrystal boundary with a π Josephson junction as one of the three arms can be found in Ref. (Susanto *et al.*, 2004). Integrability and the soliton solutions of the sine-Gordon equation on metric graphs was considered in (Sobirov *et al.*, 2016), where existence of infinitely many conservation laws was proven and exact soliton solution were obtained. It was shown that when the problem is integrable, transmission of the sine-Gordon solitons through the network vertices is reflectionless. Stationary sine-Gordon equation on finite metric graphs have been studied in the Refs. (Sabirov *et al.* 2018; Babajanov *et al.* 2018; Matrasulov *et al.* 2020; Sabirov, Sobirov, Babajanov & Matrasulov, 2013). Static sine-Gordon solitons in branched Josephson junctions were considered in the Ref. (Matrasulov *et al.*, 2020). We note that the driven sine-Gordon equation on a line is studied in the Refs. (Gul *et al.*, 2018; Pankratov, 2002; Jagtap *et al.*, 2017; Bennett *et al.*, 1982; Malomed, 1989). Here we use a time-dependent sine-Gordon equation on graphs with external, time-periodic potential for modeling of driven Josephson junction. By solving the problem numerically the time-dependent driven sine-Gordon equation, we compute the current-voltage characteristics of the device.

The paper is organized as follows. In the next section we introduce the driven sine-Gordon equation on the star graph. In Section 3, we present the numerical results, current-voltage characteristics and discussion of the results. Section 4 presents some concluding remarks.

2. Driven sine-Gordon equation on a star graph

Driven, or modified sine-Gordon equation on a real line can be written as Gul et al. (2018)

$$\partial_t^2 \psi(x, t) - \partial_x^2 \psi(x, t) + \sin[\psi(x, t)] = \gamma + \lambda \partial_t \psi(x, t) + f \cos(\omega t), \quad (1)$$

where γ , f , ω are constants.

Eq. (1) described phase difference in a Josephson junction driven by external time-periodic (e.g., AC) field. Unlike to standard (integrable) sine-Gordon equation, it does not approve analytical soliton solutions. Therefore, one needs to solve it numerically. Here we consider driven sine-Gordon equation on a metric graph, by focusing in star, i.e. Y –junction branched graph. Namely, we consider the star graph with three semi-infinite bonds b_j (see, Fig. 1), for which a coordinate x_j is assigned. Choosing the origin of coordinates at the vertex, 0 for bond b_1 we put $x_1 \in (-\infty, 0]$ and for $b_{2,3}$ we fix $x_{2,3} \in [0, +\infty)$.

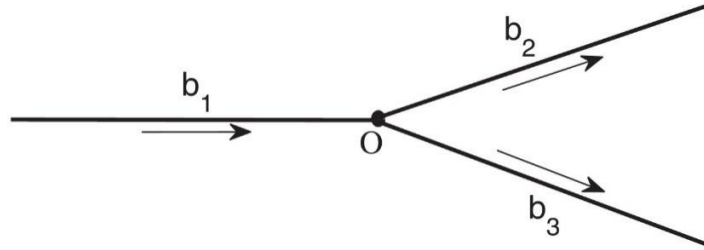


Fig. 1. Basic star graph

Then driven sine-Gordon equation can be written on each bond of the star graph as

$$\begin{aligned} \partial_t^2 \psi_j(x, t) - \alpha_j^2 \partial_x^2 \psi_j(x, t) + \beta_j^2 \sin[\psi_j(x, t)] \\ = \gamma_j + \lambda_j \partial_t \psi_j(x, t) + f_j \cos(\omega_j t), \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Vertex boundary conditions which can be derived from fundamental conservation laws, such as charge and energy conservation, are given as (Sobirov *et al.*, 2016):

$$\begin{aligned} \psi_1(x, t)|_{x=0} = \psi_2(x, t)|_{x=0} = \psi_3(x, t)|_{x=0}, \\ a_1 \partial_x \psi_1(x, t)|_{x=0} = a_2 \partial_x \psi_2(x, t)|_{x=0} + a_3 \partial_x \psi_3(x, t)|_{x=0}. \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

From vertex boundary conditions (3) one can derive the following constraint:

$$a_j = \frac{\alpha_j}{\beta_j}, \quad \frac{\alpha_1}{\beta_1} = \frac{\alpha_2}{\beta_2} + \frac{\alpha_3}{\beta_3}, \quad (4)$$

which provides condition to be fulfilled by the solution of Eq. (1) to fulfill the vertex boundary conditions given by Eq. (2), i.e. condition for fulfilling by the solution of driven sine-Gordon equation on a line to that star on a graph. Assuming that the constraint (4) is fulfilled, we solved the problem given by Eqs. (2) and (3). For numerical solution we used

fourth-order Runge-Kutta method for the system of second order differential equations in Eq. (2). In order to apply this method one needs to rewrite Eq. (2) as in the form

$$\begin{aligned} \partial_t \psi_j(x, t) &= \phi_j(x, t), \\ \partial_t \phi_j(x, t) - \alpha_j^2 \partial_x^2 \psi_j(x, t) + \beta_j^2 \sin[\psi_j(x, t)] & \\ &= \gamma_j + \lambda_j \partial_t \psi_j(x, t) + f_j \cos(\omega_j t), \end{aligned} \tag{5}$$

The initial condition is imposed in the form of anti-kink solution of sine-Gordon equation on a graph considered in Sobirov et al. (2016) which is given by

$$\psi_j(x, 0) = 4 \arctan \left[\exp \left(- \frac{\beta_j (x - x_0)}{\sqrt{1 - v^2}} \right) \right],$$

where v is the velocity of the anti-kink. For all calculations, we choose the parameters α_j and β_j as fulfilling the constraint in Eq. (4), namely $\alpha_1 = 1$, $\alpha_2 = 0.6$, $\alpha_3 = 0.4$ and $\beta_1 = \beta_2 = \beta_3 = 1$.

Figs. (2) and (3) present the plots of numerically obtained solution of the problem given by Eqs. (2) and (3). Dynamics of sine-Gordon (kink) soliton near the branching point can be analyzed from these plots. Namely, transmission of the soliton through the vertex is accompanied by reflection (backscattering). Such a behavior is opposite to what was observed in case of unperturbed sine-Gordon equation on metric graphs, where transmission of kink solitons through the vertex for the case when the constraint in Eq. (4) was reflectionless (Sobirov *et al.*, (2016).

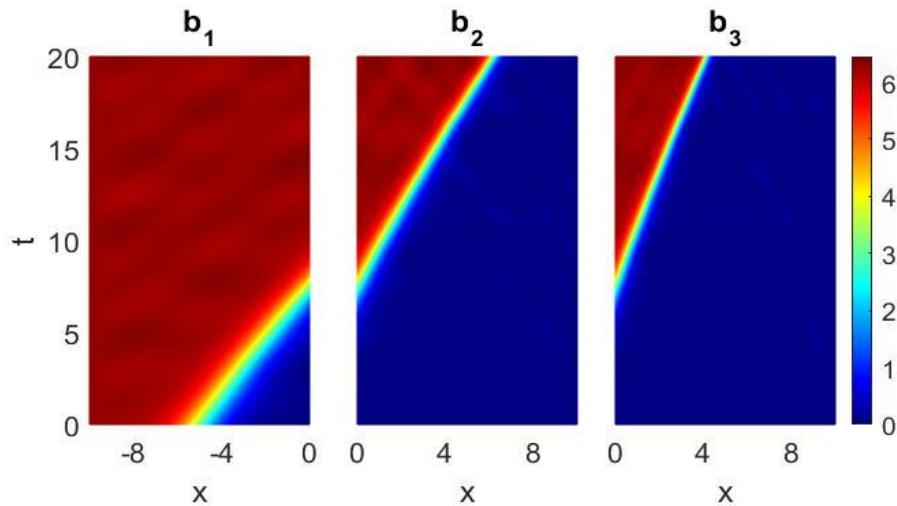


Fig. 2. Contour plot of numerical solution of Eq. (2) for parameters: $\gamma_j = 0$, $\lambda_j = 0.05$, $f_j = 0.1$, $\omega_j = 2$.

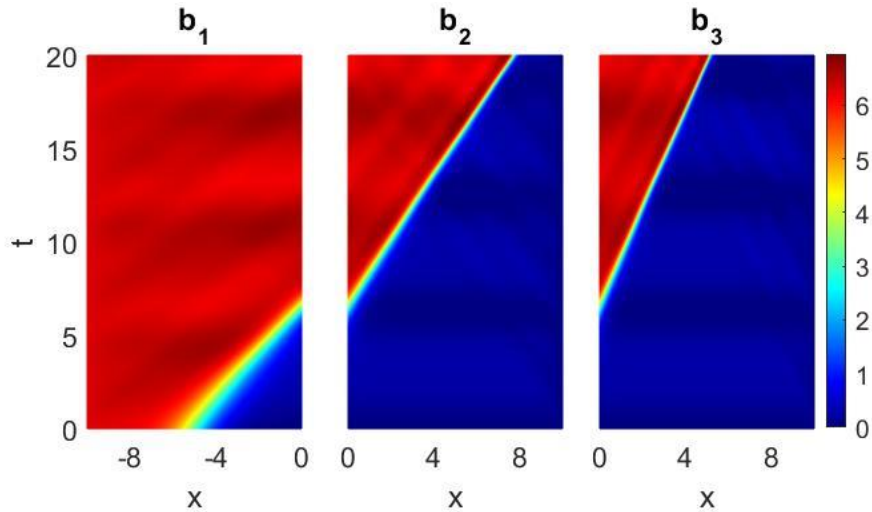


Fig. 3. Contour plot of numerical solution of Eq. (2) for parameters:
 $\gamma_j = 0.15$, $\lambda_j = 0.05$, $f_j = 0.1$, $\omega_j = 2$.

Such a difference can be observed by the role of the external driving potential, that makes the problem non-integrable.

3. Branched Josephson junction

Here we apply the results of the previous section to branched Josephson junction. The latter is a device presented in Fig. 4, that consists of planar superconductor sheets, connected each other via the branched normal metal (or insulator) having Y –junction shape with long branches. Such structure can be considered as a version of the so-called multi-terminal Josephson junction considered in the Refs. (Amin *et al.*, 2002a; Amin *et al.*, 2002b; Amin *et al.*, 2001; Riwar *et al.*, 2016; Pankratova *et al.*, 2020). The most closest to our model Josephson junction device was quite recently considered in (Gavensky *et al.*, 2023). The phase difference on each branch such device is described in terms of Eq. (2) and fulfills the vertex boundary conditions given by Eq. (3).

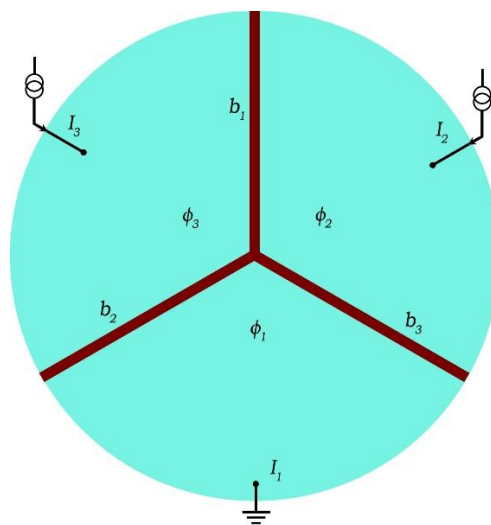


Fig. 4. Sketch for the branched Josephson junction

Therefore the numerical results obtained in the previous section can be used for computing its electronic properties, e.g. the profile of current and the current-voltage characteristics. To do this, we can use relation of the between current and phase difference, as well as relation between voltage and phase difference, which are given by (respectively) (Barone *et al.*, 1971).

$$J_j = J_{0j} \sin(\psi_j(x, t)),$$

$$V_j = \frac{\hbar}{2e} \partial_t \psi_j(x, t)$$

where J_{0j} is the amplitude of the Josephson current. Fig. 5 presents the plots of profile of the current on each branch of the Josephson junction at different time moments. Crucial change of the current's profile in transmission from the first branch to second and third ones can be clearly seen from the plots. Symmetry between the second and third bonds is caused by the initial condition, which imposed on first bond as incoming sine-Gordon kink at $t = 0$.

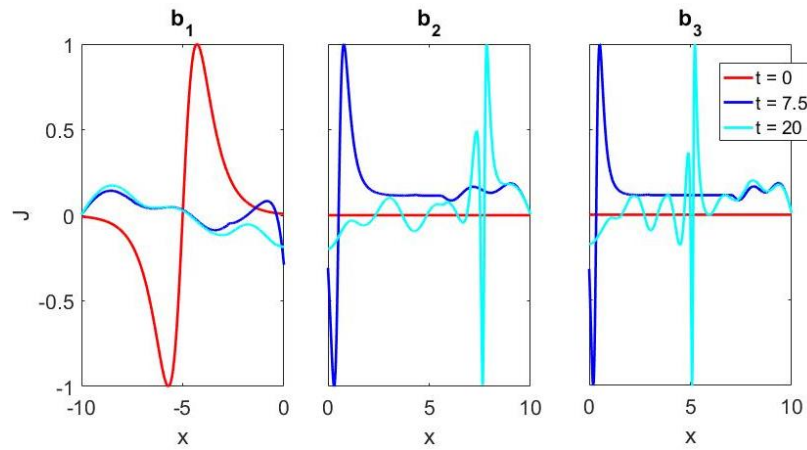


Fig. 5. Current profile on each branch of the Josephson junction presented in Fig. (4) at different time moments. The parameters are chosen as $\gamma_j = 0.15$, $\lambda_j = 0.05$, $f_j = 0.1$, $\omega_j = 2$

In Figs. (6) and (7) demonstrated the current-voltage characteristics on each branch of the star shaped branched Josephson junction (see, Fig. 4).

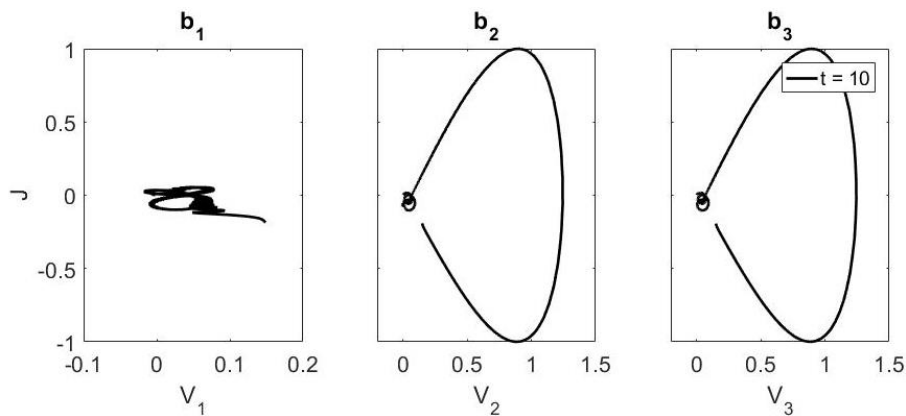


Fig. 6. Current-voltage characteristics on each branch of the Josephson junction presented in Fig. (4) for the parameters: $\gamma_j = 0$, $\lambda_j = 0.05$, $f_j = 0.1$, $\omega_j = 2$.

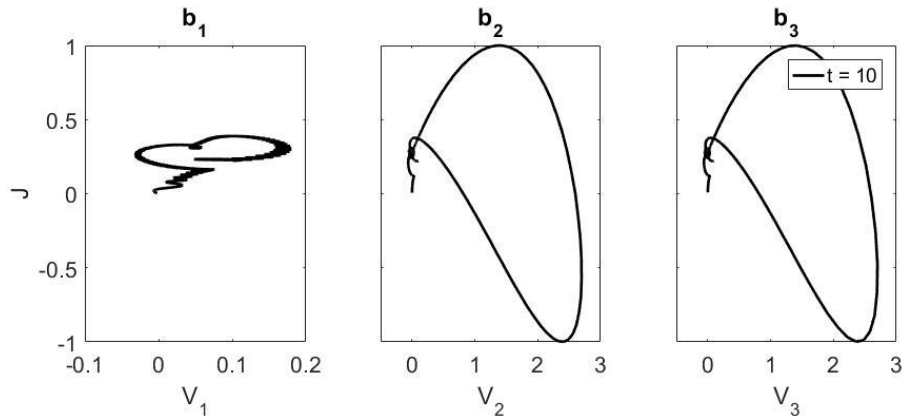


Fig. 7. Current-voltage characteristics on each branch of the Josephson junction presented in Fig. (4) for the parameters: $\gamma_j = 0.15$, $\lambda_j = 0.05$, $f_j = 0.1$, $\omega_j = 2$.

Abrupt change of the shape of the $I - V$ curve can be observed for these plots, too. Such a change can be explained by existence of certain backscattering and dominating (with respect to backscattering) at the junction's branching point. It is clear that by manipulating branch lengths and the sizes of superconducting domains, one can achieve tuning of the current-voltage characteristics.

Especially, such a tuning becomes effective, when one considers more complicated (than the simple $Y -$ junction) branching architectures, such as tree, loop, octagon, etc.

4. Conclusions

In this paper we studied soliton dynamics in branched Josephson junction driven by external time-periodic field. The whole is modelled in terms of modified sine-Gordon equation containing time-periodic potential. By solving sine-Gordon equation numerically we explored soliton dynamics on each branch and transmission of sine-Gordon solitons through the junction's branching point. Current-voltage characteristics of the device is plotted using the obtained solution of the sine-Gordon equation. The model we proposed can be fabricated and experimentally studied by splitting bulk planar superconductor via branched ($Y -$ junction) normal metal or insulator. Although the above treatment dealt with star-shaped branched Josephson junction, the approach we used can be applied for arbitrary branching architecture. Such a study is a subject for our forthcoming research that should appear in nearest future. The above results can be used for engineering different micro- and nano-scale devices on the basis of branched Josephson junctions

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