Unstable kink-soliton profiles for the sine-Gordon equation on a $\mathcal{Y}$-junction graph with $\delta$-interaction

Jaime Angulo Pava $^1$ and Ramón G. Plaza $^2$

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$^1$ Department of Mathematics, IME-USP
Rua do Matão 1010, Cidade Universitária, CEP 05508-090, São Paulo, SP (Brazil)
angulo@ime.usp.br

$^2$ Instituto de Investigaciones en Matemáticas Aplicadas y en Sistemas,
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Circuito Escolar s/n,
Ciudad Universitaria, C.P. 04510 Cd. de México (Mexico)
plaza@mym.iimas.unam.mx

Abstract

The aim of this work is to establish a linear instability result of stationary, kink-soliton profile solutions for the sine-Gordon equation on a metric graph with a structure represented by a $\mathcal{Y}$-junction. By considering boundary conditions at the graph-vertex of $\delta$-interaction type, it is shown that kink-soliton type stationary profiles are linearly (and nonlinearly) unstable. The extension theory of symmetric operators, Sturm-Liouville oscillation results and analytic perturbation theory of operators are fundamental ingredients in the stability analysis. A comprehensive study of the local well-posedness of the sine-Gordon model in $\mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})$ where $\mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \subset H^1(\mathcal{Y})$ is an appropriate energy space, is also established. The theory developed in this investigation has prospects for the study of the instability of stationary wave solutions of other nonlinear evolution equations on metric graphs.

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1 Introduction

In recent years, there has been a growing interest among the scientific community in modeling and analyzing evolution problems described by partial differential equations (PDEs) on graphs. A metric graph is a network-shaped structure of edges which are assigned a length (that is, a metric) and connected at vertices according to boundary conditions which determine the dynamics on the network. This trend has been mainly motivated by the demand of reliable mathematical models for different phenomena in branched systems which, in meso- or nano-scales, resemble a thin neighborhood of a graph, such as Josephson junction networks [48,49], electric circuits [14], unidirectional shallow water flow in a network [22], blood pressure waves in large arteries [50], or nerve impulses in complex arrays of neurons [56], just to mention a few examples (see also [7, 18, 19, 23, 24, 26, 30, 40, 43] and the many references therein). One of the main difficulties consists
on the fact that metric graphs are not manifolds. From a mathematical viewpoint, the nature of a PDE model on a graph is tantamount to a system of PDEs defined on appropriate intervals in which the coupling is given exclusively through the boundary conditions at the vertices, known as the “topology of the graph” (see, for example, a recent review of the extension of Hamiltonian dynamics to non-manifold structures by Bibikov and Prokhorov [20]). Hence, both the model equation and the geometry are complex in general, making the problem difficult to tackle. A first step is to consider simple geometries, such as star-shaped graphs and Y-junctions. Another simplification is to solve linear equations, such as Schrödinger operators, on graphs. In this case the system is called a quantum graph and there is a broad literature on the subject (see, e.g., [17–19, 21, 40, 41]).

The extension of the analysis to nonlinear dispersive equations on graphs is an emerging subfield that has recently attracted the attention of mathematicians and physicists alike. In particular, the prototype of graph geometry often considered is the star graph, namely, a metric graph with \( N \) semi-infinite edges of the form \((0, \infty)\) connected at a single common vertex at \( \nu = 0 \). The analyses have focused on the characterization of ground states and standing waves. These works pertain primarily to the nonlinear Schrödinger (NLS) equation (see Adami et al. [3–5], Angulo and Goloschapova [9, 10] and Cacciapuoti et al. [25]; see also Noja [51] for a recent review), albeit other nonlinear dispersive equations have been also studied, such as the Benjamin-Bona-Mahony (BBM) equation for unidirectional shallow fluid flow on a Y-junction (see Bona and Cascaval [22] and Mugnolo and Rault [45]), Airy-type equations (Mugnolo et al. [44]), nonlinear Klein-Gordon equations (Goloschapova [32]) or the Korteweg-de Vries (KdV) equation on general metric graphs (Angulo and Cavalcante [8]). All these model equations share one feature: the presence of solitary wave solutions (solitons). The analysis of existence, stability and the overall role of solitons for some PDE models on graphs, as well as the study of nonlinear equations on ramified structures, constitute a very active field of research due to its potential of becoming a paradigm model for topological effects of nonlinear wave propagation. The objective of this work is to contribute to this on-going effort through the analysis of the well-known sine-Gordon equation on a metric graph of Y-junction type.

### 1.1 The sine-Gordon equation on graphs

The sine-Gordon equation in one space dimension,

\[
\frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial t^2} - c^2 \frac{\partial^2 u}{\partial x^2} + \sin u = 0,
\]  

where \( c > 0 \) is a constant and \( x \in \mathbb{R}, t > 0 \), appears in many models in mathematical physics, such as the description of the magnetic flux in a Josephson line [15, 16, 58], crystal dislocations [31], mechanical oscillations of a nonlinear pendulum [28], or even nonlinear oscillations in DNA chains [36], among other applications. It is a nonlinear wave equation underlying many important mathematical features, such as complete integrability [1, 2], a Hamiltonian structure [62] and the existence of localized solutions (solitons). The analysis of existence, stability and the overall role of solitons for some PDE models on graphs, as well as the study of nonlinear equations on ramified structures, constitute a very active field of research due to its potential of becoming a paradigm model for topological effects of nonlinear wave propagation. The objective of this work is to contribute to this on-going effort through the analysis of the well-known sine-Gordon equation on a metric graph of Y-junction type.

Posing the sine-Gordon equation on a metric graph comes out naturally from practical applications. For example, since the phase-difference in a long (infinite) Josephson junction obeys equation (1.1), the coupling of two or more Josephson junctions forming a network can be effectively modeled by the sine-Gordon model on a graph. The sine-Gordon equation was first conceived on a Y-shaped Josephson junction by Nakajima et al. [48, 49] as a prototype for logic circuits. The authors consider three long (semi-infinite) Josephson junctions coupled at one single common vertex, a structure known as a tricrystal junction. There exists two main types of Y-junctions. A Y-junction of the first type (or type I) consists of one incoming (or parent) edge, \( E_1 = (-\infty, 0) \), meeting at one single vertex at the origin, \( \nu = 0 \), with other two outgoing (children) edges, \( E_j = (0, \infty), j = 2, 3 \). The second type (or Y-junction of type II) resembles more a starred structure and consists of three
identical edges of the form $E_j = (0, \infty)$, $1 \leq j \leq 3$. See Figure 1 for an illustration. Junctions of type I are more common in unidirectional fluid flow models (see, for example, [22]), whereas graphs of type I or II are indistinctively used to describe Josephson tricrystal junctions; see, for instance, [34,60] (type I), or [38,55,61] (type II).

What is more crucial is the choice of boundary conditions, mainly because the transition rules at the vertex completely determine the dynamics of the PDE model on the graph. For the sine-Gordon equation in $Y$-junctions, previous studies have basically (and almost exclusively) considered two types of boundary conditions: interactions of $\delta$-type, and of $\delta'$-type. The former refers to continuity of the wave functions and a balance flux relation for the derivatives of the wave functions at the vertex. The latter consists of continuity of the fluxes (derivatives) at the vertex (surface current density is the same in all three thin films at the intersection), and a Kirchhoff-type rule for the self-induced magnetic flux. Since Josephson models arise in the description of electromagnetic flux, interactions of $\delta'$-type have received more attention (see, for example, [34,38,61] for the description and analysis of stationary kink-type solutions and, more recently, [60] for solutions of the breather type). In both cases ($\delta$- and $\delta'$-types), rigorous studies of the well-posedness of the model, as well as of the spectral and nonlinear stability properties of particular stationary solutions, are still under development (the case of interactions of $\delta'$-type at the vertex will be addressed in a companion paper [13]).

1.2 Boundary conditions of $\delta$-interaction type

In this paper, we focus our attention to boundary conditions of $\delta$-type. Previous works (see, e.g., [27,29,55]) have considered interactions consisting of two basic transition rules at the vertex. For concreteness, we describe them in the context of a $Y$-junction of type I. The first boundary condition is the wave function continuity at the intersection point, namely,

$$u_1(0^-) = u_2(0^+) = u_3(0^+).$$  

In the context of $Y$-junctions for the sine-Gordon model, it was first proposed by Nakajima et al. [49] (see equation (4) in that reference) to account for circuits with a trigger turning point. The second
boundary condition reads,
\[- c_1^2 \partial_x u_1(0-) + \sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 \partial_x u_j(0+) = 0, \]  
and it is equivalent to the charge conservation property (or conservation of the applied magnetic 
flux, in the case of a Josephson junction, for example) at the vertex. This boundary condition, 
adopted from previous studies for (linear) Klein-Gordon equations (see, e.g., \([6,20]\)), is a continuous 
analogue of the celebrated Kirchhoff’s circuit law in the sense that it somehow expresses a flux 
balance across the vertex. Dutykh and Caputo \([29]\) have shown that (1.3) can be justified by 
transforming the \(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction domain into a manifold \(\mathcal{Y}_\varepsilon\) of small thickness \(\varepsilon > 0\). In this fashion, 
\(\mathcal{Y}_\varepsilon\) becomes a tubular neighborhood of the graph, often referred to in the literature as a fat graph 
(see \([21]\), chapter 17). Henceforth, imposing Neumann boundary conditions on \(\partial \mathcal{Y}_\varepsilon\) and taking the 
limit when \(\varepsilon \to 0\) leads to (1.3). Another approach adopted by the same authors in order to derive 
(1.3) is based on a conservation of energy argument (see \([29]\) for further information).

The sine-Gordon model on a \(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction with this type of boundary conditions of \(\delta\)-interaction 
type has been studied only by Caputo and Dutykh \([27,29]\) and by Sabirov et al. \([55]\), up to our 
knowledge. In the latter reference, the authors consider the stationary sine-Gordon equation on a 
\(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction with finite edges, \(E_j = (0, L_j)\). They find exact analytical solutions under boundary 
conditions of both the \(\delta\) - and \(\delta'\)-interaction types. Caputo and Dutykh \([27,29]\) formulate the 
sine-Gordon model on a \(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction under boundary conditions (1.2) and (1.3), and implement a 
symplectic numerical scheme to solve it and, more precisely, to numerically study soliton collisions 
at the vertex.

As far as we know, there is no analytical study of the stability of stationary solutions to the sine-
Gordon model on a graph with boundary conditions of \(\delta\)-interaction type available in the literature. 
The stability of these static configurations is an important property from both the mathematical 
and the physical points of view. Stability can predict whether a particular state can be observed in 
experiments or not. Unstable configurations are rapidly dominated by dispersion, drift, or by other 
interactions depending on the dynamics, and they are practically undetectable in applications. In 
the analysis of their stability, it is customary to linearize the equation around the profile solution 
and to obtain useful information from the spectral properties of the linearized operator posed on 
an appropriate function space. Upon linearization of the sine-Gordon equation (1.1) around a 
stationary soliton solution, we end up with a Schrödinger type operator with a bounded potential 
(see the form of the operator (1.11) below) that can be appropriately defined on a graph. Therefore, 
motivated by the spectral analysis of the linearized model around the static profile solutions, we 
adopt a quantum-graph approach in order to justify, interpret and extend the boundary conditions 
that actually define the model.

According to custom in quantum graph theory \([17,21]\), let us consider for simplicity the case of a 
star graph \(\mathcal{G}\) constituted by \(N\) semi-infinite edges of the form \(E_j = (0, \infty)\), \(1 \leq j \leq N\), attached at a 
single vertex at \(\nu = 0\). A function on \(\mathcal{G}\) is a vector \(u = (u_j)_{j=1}^N\), with scalar components, \(u_j = u_j(x)\) 
on each edge \(E_j\). Sobolev and Lebesgue spaces on \(\mathcal{G}\) are defined as \(H^m(\mathcal{G}) = \oplus_{j=1}^N H^m(0, \infty)\) and 
\(L^p(\mathcal{G}) = \oplus_{j=1}^N L^p(0, \infty)\), respectively. Schrödinger operators on quantum graphs have the form
\[
\tilde{\mathcal{L}} u = \left\{ \left( - \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + V_j(x) \right) u_j \right\}_{j=1}^N,
\]
defined on \(L^2(\mathcal{G})\) with a domain being a subset of \(H^2(\mathcal{G})\). If the potentials \(V_j\) are not too singular 
then the coupling at the vertex does not depend on them and the self-adjoint extensions of the 
Laplace operator determine all the self-adjoint extensions of \(\tilde{\mathcal{L}}\). It is known (see, e.g., \([21]\)) that all 
self-adjoint extensions of the formal operator \(-\Delta = \{-u_j''\}_{j=1}^N\) on the star graph are determined by
vertex conditions having the form

\[(U - I)u(0) + i(U + I)u'(0) = 0,\]

where \(U\) is a unitary matrix. A self-adjoint extension is of \(\delta\)-interaction type in the particular case where the matrix \(U\) is given by \(U_{jk} = 2(N + iZ)^{-1} - \delta_{j,k}\), for \(1 \leq j, k \leq N\), being \(\delta_{j,k}\) the Kronecker symbol and for an arbitrary parameter \(Z \in \mathbb{R}\). Upon substitution into the last equation we obtain the so called \(\delta\)-boundary conditions at the vertex with intensity \(Z\),

\[u_1(0) = u_2(0) = \ldots = u_N(0),\]

\[\sum_{j=1}^{n} u'_j(0) = Zu_1(0).\]

In such a case, the self-adjoint extension is defined as the formal operator, \(-\Delta Z \equiv -\Delta\), on a domain, \(D(-\Delta Z)\), which is a subspace of \(H^2(G)\) that includes the \(\delta\)-conditions at the vertex. The parameter value \(Z\) is fundamental and determines the basic spectral properties of the operator. For example, it can be shown that \(-\Delta Z\) has non-empty point spectrum only when \(Z < 0\), yielding the term “attractive” to characterize the \(\delta\)-vertex with \(Z < 0\), in contrast with a “repulsive” vertex when \(Z \geq 0\). The former can be interpreted as an attractive potential well at the vertex. When \(Z = 0\) the \(\delta\)-condition at the vertex is said to be of Kirchhoff type. The quadratic form associated to \(-\Delta Z\) is

\[Q[u] = \frac{1}{2} \|u'\|^2_{L^2(G)} + \frac{Z}{2} |u_1(0)|^2,\]

with domain

\[D(Q) = \{ u \in H^1(G) : u_1(0) = \ldots = u_N(0) \} =: \mathcal{E}(G),\]

independent of \(Z\) and usually referred to as the energy domain (see [21,51]).

For the sine-Gordon model on a graph, keeping the characteristic velocity on each edge is important. Thus, we are concerned with all the self-adjoint extensions of the formal operator

\[F u = \left\{ \left( -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} \right) u_j \right\}_{j=1}^{N}, \quad u = (u_j)_{j=1}^{N},\]

on a star graph \(G\). It is not hard to verify that self-adjoint extensions correspond to an interaction of \(\delta\)-type only when \(U_{jk} = 2c_k^2(N+iZ)^{-1} - \delta_{j,k}\), even though in this case the matrix \(U\) is no longer unitary. For convenience of the reader, we provide a direct proof of this fact in Appendix §A for the particular case of a \(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction of type I, whereupon substitution of \(U\) yields the transition conditions

\[u_1(0-) = u_2(0+) = u_3(0+),\]

\[-c_1^2 u'_1(0-) + \sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 u'_j(0+) = Z u_1(0-),\]

recovering in this fashion the continuity condition (1.2) and the Kirchhoff boundary condition (1.3) when \(Z = 0\).

Therefore, the main goal of this paper is to analyze the structural and stability properties of stationary solutions to the sine-Gordon model defined on a \(\mathcal{Y}\)-junction under boundary conditions of \(\delta\)-interaction type of the form (1.4) at the vertex. These conditions depend upon the parameter \(Z\), which ranges along the whole real line and determines the dynamics of the model. Therefore, the value \(Z \in \mathbb{R}\) is part of the physical parameters that determine the model (such as the speeds \(c_j\), for instance). Instead of adopting \textit{ad hoc} boundary conditions, we consider a parametrized family
of transition rules covering a wide range of applications and which, for the particular value \( Z = 0 \), include the Kirchhoff condition (1.3) previously studied in the literature. Our analysis focuses on a particular class of solutions of the sine-Gordon equation known as \textit{kinks} (also referred to as topological solitons) [28,56,57].

1.3 Main results

In this paper we consider the sine-Gordon equation (1.1) on a metric graph with the shape of a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction with three semi-infinite edges and joined by a single vertex \( \nu = 0 \). For concreteness, in the sequel we assume that the \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction is of type I, where \( E_1 = (-\infty,0) \) and \( E_3 = (0,\infty) \), \( j = 2,3 \). The results and observations of this paper can be easily extended to the case of a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction of type II at the expense of extra bookkeeping. The sine-Gordon model on the \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction under consideration reads

\[
\partial_t^2 u_j - c_j^2 \partial_x^2 u_j + \sin u_j = 0, \quad x \in E_j, \quad t > 0, \quad 1 \leq j \leq 3,
\]

(1.5)

where \( u = (u_j^3)_{j=1}^3 \), \( u_j = u_j(x,t) \). It is assumed that the characteristic speed on each edge \( E_j \) is constant and positive, \( c_j > 0 \), without loss of generality. Clearly, one can recast the equations in (1.5) as a first order system that reads

\[
\begin{aligned}
\partial_t u_j &= v_j, \\
\partial_t v_j &= c_j^2 \partial_x^2 u_j + \sin u_j,
\end{aligned}
\]

(1.6)

where \( u \in \mathbb{R}^3 \), \( v_j = v_j(x,t) \). The equations are endowed with boundary conditions of \( \delta \)-type, having the from (1.4) for all \( t > 0 \) and for a given parameter \( Z \in \mathbb{R} \).

We are interested in the dynamics generated by the flow of the sine-Gordon model (1.5) around solutions of stationary type,

\[
u_j(x,t) = \phi_j(x), \quad v_j(x,t) = 0,
\]

(1.7)

for all \( j = 1,2,3 \), and \( x \in E_j, \ t > 0 \), where each of the profile functions \( \phi_j \) satisfies the equation

\[
-c_j^2 \phi_j'' + \sin \phi_j = 0,
\]

(1.8)

on each edge \( E_j \) and for all \( j \), as well as the boundary conditions (1.4) at the vertex \( \nu = 0 \). More precisely, we consider the particular family of profiles determined by the well-known kink-soliton profile solutions to the sine-Gordon equation on the full real line [28,57], having the form

\[
\begin{aligned}
\phi_1(x) &= 4 \arctan \left( e^{-(x-a_1)/c_1} \right), \quad x \in (-\infty,0), \\
\phi_j(x) &= 4 \arctan \left( e^{-(x-a_j)/c_j} \right), \quad x \in (0,\infty), \quad j = 2,3,
\end{aligned}
\]

(1.9)

where each \( a_j \) is a constant determined by the boundary conditions (1.4). Notice as well that this family of stationary solutions (1.9) satisfies

\[
\phi_1(-\infty) = \phi_j(+\infty) = 0, \quad j = 2,3
\]

(1.10)

(in other words, the constant of integration when solving (1.8) to arrive at (1.9) is zero on each edge \( E_j \)). This decaying behavior at \( \pm\infty \), for instance, guarantees that \( \Phi = (\phi_j^3)_{j=1}^3 \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) \).

In the forthcoming stability analysis, the family of linearized operators around the stationary profiles plays a fundamental role. These operators are characterized by the following formal self-adjoint diagonal matrix operators,

\[
\mathcal{L} \nu = \left( \left( -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} v_j + \cos(\phi_j) v_j \right) \delta_{j,k}, \quad 1 \leq j,k \leq 3, \quad \nu = (v_j^3)_{j=1}^3, \quad (1.11)
\]
where \( \delta_{j,k} \) denotes the Kronecker symbol, and defined on domains with \( \delta \)-type interaction at the vertex \( \nu = 0 \),

\[
D(L_Z) = \left\{ v = (v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) , \sum_{j=2}^3 c_j^2 v_j'(0+) - c_1^2 v_1'(0-) = Z v_1(0-) \right\},
\]

with \( Z \in \mathbb{R} \). The operator is completely determined, \( (L_Z, D(L_Z)) \), \( L_Z \equiv L \), by each parameter value \( Z \in \mathbb{R} \). It is to be observed that the particular family (1.9) of kink-profile stationary solutions under consideration is such that \( \Phi = (\phi_j)_{j=1}^3 \in D(L_Z) \).

Let us summarize the main contributions of this paper:

- We prove that the Cauchy problem associated to (1.6) is well-posed in the energy space \( \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) (section §2), where

\[
\mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) = \{(v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in H^1(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) \}.
\]

- We establish a general instability criterium for stationary solutions for the sine-Gordon model (1.6) on a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction (section §3). It is to be observed that the instability criterium applies to any type of stationary solutions (such as kinks or breathers, for example) and for other self-adjoint extensions characterized by different interactions at the vertex, such as the \( \delta' \)-type (see [13]), making it potentially useful in applications.

- We provide a complete characterization of the stationary kink-profile solutions (1.9) in terms of the parameter \( Z \in \mathbb{R} \). It is shown that the family \( \Phi_Z = (\phi_j)_{j=1}^3 \) belongs to the domain space \( D(L_Z) \) only for parameter values \( Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0) \) (section §4.1). This implies, in turn, that there does not exist a kink-profile solution of the form (1.9) (and hence, satisfying the boundary condition at \( \pm \infty \), (1.10)), compatible with the Kirchhoff condition (1.3) with \( Z = 0 \).

- We show (see section §4.2) that the family of stationary kink-profiles, \( Z \mapsto \Phi_Z \), are spectrally (and nonlinearly) unstable under the flow of the sine-Gordon model for each \( Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0) \) (see Theorem 4.1 below).

- For completeness, in Appendix §A we prove that all self-adjoint extensions of the formal operator (1.11) on a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction are defined on domains of the form (1.12).

On notation

Let \( A \) be a closed densely defined symmetric operator in a Hilbert space \( H \). The domain of \( A \) is denoted by \( D(A) \). The deficiency indices of \( A \) are denoted by \( n_{\pm}(A) := \dim \ker (A^* \mp iI) \), with \( A^* \) denoting the adjoint operator of \( A \). The number of negative eigenvalues counting multiplicities (or Morse index) of \( A \) is denoted by \( n(A) \). For any \( -\infty \leq a < b \leq \infty \), we denote by \( L^2(a, b) \) the Hilbert space equipped with the inner product

\[
(u, v) = \int_a^b u(x) \overline{v(x)} \, dx.
\]

By \( H^n(a, b) \) we denote the classical Sobolev spaces on \( (a, b) \subseteq \mathbb{R} \) with the usual norm. We denote by \( \mathcal{Y} \) the junction parametrized by the edges \( E_j = (-\infty, 0), E_j = (0, \infty), j = 2, 3 \), attached to a common vertex \( \nu = 0 \). On the graph \( \mathcal{Y} \) we define the classical spaces

\[
L^p(\mathcal{Y}) = L^p(-\infty, 0) \oplus L^p(0, +\infty) \oplus L^p(0, +\infty), \quad p > 1,
\]
and

\[ H^m(\mathcal{Y}) = H^m(-\infty, 0) \oplus H^m(0, +\infty) \oplus H^m(0, +\infty) , \]

with the natural norms. Also, for \( u = (u_j)_{j=1}^3, v = (v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \), the inner product is defined by

\[ \langle u, v \rangle = \int_{-\infty}^0 u(x)\overline{v_1(x)} \, dx + \sum_{j=2}^3 \int_0^\infty u_j(x)v_j(x) \, dx . \]

Depending on the context we will use the following notations for different objects. By \( \| \cdot \| \) we denote the norm in \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \) or in \( L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \). By \( \| \cdot \|_p \) we denote the norm in \( L^p(\mathbb{R}) \) or in \( L^p(\mathcal{Y}) \). For the case of \( \mathcal{Y} \) being a junction of type II with \( \mathcal{Y} = (0, +\infty) \cup (0, +\infty) \cup (0, +\infty) \), similar definitions as above can be given.

2 Local well-posedness theory

In this section we study the local well-posedness problem associated to (1.6) initially with a specific framework. We recast system (1.6) in the vectorial form

\[ \mathbf{w}_t = J E \mathbf{w} + F(\mathbf{w}) \tag{2.1} \]

where \( \mathbf{w} = (u, v)^\top \), with \( u = (u_1, u_2, u_3), v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \), \( u_1, v_1 : (-\infty, 0) \to \mathbb{R}, u_j, v_j : (0, +\infty) \to \mathbb{R}, j = 2, 3, \)

\[ J = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & I_3 \\ -I_3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad E = \begin{pmatrix} \mathcal{F} & 0 \\ 0 & I_3 \end{pmatrix}, \quad F(\mathbf{w}) = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ -\sin(u_1) \\ -\sin(u_2) \\ -\sin(u_3) \end{pmatrix} \tag{2.2} \]

where \( I_3 \) denotes the identity matrix of order 3 and \( \mathcal{F} \) the diagonal-matrix linear operator

\[ \mathcal{F} = \left( -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} \delta_{j,k} \right), \quad 1 \leq j, k \leq 3. \]

Here we will consider the operator \( \mathcal{F}_Z \equiv \mathcal{F} \) defined on the \( \delta \)-interaction domain \( D(\mathcal{F}_Z) \)

\[ D(\mathcal{F}_Z) = \left\{ \mathbf{v} = (v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+), \sum_{j=2}^3 c_j^2 v_j'(0+) - c_j^2 v_j'(0-) = Z v_1(0-) \right\} \tag{2.3} \]

Thus, the natural space to looking for a local well-posedness theory for (2.1) will be the space \( \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) where \( \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \) represents the closed (continuous) subspace at zero of \( H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \),

\[ \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) = \{(v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in H^1(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) \} \tag{2.4} \]

The analysis of the initial value problem for the sine-Gordon vectorial model (2.1) on metric star shaped graphs requires new tools to those usually used in the case of the model on spaces of \( \mathbb{R}^n \)-type.

We start our analysis by establishing the spectrum properties of the family of self-adjoint operator \( (\mathcal{F}_Z, D(\mathcal{F}_Z)) \).
Theorem 2.1. Let $Z \in \mathbb{R}$. Then the essential spectrum of $(\mathcal{F}_Z, D(\mathcal{F}_Z))$ is purely absolutely continuous and $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(\mathcal{F}_Z) = \sigma_{\text{ac}}(\mathcal{F}_Z) = [0, +\infty)$. If $Z < 0$, $\mathcal{F}_Z$ has precisely one negative, simple eigenvalue, i.e. its point spectrum $\sigma_{\text{pt}}(\mathcal{F}_Z)$ is

$$ \sigma_{\text{pt}}(\mathcal{F}_Z) = \left\{ - \frac{Z^2}{(\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j)^2} \right\}, $$

with $\Phi_Z = (e^{\alpha x}, e^{-\alpha x}, e^{-\alpha x})$ its “strictly positive” eigenfunction and $\alpha = -Z/\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j > 0$. If $Z \geq 0$, $\mathcal{F}_Z$ has no eigenvalues, $\sigma_{\text{pt}}(\mathcal{F}_Z) = \emptyset$.

Proof. By convenience of the reader, we present the main steps of the proof:

1) For every $Z$, the Morse index of $\mathcal{F}_Z$, $n(\mathcal{F}_Z)$, satisfies $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) \leq 1$: Indeed, from Proposition A.6 we have immediately that the symmetric operator $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$ defined in (A.3) (see Appendix A) is non-negative, $\langle \mathcal{M} \psi, \psi \rangle \geq 0$ for every $\psi \in D(\mathcal{M})$, and the deficiency indices are $n_\pm(\mathcal{M}) = 1$. Therefore, from Proposition A.3 follows that $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) \leq 1$.

2) For $Z > 0$, $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) = 0$: Indeed, for every $\psi = (v_j)_{j=1}^{3} \in D(\mathcal{F}_Z)$ we have

$$ \langle \mathcal{F}_Z \psi, \psi \rangle = \int_{-\infty}^{0} c_1^2(v_1)^2 dx + \sum_{j=2}^{3} \int_{0}^{\infty} c_j^2(v_j)^2 dx + Z|v_1(0)|^2 \geq 0, $$

thus, since $\mathcal{F}_Z$ is a self-adjoint operator and non-negative we need to have $\sigma(\mathcal{F}_Z) \subset [0, +\infty)$. Therefore, $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) = 0$.

3) For $Z < 0$, $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) = 1$: From the definition of $\Phi_Z$ above we have immediately that $\Phi_Z \in D(\mathcal{F}_Z)$ and $\mathcal{F}_Z \Phi_Z = -\alpha^2 \Phi_Z$. Therefore, from item 1) follows that $n(\mathcal{F}_Z) = 1$.

4) From classical Schrödinger theory on the half-line $(0, +\infty)$ for the operator $A = -c^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2}$, with $c > 0$ and Dirichlet-domain $D_{\text{Dir}} = \{ f \in H^2(0, +\infty) : f(0) = 0 \}$ we have that $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(-c^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2}) = \sigma(-c^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2}) = [0, +\infty)$. Thus by Weyl’s criterion (see Reed and Simon [54]) for all $\lambda \geq 0$, there exists a sequence $\{\psi_n\} \subset D_{\text{Dir}}$ orthogonal in $L^2(0, +\infty)$ with $\|\psi_n\|_{L^2(0, +\infty)} = 1$ such that $\|(A - \lambda I)\psi_n\|_{L^2(0, +\infty)} \to 0$ as $n \to +\infty$.

Next, we note that the self-adjoint operator $\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}$ with homogeneous Dirichlet boundary conditions

$$ D(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}) = \{ \psi \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) = 0 \}, $$

belongs to the family of self-adjoint extensions of $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$ (see Proposition A.6). Since $(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}, D(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}))$ possesses no point spectrum and it is positive definite we need to have $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}) = \sigma(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}}) \subset [0, +\infty)$. Now, we see that $[0, +\infty) \subset \sigma_{\text{ess}}(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}})$. Indeed, for $\lambda \geq 0$ we have that the sequence $\Psi_n = (0, \psi_n, 0)$ satisfies $\{\Psi_n\} \subset D_{\text{Dir}}$, orthogonal in $L^2(\mathcal{Y})$, $\|\Psi_n\|_{L^2(\mathcal{Y})} = 1$ and

$$ \|(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}} - \lambda I)\Psi_n\|_{L^2(\mathcal{Y})}^2 = \|(A - \lambda I)\psi_n\|_{L^2(0, +\infty)}^2 \to 0, \text{ as } n \to +\infty, $$

therefore by the Weyl’s criterion follows that $\lambda \in \sigma_{\text{ess}}(\mathcal{F}_{\text{Dir}})$. Then, by Proposition A.5 we get that all self-adjoint extensions for $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$ have continuous spectrum being $[0, +\infty)$. Now, since the self-adjoint operators $(\mathcal{F}_Z, D(\mathcal{F}_Z))$ may have at most a finite collection of negative eigenvalues, its continuous spectrum, $\sigma_{\text{ac}}(\mathcal{F}_Z)$, coincides with its essential spectrum $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(\mathcal{F}_Z)$ and $\sigma(\mathcal{F}_Z) = \sigma_{\text{ac}}(\mathcal{F}_Z) \cup \sigma_{\text{pt}}(\mathcal{F}_Z)$. This finishes the proof.
The following statement about the resolvent of the operator $A = J E$ will be sufficient for our study here. The results in Theorem 2.1 will be the main points in the analysis.

**Theorem 2.2.** Let $Z \in \mathbb{R}$. For $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$ with $-\lambda^2 \in \rho(F_Z)$, we have that $\lambda$ belongs to the resolvent set of $A = J E$ with $D(A) = D_{\delta} \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})$ and $R(\lambda : A) = (\lambda I - A)^{-1} : H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \rightarrow D(A)$ has the representation for $\Psi = (u, v)$

$$ R(\lambda : A)\Psi = \begin{pmatrix} -R(-\lambda^2 : F_Z)(\lambda u + v) \\ -\lambda R(-\lambda^2 : F_Z)(\lambda u + v) - u \end{pmatrix}, $$

where $R(-\lambda^2 : F_Z) = (-\lambda^2 I_3 - F_Z)^{-1} : L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \rightarrow D(F_Z)$.

**Remark 2.3.** In Remark 2.4 below we give a explicit formulation for the resolvent operator $R(\eta : F_Z)$ for any $\eta < 0$ (without loss of generality) and $Z \neq 0$.

**Proof.** For $\Psi = (u, v) \in H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})$, $(A - \lambda)^{-1} \Psi = (h, j)$ if and only if

$$ \begin{cases} I_3 u = -\lambda I_3 h + I_3 j \\ I_3 v = -F_Z h - \lambda I_3 j, \end{cases} $$

then $(-\lambda^2 I_3 - F_Z)h = I_3(\lambda u + v)$. Therefore, by hypothesis we obtain $I_3 h = (-\lambda^2 I_3 - F_Z)^{-1}(\lambda u + v)$. This finishes the proof. \qed

**Remark 2.4.** For future reference in our study, we establish the resolvent operator $R(-\lambda^2 : F_Z)$ and $Z \neq 0$. Thus, we star with $Z > 0$. From Theorem 2.1 we obtain for every $\lambda > 0$ (without loss of generality) that for $u = (u_j)_{j=1}^3 \in L^2(\mathcal{Y})$ and $(\Phi_j)_{j=1}^3 = (F_Z + \lambda^2 I_3)^{-1}u$ the following:

(a) for $x < 0$

$$ \Phi_1(x) = -c_1 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \lambda^2)^{-1}(u_1(x) = \frac{d_1}{c_1^2} e^{\frac{\lambda x}{c_1}} + \frac{1}{2c_1 \lambda} \int_{-\infty}^{0} u_1(y) e^{-\frac{\lambda}{c_1}|x-y|} dy \quad (2.7) $$

(b) for $x > 0$ and $j = 2, 3,$

$$ \Phi_j(x) = -c_1 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \lambda^2)^{-1}(u_j(x) = \frac{d_j}{c_j^2} e^{\frac{\lambda x}{c_j}} + \frac{1}{2c_j \lambda} \int_{0}^{\infty} u_j(y) e^{-\frac{\lambda}{c_j}|x-y|} dy, \quad (2.8) $$

where the constants $d_j = d_j(\lambda, (\Phi_j))$ are chosen such that $(\Phi_j) \in D_{\delta, Z}$. In the following we determine these. So, define

$$ t_1(\lambda) = \frac{1}{2c_1} \int_{-\infty}^{0} u_1(y) e^{\frac{\lambda y}{c_1}} dy $$$$ t_j(\lambda) = \frac{1}{2c_j} \int_{0}^{\infty} u_j(y) e^{-\frac{\lambda y}{c_j}} dy, \quad j = 2, 3. $$

Then, from the relations for $j = 2, 3,$

$$ \Phi_1(0-) = \frac{d_1}{c_1^2} + \frac{1}{\lambda} t_1(\lambda), \quad \Phi_j(0+) = \frac{d_j}{c_j^2} + \frac{1}{\lambda} t_j(\lambda), $$

$$ \Phi'_1(0-) = \frac{d_1}{c_1^2} - \frac{1}{c_1} t_1(\lambda), \quad \Phi'_j(0+) = -\frac{d_j}{c_j^2} + \frac{1}{c_j} t_j(\lambda), $$

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we obtain the linear system
\[
M \begin{pmatrix} d_1 \\ d_2 \\ d_3 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \frac{1}{c_1} & -\frac{1}{c_2} & 0 \\ \frac{1}{c_1} & \frac{1}{c_2} & -\frac{1}{c_3} \\ \frac{1}{c_1} + \frac{Z}{c_1\lambda} & \frac{1}{c_2} & -\frac{1}{c_3} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} d_1 \\ d_2 \\ d_3 \end{pmatrix} = \frac{1}{\lambda} \begin{pmatrix} t_2(\lambda) - t_1(\lambda) \\ t_3(\lambda) - t_2(\lambda) \\ \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j t_j(\lambda) - \frac{Z}{\lambda} t_1(\lambda) \end{pmatrix}.
\]

Thus, since det(M) = \(\frac{1}{(c_1c_2c_3)^2}[\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j + \frac{Z}{\lambda}]\) and Z, \(Z > 0\), we obtain the uniqueness of the constants \(d_j\) such that \((\Phi_j) \in D_{\delta,Z}\).

Now, for \(Z < 0\), from Theorem 2.1 we obtain for every \(\lambda > 0\) (without loss of generality) and \(\lambda^2 \neq -\lambda_0\) with \(\lambda_0 = -Z^2/(\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j)^2\) that for \(u = (u_j)_{j=1}^{3} \in L^2(\mathcal{Y})\) and \((\Psi)_{j=1}^{3} = (\mathcal{F}_Z + \lambda^2 I_3)^{-1} u\) the following:

(c) for \(x < 0\), \(\alpha = -Z/\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j > 0\), and from (2.7),
\[
\Psi_1(x) = \frac{1}{\lambda^2 + \lambda_0} e^{\frac{\alpha}{\lambda_0} x} \langle u_1, e^{\frac{\alpha}{\lambda} x} \rangle + \Phi_1(x),
\]
which we will denote by \(\mathcal{F}_Z(\mathcal{Y})\) with the space \(H^1(\mathcal{Y})\) with the norm \(\|\cdot\|_{X^1_Z}\). Moreover, the following well-defined inner product in \(H^1(\mathcal{Y})\),
\[
\langle u, v \rangle_{1,Z} = \int_{-\infty}^{0} u'_1(x) v'_1(x) dx + \sum_{j=2}^{3} \int_{0}^{\infty} u'_j(x) v'_j(x) dx + (\beta + 1) \langle u, v \rangle_{\mathcal{F}_Z(\mathcal{Y})} + Z u_1(0) v_1(0),
\]
induces the \(X^1_Z\)-norm above (here we are considering \(c_j^2 = 1\), without loss of generality).

**Theorem 2.5.** Let \(Z \in \mathbb{R}\) and consider the linear operators \(J\) and \(E\) defined in (2.2). Then, \(A \equiv JE\) with \(D(A) = D_{\delta,Z} \times \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y})\) is the infinitesimal generator of a \(C_0\)-semigroup \(\{W(t)\}_{t \geq 0}\) on \(H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})\). The initial value problem
\[
\begin{cases}
w_t = Aw \\
w(0) = w_0 \in D(A) = D_{\delta,Z} \times \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y})
\end{cases}
\]
has a unique solution \(w \in C([0, +\infty) : D(A)) \cap C^1([0, +\infty) : H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}))\) given by \(w(t) = W(t)w_0, \ t \geq 0\).

Moreover, for any \(\Psi \in H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})\) and \(\theta > 0\), \(\beta = \frac{Z^2}{(\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j)^2}\), we have the representation formula
\[
W(t)\Psi = \frac{1}{2 \pi i} \int_{\theta - i\infty}^{\theta + i\infty} e^{\lambda t} R(\lambda : A) \Psi d\lambda
\]
where \(\lambda \in \rho(A)\) with \(\text{Re} \lambda = \theta\) and \(R(\lambda : A) = (\lambda I - A)^{-1}\), and for every \(\delta > 0\), the integral converges uniformly in \(t\) for every \(t \in [\delta, 1/\delta]\).
Proof. We divide the proof in several steps (without lost of generality we consider $c_j^2 = 1$):

1) We consider the Hilbert space $X_Z \equiv H^1_Z(Y) \times L^2(Y)$ with inner product $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_{X_Z} = \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_{1,Z} + \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_{1,Z}$, with $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle_{1,Z}$ defined in (2.12). Define $B = A - \gamma I$, $\gamma = \beta + 1 > 0$, with $\beta > 0$ as in (2.11). Then the following linear initial value problem

$$
\begin{aligned}
\begin{cases}
u_t = Bu \\
u(0) = u_0 \in D(B) = D_{\delta,Z} \times E(Y)
\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

has a unique solution $u \in C([0, +\infty) : D(B)) \cap C^1([0, +\infty) : X_Z)$ given by $u(t) = \Phi(t)u_0$, $t \geq 0$, where $\{\Phi(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$ is a $C_0$-semigroup of contractions on $X_Z$. Indeed, The idea is to use the classical Lumer-Phillips Theorem (see, e.g., Pazy [52]):

a) $B$ is dissipative on $X_Z$: for $\Phi = (u, v) \in D(B)$ with $u = (u_j)_{j=1}^3 \in D(B)$ and $v = (v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in E(Y)$ (with $u_j, v_j$ real-valued without lost of generality)

$$
\langle -B\Phi, \Phi \rangle_{X_Z} = \langle -v, u \rangle_{1,Z} + \langle F_Z u, v \rangle + \gamma \|u\|_{X_Z^2}^2 + \gamma \|v\|_{L^2(Y)}^2
$$

$$
= -\langle v, u \rangle_{1,Z} - Z u_1(0) v_1(0) - \int_0^\infty u_1' v_1' dx + \sum_{j=2}^3 \int_0^\infty u_j' v_j' dx + \gamma \|u\|_{X_Z^2}^2 + \gamma \|v\|_{L^2(Y)}^2
$$

$$
= (\beta + 1) \left[ \|u\|_{X_Z^2}^2 + \|v\|_{L^2(Y)}^2 - \langle u, v \rangle \right] \geq 0,
$$

because of the Cauchy-Schwartz inequality and $\|u\|_{L^2(Y)}^2 \leq \|u\|_{X_Z^2}^2$ by (2.11).

b) From Theorem 2.2 we can choose $\lambda$ such that $\lambda + \gamma > 0$ and $\lambda + \gamma \in \rho(A)$, then the range, $R(\lambda I - B) = R((\lambda + \gamma)I - A)$, of $\lambda I - B$ is $X_Z$. Thus we obtain that $B$ is the infinitesimal generator of a $C_0$-semigroup of contractions $\{\Phi(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$ on $X_Z$. Therefore, the solution of the linear problem in (2.15) is given by $u(t) = \Phi(t)u_0$.

2) Define $W(t) = e^{\gamma t}U(t)$, then $\{W(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$ is a $C_0$-semigroup on $X_Z$ with infinitesimal generator

$$
W'(0) = \gamma I + A - \gamma I = A.
$$

Then, since the norm $\|\cdot\|_{H^1(Y)}$ is equivalent to the norm $\|\cdot\|_{X_Z^2}$ on $H^1(Y)$, we obtain that $\{W(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$ is a $C_0$-semigroup on $H^1(Y) \times L^2(Y)$ and $w(t) = W(t)w_0$ is the unique solution for the linear problem (2.13).

3) From item 2) we have $\|W(t)\|_{H^1(Y) \times L^2(Y)} = e^{\gamma t}\|U(t)\|_{H^1(Y) \times L^2(Y)} \leq Me^{\gamma t}\|U(t)\|_{X_Z} \leq Me^{\gamma t}$, for $M > 0$, $\gamma = \beta + 1 > 0$ and $t \geq 0$. Therefore, from Theorem (2.2), the semigroup theory, and the Laplace transform we obtain for $\theta > \beta$ the representation formula in (2.14). This finishes the proof.

\[ \Box \]

**Proposition 2.6.** The semigroup $\{W(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$ defined by formula (2.14) left invariance the subspace $E(Y) \times L^2(Y)$. Moreover, $W(t)(E(Y) \times L^2(Y)) \subset E(Y) \times C(Y)$, $t > 0$, where

$$
C(Y) = \{(v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in L^2(Y) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+)\}.
$$

**Proof.** By the representation of $W(t)$ in (2.14) is sufficient to show that the resolvent operator $R(\lambda : \mathcal{A}) \Phi \in E(Y) \times L^2(Y)$ for $\Phi \in E(Y) \times L^2(Y)$. Indeed, for $\Phi = (u, v)$ we have from (2.5) that $R(-\lambda^2 : F_Z)(\lambda u + v) \in D_{\delta,Z} \subset E(Y)$ and so $R(\lambda : \mathcal{A}) \Phi \in E(Y) \times E(Y) \subset E(Y) \times C(Y) \subset E(Y) \times L^2(Y)$. \[ \Box \]
Our local well-posedness result for the sine-Gordon equation on a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction with a \( \delta \)-interaction is the following.

**Theorem 2.7.** For any \( \Psi \in \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) there exists \( T > 0 \) such that the sine-Gordon equation (2.1) has a unique solution \( w \in C([0, T]; \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})) \) satisfying \( w(0) = \Psi \). For each \( T_0 \in (0, T) \) the mapping

\[
\Psi \in \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \to w \in C([0, T_0]; \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y})),
\]

(2.18)

is at least of class \( C^2 \). Moreover, for all \( t > 0 \), \( w(t) \in \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times \mathcal{C}(\mathcal{Y}) \).

**Proof.** Based in Theorem 2.5 and Proposition 2.6 the local well-posedness result in \( X(\mathcal{Y}) \equiv \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) follows from standard arguments of the Banach fixed point theorem. We will give the sketch of the proof for convenience of the reader. Consider the mapping \( J_\Psi : C([0, T] : X(\mathcal{Y})) \to C([0, T]; X(\mathcal{Y})) \) given by

\[
J_\Psi(w)(t) = e^{tA}w + \int_0^t e^{(t-s)A}F(w(s))ds,
\]

where \( e^{tA} \) is the \( C_0 \)-semigroup \( \{W(t)\}_{t \geq 0} \) defined in (2.14). One needs to show that the mapping \( J_\Psi \) is well-defined. We note immediately that the nonlinearity satisfies for \( w \in X(\mathcal{Y}) \) that

\[
F(w) \in \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times \mathcal{C}(\mathcal{Y}) \subset \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \text{ with } ||F(w)||_{X(\mathcal{Y})} \leq ||u||_{L^2(\mathcal{Y})} \leq ||w||_{X(\mathcal{Y})}.
\]

Thus we obtain for \( t \in [0, T] \)

\[
||J_\Psi[w](t)||_{X(\mathcal{Y})} \leq Me^{\gamma T}||\Psi||_{X(\mathcal{Y})} + \frac{M}{\gamma}(e^{\gamma T} - 1) \sup_{s \in [0, T]} ||w(s)||_{X(\mathcal{Y})},
\]

where the positive constants \( M, \gamma \) do not depend on \( \Psi \) and are determined by the semigroup \( W(t) \) (see Theorem 2.5 and its proof). The continuity and contraction property of \( J_\Psi \) are proved in a standard way. Therefore, we obtain the existence of a unique solution to the Cauchy problem associated to (2.1) on \( \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) and that the mapping data-solution in (2.18) is at least continuous.

Next, we recall that the argument based on the contraction mapping principle above has the advantage that if \( F(w) \) has a specific regularity, then it is inherited by the mapping data-solution. In particular, following the ideas in [9], we consider for \( (\Psi, z) \in B(\Psi; \varepsilon) \times C([0, T], X(\mathcal{Y})) \) the mapping

\[
\Gamma(\Psi, z)(t) = z(t) - J_\Psi[z](t), \quad t \in [0, T].
\]

Then \( \Gamma(\Psi, w)(t) = 0 \) for all \( t \in [0, T] \), and since \( F(z) \) is smooth we obtain that \( \Gamma \) is smooth. Hence, using the arguments applied for obtaining the local well-posedness in \( X(\mathcal{Y}) \) above, we can show that the operator \( \partial_z \Gamma(\Psi, w) \) is one-to-one and onto. Thus, by the Implicit Function Theorem there exists a smooth mapping \( \Lambda : B(\Psi; \varepsilon) \to C([0, T], X(\mathcal{Y})) \) such that \( \Gamma(\Psi, \Lambda(V_0)) = 0 \) for all \( V_0 \in B(\Psi; \varepsilon) \). This argument establishes the smoothness property of the mapping data-solution associated to the sine-Gordon equation. Lastly, from the Proposition 2.6 and from the arguments above we obtain that for all \( t > 0 \), \( w(t) \in \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times \mathcal{C}(\mathcal{Y}) \). This finishes the proof.

\[\square\]

3 Linear instability criterium for sine-Gordon model on \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction

In this section we establish a linear instability criterium of stationary solutions for the sine-Gordon model (1.6) on a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction. The analytical criterium developed here applies to both the typical \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction of type I, (see Figure 1(a)), and of type II (see Figure 1(b)). More importantly, the criterium also applies to any type of stationary solutions independently of the boundary conditions under consideration and can be therefore used to study configurations with boundary rules at the
vertex of $\delta'$-interaction type, or with other types of stationary solutions to the sine-Gordon equation such as breathers, for instance.

Let us suppose that $JE$ on a domain $D(JE) \subset L^2(\mathcal{V})$ is the infinitesimal generator of a $C_0$-semigroup on $L^2(\mathcal{V})$ and the stationary solution $\Phi = (\phi_1(x), \phi_2(x), \phi_3(x), 0, 0, 0) \in D(JE)$. Thus, every component satisfies the equation

$$-c_j^2 \phi_j'' + \sin(\phi_j) = 0, \quad j = 1, 2, 3. \quad (3.1)$$

Now, we suppose that $w$ satisfies formally equality in (2.1) and we define

$$v \equiv w - \Phi, \quad (3.2)$$

then, from (3.1) we obtain (by using the notation) the following linearized system for (2.1) around $\Phi$.

$$v_t = J\mathcal{E}v \quad (3.3)$$

with $\mathcal{E}$ being the $6 \times 6$ diagonal-matrix $\mathcal{E} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathcal{L} & 0 \\ 0 & I_3 \end{pmatrix}$, and

$$\mathcal{L} = \left( -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \cos(\phi_j) \right) \delta_{j,k}, \quad 1 \leq j, k \leq 3. \quad (3.4)$$

We point out the equality $J\mathcal{E} = JE + T$, with

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -\cos(\phi_j) \delta_{j,k} \end{pmatrix} 0$$

being a bounded operator on $H^1(\mathcal{G}) \times L^2(\mathcal{G})$. This implies that $J\mathcal{E}$ also generates a $C_0$-semigroup on $H^1(\mathcal{G}) \times L^2(\mathcal{G})$ (see Pazy [52]).

In the sequel, our objective is to provide sufficient conditions for the trivial solution $v \equiv 0$ to be unstable by the linear flow (3.3). More precisely, we are interested in finding a growing mode solution of (3.3) with the form $v = e^{\lambda t} \Psi$ and $\text{Re} \lambda > 0$. In other words, we need to solve the formal system

$$J\mathcal{E} \Psi = \lambda \Psi, \quad (3.5)$$

with $\Psi \in D(J\mathcal{E})$. If we denote by $\sigma(J\mathcal{E}) = \sigma_{\text{pt}}(J\mathcal{E}) \cup \sigma_{\text{ess}}(J\mathcal{E})$ the spectrum of $J\mathcal{E}$ (namely, $\lambda \in \sigma_{\text{pt}}(J\mathcal{E})$ if $\lambda$ is isolated and with finite multiplicity), the later discussion suggests the usefulness of the following definition:

**Definition 3.1.** The stationary vector solution $\Phi \in D(\mathcal{E})$ is said to be spectrally stable for model sine-Gordon if the spectrum of $J\mathcal{E}$, $\sigma(J\mathcal{E})$, satisfies $\sigma(J\mathcal{E}) \subset i\mathbb{R}$. Otherwise, the stationary solution $\Phi \in D(\mathcal{E})$ is said to be spectrally unstable.

It is standard to show that $\sigma_{\text{pt}}(J\mathcal{E})$ is symmetric with respect to both the real and imaginary axes and $\sigma_{\text{ess}}(J\mathcal{E}) \subset i\mathbb{R}$ by supposing $J$ skew-symmetric and $\mathcal{E}$ self-adjoint (by supposing, by instance, Assumption (S3) below for $\mathcal{L}$ (see [33, Lemma 5.6 and Theorem 5.8]). These cases on $J$ and $\mathcal{E}$ will be considered in our theory. Hence it is equivalent to say that $\Phi \in D(J\mathcal{E})$ is spectrally stable if $\sigma_{\text{pt}}(J\mathcal{E}) \subset i\mathbb{R}$, and it is spectrally unstable if $\sigma_{\text{pt}}(J\mathcal{E})$ contains point $\lambda$ with $\text{Re} \lambda > 0$.

It is widely known that the spectral instability of a specific traveling wave solution of an evolution type model is a key prerequisite to show their nonlinear instability property (see [33, 42, 59] and references therein). Thus we have the following definition.
Definition 3.2. The stationary vector solution $\Phi \in D(\mathcal{E})$ is said to be non-linearly unstable in $X \equiv H^1(Y) \times L^2(Y)$-norm for model sine-Gordon if there is $\epsilon > 0$, such that for every $\delta > 0$ there are an initial data $w_0$ with $\|\Phi - w_0\|_X < \delta$ and an instant $t_0 = t_0(w_0)$ such that $\|w(t_0) - \Phi\|_X > \epsilon$, where $w = w(t)$ is the solution of the sine-Gordon model with initial data $w(0) = w_0$.

From (3.5), our eigenvalue problem to solve is now reduced to:

$$J\mathcal{E}\Psi = \lambda\Psi, \quad \text{Re} \lambda > 0, \quad \Psi \in D(\mathcal{E}).$$

(3.6)

Next, we establish our theoretical framework and assumptions for obtaining a nontrivial solution to problem in (3.6):

(S1) $J\mathcal{E}$ is the generator of a $C_0$-semigroup $\{S(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$.

(S2) Let $\mathcal{L}$ be the matrix-operator in (3.4) defined on a domain $D(\mathcal{L}) \subset L^2(\mathcal{G})$ on which $\mathcal{L}$ is self-adjoint.

(S3) Suppose $\mathcal{L} : D(\mathcal{L}) \to L^2(\mathcal{G})$ is invertible with Morse index $n(\mathcal{L}) = 1$ and such that $\sigma(\mathcal{L}) = \{\lambda_0\} \cup J_0$ with $J_0 \subset [r_0, +\infty)$, for $r_0 > 0$, and $\lambda_0 < 0$.

Our linear instability criterium is the following.

Theorem 3.3. Suppose the assumptions (S1) - (S3) hold. Then the operator $J\mathcal{E}$ has a real positive and a real negative eigenvalue.

The proof of Theorem 3.3 is based in ideas from Lopes [42] and from the following result on closed convex cone (see Krasnoelski [39], Chapter 2, section 2.2.6).

Theorem 3.4. Let $K$ be a closed convex cone of a Hilbert space $(X, \| \cdot \|)$ such that there are a continuous linear functional $\Pi$ and a constant $a > 0$ such that $\Pi(u) \geq a\|u\|$ for any $u \in K$. If $T : X \to X$ is a bounded linear operator that leaves $K$ invariant, then $T$ has an eigenvector in $K$ associated to a nonnegative eigenvalue.

Proof of Theorem 3.3. From assumption (S1) we have that $J\mathcal{E}$ is the infinitesimal generator of a $C_0$-semigroup $\{S(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$. For $\psi_0 \in D(\mathcal{J}), \|\psi_0\| = 1$ and $\lambda_0 < 0$ such that $\mathcal{L}\psi_0 = \lambda_0\psi_0$, we consider $\Psi_0 = (\psi_0, 0, 0, 0)^\top$ and the following nonempty closed convex cone

$$K_0 = \{z \in D(\mathcal{E}) : \langle \mathcal{E}z, z \rangle \leq 0, \quad \text{and} \quad \langle z, \Psi_0 \rangle \geq 0\}.$$

Next, we see that $K_0$ is invariant by the semigroup $S(t)$. Indeed, we will use a density argument based in the existence of a core for $A \equiv J\mathcal{E}$. Thus, from semi-group theory follows that the space

$$D(A^\infty) = \bigcap_{n \in \mathbb{N}} D(A^n)$$

with $D(A^n) = \{f \in D(A^{n-1}) : A^{n-1}f \in D(A)\}$, result to be dense in $L^2(\mathcal{G})$ and it is a $\{S(t)\}_{t \geq 0}$-invariant subspace of $D(\mathcal{A})$. Thus, $D(A^\infty)$ is a core for $A$. Therefore is enough to consider the case $f \in K_0 \cap D(A^\infty)$ and so the Hamiltonian equation

$$\begin{cases}
\dot{z} = Az \\
z(0) = f
\end{cases}$$

(3.7)

has solution $z(t) = S(t)f \in D(A^\infty)$ and therefore from the self-adjoint property of $\mathcal{E}$ and the skew-symmetric property of $J$ we obtain

$$\frac{d}{dt} \langle \mathcal{E}z(t), z(t) \rangle = \langle \mathcal{E}J\mathcal{E}z(t), z(t) \rangle + \langle \mathcal{E}z(t), J\mathcal{E}z(t) \rangle = 0,$$
then for all \( t \), \( \langle \mathcal{E}(z), z(t) \rangle = \langle \mathcal{E}f, f \rangle \leq 0 \). Next, we suppose \( \langle f, \Psi_0 \rangle > 0 \) and that there is \( t_0 \) such that \( \langle S(t_0)f, \Psi_0 \rangle < 0 \). Then by continuity of the flow \( t \to S(t)f \) there is \( \tau \in (0, t_0) \) with \( \langle S(\tau)f, \Psi_0 \rangle = 0 \). Now, from assumption \((S_4)\) we have from the spectral theorem applied to the self-adjoint operator \( \mathcal{E} \) (more specifically to \( \mathcal{L} \)), the orthogonal decomposition for \( f_\tau = S(\tau)f \),

\[
  f_\tau = \sum_{i=1}^{m} a_i h_i + g, \quad g \perp h_i, \text{ for all } i,
\]

where \( \mathcal{E}h_i = \lambda_i h_i, \|h_i\| = 1, \lambda_i \in \sigma_{\text{pt}}(\mathcal{E}) \) with \( \lambda_i \geq \eta \), and \( \langle \mathcal{E}g, g \rangle \geq \theta \|g\|^2, \theta > 0 \). Therefore,

\[
  0 \geq \langle \mathcal{E}f_\tau, f_\tau \rangle = \sum_{i=1}^{m} a_i^2 \lambda_i + \theta \|g\|^2 \geq \eta \sum_{i=1}^{m} a_i^2 + \theta \|g\|^2 \geq 0.
\]

Thus, it follows \( g = 0 \) and \( a_i = 0 \) for \( i \). Therefore, \( S(\tau)f = 0 \) and since \( S(t) \) is a semigroup we obtain \( f = 0 \) and so \( \langle f, \Psi_0 \rangle = 0 \) which is a contradiction. Now we suppose \( \langle f, \Psi_0 \rangle = 0 \), then the former analysis shows \( f = 0 \) and so \( S(t)f \equiv 0 \) for all \( t \). It shows the invariance of \( K_0 \) by \( S(t) \). Then, for \( \mu \) large we obtain from semigroup’s theory the integral representation of the resolvent

\[
  Tz = (\mu I - A)^{-1}(z) = \int_{0}^{\infty} e^{-\mu t} S(t)zdt
\]

and it also leaves \( K_0 \) invariant. Next, for \( \Pi : L^2(\mathcal{G}) \to \mathbb{R} \) defined by \( \Pi(z) = \langle z, \Psi_0 \rangle \) we will see that there is \( a > 0 \) such that \( \Pi(z) \geq a \|z\| \) for any \( z \in K_0 \). Indeed, suppose for \( \|g\| = 1, \langle g, \Psi_0 \rangle = \gamma > 0 \) and \( \langle \mathcal{E}g, g \rangle \leq 0 \). Since ker(\( \Pi \)) is a hyperplane we obtain \( g = z + \gamma \Psi_0 \) with \( \langle z, \Psi_0 \rangle = 0 \). So, \( -\lambda_0 \gamma^2 \geq \langle \mathcal{E}z, z \rangle \). Now, from the orthogonal decomposition \( z = \sum_{i=1}^{m} \langle z, h_i \rangle h_i + g, \quad g \perp h_i, \text{ for all } i \), follows for \( \eta, \theta > 0, \langle \mathcal{E}z, z \rangle = \min\{\eta, \theta\}(1 - \gamma^2) \). Then,

\[
  \langle g, \Psi_0 \rangle = \gamma \geq \sqrt{\frac{\min\{\eta, \theta\}}{-\lambda_0 + \min\{\eta, \theta\}}} \equiv a.
\]

Therefore, by the analysis above and Theorem 3.4, we conclude that there exist an \( a \geq 0 \) and a nonzero element \( \omega_0 \in K_0 \) such that \( (\mu I - A)^{-1}(\omega_0) = a \omega_0 \). It is immediate that \( \alpha > 0 \) and so \( J \mathcal{E}\omega_0 = \zeta \omega_0 \) with \( \zeta = \frac{\mu a}{\alpha} \). Next we see that \( \zeta \neq 0 \). Suppose that \( \zeta = 0 \), then the injectivity of \( J \) and \( \mathcal{E} \) implies \( \omega_0 = 0 \), which is a contradiction. Then, \( J\mathcal{E} \) has a nonzero real eigenvalue \( \zeta \).

Now, we have \( \sigma(J\mathcal{E}) = \sigma((J\mathcal{E})^*) = -\sigma(\mathcal{E}J) = -\sigma(\mathcal{E}J\mathcal{E}^{-1}) = -\sigma(J\mathcal{E}) \) and so \( -\zeta \) also belongs to \( \sigma(J\mathcal{E}) \). Thus from Theorem 5.8 of [33], the essential spectrum of \( J\mathcal{E} \) lies on the imaginary axis and therefore \( -\zeta \) is an eigenvalue of \( J\mathcal{E} \) and this finishes the proof. 

\[\square\]

4 Instability of stationary solutions for the sine-Gordon equation with \( \delta \)-interaction

In this section apply the linear instability criterium (Theorem 3.3 above) to the case of stationary solutions determined by a \( \delta \)-interaction type at the vertex \( \nu = 0 \). First we examine the structure of such stationary wave solutions.

4.1 Stationary solutions for the sine-Gordon equation with \( \delta \)-interaction

Next we consider the sine-Gordon model (1.6) on a \( \mathcal{Y} \)-junction type of the form \( \mathcal{Y} = (-\infty, 0) \cup (0, +\infty) \cup (0, +\infty). \) The stationary solutions will be of the type in (1.7) and satisfying the system
in (1.9). Suppose that the profile $\Phi = (\phi_j)_{j=1}^3$ belongs to the domain $D(L_Z)$ of $\delta$-type defined in (1.12). Let us rewrite the family of stationary profiles (1.9) here for convenience:

$$
\phi_i(x) = 4 \arctan \left( e^{\frac{x}{c_i}(x-a_i)} \right), \quad x < 0,
$$

$$
\phi_i(x) = 4 \arctan \left( e^{-\frac{1}{c_i}(x-a_i)} \right), \quad x > 0, \quad i = 2, 3.
$$

(4.1)

Then, clearly, from the continuity condition at the vertex $\nu = 0$ we obtain $\frac{1}{c_1}a_1 = -\frac{1}{c_2}a_2 = -\frac{1}{c_3}a_3$. The Kirchhoff-type condition in (1.12) implies the following relation for $\nu = 0$:

$$
-\frac{e^{-\frac{a_1}{c_1}}}{1 + e^{-\frac{2a_1}{c_1}}} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j = Z \arctan \left( e^{-\frac{a_1}{c_1}} \right).
$$

(4.2)

From (4.2) we deduce that $Z < 0$. Next, from the behavior of the function

$$
f(y) = \frac{1+y^2}{y} \arctan(y), \quad y \geq 0
$$

(4.3)

we obtain that $Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0)$. Moreover, we have the following specific behavior of the profiles $\phi_i$:

1) for $Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j)$ we obtain $a_1 > 0$; therefore $a_2, a_3 < 0$, $\phi_i'' > 0$ for every $i$, and $\phi_1' > 0$, $\phi_2' < 0$ ($j = 1, 2$). Thus, the profile of $(\phi_j)_{j=1}^3$ should look similar to Figure 2(a) above (tail-profile). Moreover, $\phi_i \in (0, \pi)$, $i = 1, 2, 3$.

2) for $Z \in (-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0)$ we obtain $a_1 < 0$; therefore $a_2, a_3 > 0$, and $\phi_i''(a_i) = 0$, $i = 1, 2, 3$. We also have $\phi_1' > 0$, $\phi_2' < 0$ ($i = 1, 2$). Thus, the profile of $(\phi_j)_{j=1}^3$ should look similar to Figure 2(b) below (bump-profile). Moreover, $\phi_i \in (0, \eta_0)$, $i = 1, 2, 3, \eta_0 = 4 \arctan \left( e^{-\frac{1}{c_1}a_1} \right) > \pi$.

3) the case $Z = -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j$ implies $a_1 = 0 = a_2 = a_3$; therefore, $\phi_i(0) = \pi$ and $\phi_i''(0) = 0$, $i = 1, 2, 3$. In this case, we have a “smooth” profile around the vertex $\nu = 0$ (see Figure 2(c) below).

We shall see that the stability study of the profiles given in (4.1) will require exactly the three cases considered above. The main stability result for the stationary profiles $\Phi_Z = (\phi_1, \phi_2, \phi_3, 0, 0, 0)$ with $\phi_j$ defined in (4.1)-(4.2) is the following.

**Theorem 4.1.** Let $Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0)$ and the smooth family of stationary profiles $Z \to \Phi_Z$ defined in (4.1)-(4.2) . Then $\Phi_Z$ is spectrally and nonlinearly unstable for the sine-Gordon model (2.1).

The proof of spectral instability result in Theorem 4.1 will be a consequence of Theorem 3.3. Thus by Theorem 2.5 we only need to verify the assumptions (S1), (S2) and (S3) associated to the operator in (3.4) with domain $D(L_Z)$ of $\delta$-type defined in (2.3). That will be the focus of the following subsection. The nonlinear instability property of $\Phi_Z$ will be a consequence of Theorem 2.7 and the approach by Henry *et al.* in [35] (see also Angulo and Natali [12], Angulo *et al.* [11]).

### 4.2 Spectral study in the case of a $\delta$-interaction

In this section we study the structure of the kernel and Morse index of the following diagonal-matrix Schrödinger operator

$$
L_Z = \left( -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \cos(\phi_j) \right) \delta_{j,k}, \quad 1 \leq j, k \leq 3
$$

(4.4)

with domain $D(L_Z)$ defined in (2.3) and $\phi_j$ given by (4.1)-(4.2). From Proposition A.6 in Appendix we have that $(L_Z, D(L_Z))$ represents a family of self-adjoint operators.
Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j)
\quad \text{for all } j = 1, 2, 3.
\] Figure 2: Plots of stationary solutions (4.1) in the case where
\( c_j = 1 \) for all \( j = 1, 2, 3 \), for different values
of \( Z \in (-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0) = (-3, -6/\pi) \). Panel (a) shows the stationary profile solutions (“tail” configuration) for
the value \( Z = -5/2 \in (-3, -6/\pi) \). Panel (b) shows the profiles of “bump” type for the value \( Z = -1/6 \in (-6/\pi, 0) \). Panel (c) shows the “smooth” profile solutions when
\( Z = -3 \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0) \).

\textbf{Proposition 4.2.} Let \( Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^3 c_j, 0) \). Then \( \ker(L_Z) = \{0\} \).

\textit{Proof.} Let \( u = (u_1, u_2, u_3) \in D(L_Z) \) and \( L_Z u = 0 \). Since
\[ -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} \phi_j' + \cos(\phi_j) \phi_j' = 0, \quad j = 1, 2, 3, \]
we obtain from Sturm-Liouville theory on half-lines that
\[ u_1(x) = \alpha_1 \phi_1'(x), \quad x < 0, \quad u_j(x) = \alpha_j \phi_j'(x), \quad x > 0, \quad j = 2, 3, \]
with \( \alpha_j \in \mathbb{R} \). Therefore, since \( \phi_j'(0+) = -\phi_j'(0-) \frac{c_1}{c_j}, \quad j = 2, 3, \) we obtain from the conditions given
by elements of \( D(L_Z) \) that
\[ \alpha_1 = -\alpha_2 \frac{c_1}{c_2} = -\alpha_3 \frac{c_1}{c_3}, \quad \sum_{j=2}^3 \alpha_j c_j^2 \phi_j''(0+) - \alpha_1 c_1^2 \phi_1''(0-) = Z \alpha_1 \phi_1'(0-). \]

Next, we consider the following cases:
1) Let \( Z = -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j \). Then, from \( \phi_j' (0) = 0 \) for all \( i \) we obtain \( \alpha_1 \phi_1' (0-) = 0 \). Since \( \phi_1' (0-) \neq 0 \) we have \( \alpha_1 = 0 \) and so \( \alpha_2 = \alpha_3 = 0 \). Hence \( u = 0 \).

2) Let \( Z \in (-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, 0) \). From equation (1.8) and continuity we have \(-c_j^2 \phi_j'' (0+) = -\sin (\phi_j (0+)) = -c_j^2 \phi_j'' (0-)\). Then from (4.6) there follows

\[
- \alpha_1 c_1 \phi_1'' (0-) \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j = Z \alpha_1 \phi_1' (0-). \tag{4.7}
\]

Suppose \( \alpha_1 \neq 0 \). Then, since \( \phi_1'' (0-) < 0 \) and \( \phi_1' (0-) > 0 \) we obtain a contradiction from (4.7). Hence, \( \alpha_1 = \alpha_2 = \alpha_3 = 0 \).

3) Let \( Z \in (-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j) \). Suppose \( \alpha_1 \neq 0 \). Then, since

\[
\phi_1'' (0) = 4 \frac{e^{-\frac{a_1}{c_1}} - e^{-\frac{3a_1}{c_1}}}{[1 + e^{-\frac{2a_1}{c_1}}]^2 c_1^2}, \quad \phi_1' (0) = \frac{4e^{-\frac{a_1}{c_1}}}{[1 + e^{-\frac{2a_1}{c_1}}] c_1},
\]

we obtain from (4.2) and (4.7) the relation

\[
(1 - y^2) \arctan y = y, \quad y = e^{-\frac{a_1}{c_1}}. \tag{4.8}
\]

Since \( a_1 > 0 \) we obtain \( y \in (0, 1) \) and so the function \( h(x) = (1 - x^2) \arctan x - x \) has a zero for \( x \in (0, 1) \). Since \( h(0) = 0, h(1) = -1 \) and \( h'(x) < 0 \) on \( (0, 1) \), we obtain a contradiction. Hence, \( \alpha_1 = \alpha_2 = \alpha_3 = 0 \).

\[\blacksquare\]

**Proposition 4.3.** Let \( Z \in \left(-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j\right] \). Then \( n(L_Z) = 1 \).

**Proof.** We will use the extension theory for symmetric operator. In fact, from Proposition A.6 in Appendix we obtain that the family \((L_Z, D(L_Z))\) represents all the self-adjoint extensions of the closed symmetric operator \((M_0, D(M_0))\) where

\[
M_0 = \left((-c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \cos (\phi_j)) \delta_{j,k}, 1 \leq j, k \leq 3, \right.
\]

\[
D(M_0) = \left\{(v_j)_{j=1}^{3} \in H^2(G) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) = 0, \sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 v_j'(0+) - c_1^2 v_1'(0-) = 0 \right\}. \tag{4.9}
\]

where \( n_{\pm} (M_0) = 1 \). Next, we show that \( M_0 \geq 0 \). Let \( L_j = -c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + \cos (\phi_j) \), then from (1.8) we obtain

\[
L_j \psi = -\frac{1}{\phi_j} \frac{d}{dx} \left[ c_j^2 (\phi_j')^2 \frac{d}{dx} \phi_j \right]. \tag{4.10}
\]

We note that always we have \( \phi_j' \neq 0 \). Thus for \( \Psi = (\psi_j) \in D(M_0) \) we obtain

\[
\langle M_0 \Psi, \Psi \rangle = \int_{-\infty}^{0} c_1^2 (\phi_1')^2 \left[ \frac{d}{dx} \left( \frac{\psi_j}{\phi_1'} \right) \right]^2 dx + \sum_{j=2}^{3} \int_{0}^{\infty} c_j^2 (\phi_j')^2 \left[ \frac{d}{dx} \left( \frac{\psi_j}{\phi_j'} \right) \right]^2 dx
\]

\[
- c_1^2 \psi_1(0) \left[ \frac{\psi_1'(0) \phi'_1(0) - \psi_1'(0) \phi''_1(0)}{\phi'_1(0)} \right] + \sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 \psi_j(0) \left[ \frac{\psi_j'(0) \phi'_j(0) - \psi_j'(0) \phi''_j(0)}{\phi'_j(0)} \right] \tag{4.11}
\]
The integral terms in (4.11) are non-negative and equal zero if and only if \( \Psi \equiv 0 \). Due to the conditions \( \psi_1(0-) = \psi_2(0+) = \psi_3(0+) = 0 \) non-integral term vanishes, and we get \( M_0 \geq 0 \).

Due to Proposition A.3 (see Appendix §A), we have all the self-adjoint extensions \( L_Z \) of \( M_0 \) satisfies \( n(L_Z) \leq 1 \). Next, for \( \Phi = (\phi_1, \phi_2, \phi_3) \in D(L_Z) \), it follows from the relations \( L_j\phi_j = -\sin(\phi_j) + \cos(\phi_j)\phi_j \) that

\[
\langle L_Z \Phi, \Phi \rangle = \int_{-\infty}^{0} [-\sin(\phi_1) + \cos(\phi_1)\phi_1] dx + \sum_{j=2}^{n} \int_{0}^{+\infty} [-\sin(\phi_j) + \cos(\phi_j)\phi_j] dx < 0,
\]

because of \( 0 < \phi_j(x) \leq \pi \) for every \( Z \in \left(-\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j\right) \) and \( \theta \cos \theta \leq \sin \theta \) for all \( \theta \in [0, \pi] \).

Then from minimax principle we arrive at

\[
\text{Indeed, the nonnegative property for } a \text{ may have an undefined sign because of (4.4).}
\]

\[
\text{Remark 4.4. For the case } Z \in \left(-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, 0\right) \text{ in Proposition 4.3, it is not clear for us if the extension theory approach can give us the exact value of the Morse-index of } L_Z \text{ for every } Z.
\]

Indeed, the nonnegative property for \( F_0 \) is still right from (4.11), but the quadratic form \( \langle L_Z \Phi, \Phi \rangle \) may have an undefined sign because of \( \phi_i \in (0, \eta_0), \eta_0 = 4 \arctan(e^{-\frac{1}{c_3} a_1}) > \pi \). We note here that the inequality \( \theta \cos \theta \leq \sin \theta \) still is true for all \( \theta \in [0, \theta_0] \) where \( \theta_0 \approx 4.9394 \) is the unique zero for \( h(x) = \tan x - x \) in the interval \((\pi, 2\pi)\). Thus, it is not difficult to see that for specific intervals of \( a_1 < 0 \) we have either \( \eta_0 < \theta_0 \) or \( \eta_0 > \theta_0 \). As we will see in the following proposition the property \( n(L_Z) = 1 \) is still true.

**Proposition 4.5.** Let \( Z \in \left(-\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, 0\right) \). Then \( n(L_Z) = 1 \).

**Proof.** We will use analytic perturbation theory. Initially, from Proposition 4.3 we have for \( Z^* = -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j \) that \( n(L_{Z^*}) = 1 \). Now, from (4.2)-(4.3) we have the continuous mapping function \( Z \in \left(-\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j, 0\right) \rightarrow a_1(Z) \) such that

\[
a_1(Z) = \begin{cases} 
< 0 & \text{for } Z^* < Z < 0, \\
0 & \text{for } Z = Z^*, \\
> 0 & \text{for } -\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j < Z < Z^*.
\end{cases}
\]

(4.12)

Thus, by denoting the stationary profiles in (4.1) as a function of \( Z, \Phi_{a_1(Z)} = (\phi_j, a_1(Z)) \) we obtain the convergence \( \Phi_{a_1(Z)} \rightarrow \Phi_0 \) as \( Z \rightarrow Z^* \) in \( H^1(G) \). Here \( \Phi_0 = (\phi_j, 0) \).

Next, we obtain that \( L_Z \) converges to \( L_{Z^*} \) as \( Z \rightarrow Z^* \) in the generalized sense. Indeed, denoting

\[
W_Z = \left( \cos(\phi_j, a_1(Z)) \delta_{j,k} \right)
\]

we obtain

\[
\tilde{\delta}(L_Z, L_{Z^*}) = \tilde{\delta}(L_{Z^*} + (W_Z - W_{Z^*}), L_{Z^*}) \leq \|W_Z - W_{Z^*}\|_{L^2(G)} \rightarrow 0, \quad \text{as } Z \rightarrow Z^*,
\]

where \( \tilde{\delta} \) is the gap metric (see [37, Chapter IV]).

Now, from Proposition 4.2 and from Morse-index for \( L_{Z^*} \) being one, we can separate the spectrum \( \sigma(L_{Z^*}) \) of \( L_{Z^*} \) into two parts \( \sigma_0 = \{\lambda^* \} \) \( \lambda^* < 0 \) and \( \sigma_1 \) by a closed curve \( \Gamma \) belongs to the resolvent set of \( L_{Z^*} \) with \( 0 \in \Gamma \) and such that \( \sigma_0 \) belongs to the inner domain of \( \Gamma \) and \( \sigma_1 \) to the outer domain of \( \Gamma \). Moreover, \( \sigma_1 \subseteq [\theta_{Z^*}, +\infty) \) with \( \theta_{Z^*} = \inf\{\lambda : \lambda \in \sigma(L_{Z^*}), \lambda > 0\} > 0 \). Then, by [37, Theorem 3.16, Chapter IV], we have \( \Gamma \subseteq \rho(L_Z) \) for \( Z \in [Z^* - \delta_1, Z^* + \delta_1] \) and \( \delta_1 > 0 \) small enough. Moreover, \( \sigma(L_Z) \) is likewise separated by \( \Gamma \) into two parts so that the part of \( \sigma(L_Z) \) inside
Analysis above implies that \( n(\mathcal{L}_Z) = 1 \) for \( Z \in [Z^* - \delta_1, Z^* + \delta_1] \).

Next, we use a classical continuation argument based on the Riesz-projection for showing that \( n(\mathcal{L}_Z) = 1 \) for all \( Z \in (Z^*, 0) \). Indeed, define \( \omega \) by

\[
\omega = \sup \{ \eta : \eta \in (Z^*, 0) \text{ s.t. } n(\mathcal{L}_Z) = 1 \text{ for all } Z \in (Z^*, \eta) \}.
\]

Analysis above implies that \( \omega \) is well defined, and \( \omega \in (Z^*, 0) \). We claim that \( \omega = 0 \). Suppose that \( \omega < 0 \). Let \( N = n(\mathcal{L}_\omega) \), and \( \Gamma \) be a closed curve such that \( 0 \in \Gamma \subset \rho(\mathcal{L}_\omega) \), and all the negative eigenvalues of \( \mathcal{L}_\omega \) belong to the inner domain of \( \Gamma \). Next, using that as a function of \( Z \), \( (\mathcal{L}_Z) \) is a real-analytic family of self-adjoint operators of type \( (B) \) in the sense of Kato (see [37]) we deduce that there is \( \epsilon > 0 \) such that for \( Z \in [\omega - \epsilon, \omega + \epsilon] \) we have \( \Gamma \subset \rho(\mathcal{L}_Z) \), and the mapping \( Z \rightarrow (\mathcal{L}_Z - \xi)^{-1} \) is analytic for \( \xi \in \Gamma \). Therefore, the existence of an analytic family of Riesz-projections \( Z \rightarrow P(Z) \) given by

\[
P(Z) = -\frac{1}{2\pi i} \oint_{\Gamma} (\mathcal{L}_Z - \xi)^{-1} d\xi
\]

implies that \( \dim(\text{range } P(Z)) = \dim(\text{range } P(\omega)) = N \) for all \( Z \in [\omega - \epsilon, \omega + \epsilon] \). Further, by definition of \( \omega \), there is \( \eta_0 \in (\omega - \epsilon, \omega) \) and \( P_Z \) has \( n(P_Z) = 1 \) for all \( Z \in (Z^*, \eta_0) \). Therefore, \( N = 1 \) and \( \mathcal{L}_{Z+\epsilon} \) has exactly one negative eigenvalue, hence \( \mathcal{L}_Z \) has \( n(\mathcal{L}_Z) = 1 \) for \( Z \in (Z^*, \omega + \epsilon) \), which contradicts with the definition of \( \omega \). Thus, \( \omega = 0 \). This finishes the proof.

\[ \square \]

Remark 4.6. It is immediate from the proof of Proposition 4.5 that we recover the result of \( n(\mathcal{L}_Z) = 1 \) for \( Z \in (-\sum_{j=1}^{3} s_j, -\frac{2}{\pi} \sum_{j=1}^{3} s_j) \) in Proposition 4.3. Moreover, we do not know another approach (other than extension theory) for showing that \( n(\mathcal{L}_{Z+}) = 1 \).

Proof of Theorem 4.1. From Propositions 4.2, 4.3, 4.5, and Theorem 3.3 we obtain the linear instability of the stationary profiles \( \Phi_Z \). Now, since the mapping data-solution for the sine-Gordon model on \( \mathcal{E}(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \) is at least of class \( C^2 \) (indeed, it is smooth) by Theorem 2.7 and from the approach by Henry et al. in [35] (see also [11, 12]) it follows that the linear instability property of \( \Phi_Z \) is in fact of nonlinear type in the \( H^1(\mathcal{Y}) \times L^2(\mathcal{Y}) \)-norm by the flow of the sine-Gordon model. This finishes the proof.

\[ \square \]

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A Appendix

For convenience of the reader, and because of the use of non-standard techniques along the manuscript, in this section we formulate the extension theory of symmetric operators suitable for our needs (see [46, 47] for further information). The following result is classical and can be found in [53], p. 138.

Theorem A.1 (von-Neumann decomposition). Let \( A \) be a closed, symmetric operator, then

\[
D(A^*) = D(A) \oplus \mathcal{N}_{-i} \oplus \mathcal{N}_{+i},
\]

with \( \mathcal{N}_{\pm i} = \ker(A^* \mp iI) \). Therefore, for \( u \in D(A^*) \) and \( u = x + y + z \in D(A) \oplus \mathcal{N}_{-i} \oplus \mathcal{N}_{+i} \),

\[
A^*u = Ax + (-i)y + iz.
\]
Remark A.2. The direct sum in (A.1) is not necessarily orthogonal.

The following propositions provide a strategy for estimating the Morse-index of the self-adjoint extensions (see Reed and Simon, vol. 2, [53], chapter X).

**Proposition A.3.** Let $A$ be a densely defined lower semi-bounded symmetric operator (that is, $A \geq mI$) with finite deficiency indices, $n_\pm(A) = k < \infty$, in the Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}$, and let $\hat{A}$ be a self-adjoint extension of $A$. Then the spectrum of $\hat{A}$ in $(-\infty, m)$ is discrete and consists of, at most, $k$ eigenvalues counting multiplicities.

**Proposition A.4.** Let $A$ be a densely defined lower semi-bounded symmetric operator in some Hilbert space $H$ with deficiency indices equal $n_\pm(A) = 1$. All self-adjoint extensions $A_\theta$ of $A$ may be parametrized by a real parameter $\theta \in [0, 2\pi)$ where

$$D(A_\theta) = \{x + \zeta e^{i\theta} \phi_- : x \in D(A), \zeta \in \mathbb{C}\},$$

$$A_\theta(x + \zeta e^{i\theta} \phi_-) = Ax + i\zeta \phi_+ - i\zeta e^{i\theta} \phi_-,$$

with $A^* \phi_\pm = \pm i\phi_\pm$, and $||\phi_+|| = ||\phi_-||$.

Next Proposition can be found in Naimark [47] (see Theorem 9, p. 38).

**Proposition A.5.** All self-adjoint extensions of a closed, symmetric operator which has equal and finite deficiency indices have one and the same continuous spectrum.

The following proposition is the main result of this Appendix and characterizes all self-adjoint extensions of the symmetric operator under consideration. It plays a key role in the proof of Proposition 4.3.

**Proposition A.6.** Consider the closed symmetric operator densely defined on $L^2(\mathcal{Y})$, $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$, by

$$\mathcal{M} = \left(- c_j^2 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} \right) \delta_{j,k}, \ 1 \leq j, k \leq 3,$$

$$D(\mathcal{M}) = \left\{ (v_j)_{j=1}^3 \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) : v_1(0-) = v_2(0+) = v_3(0+) = 0, \sum_{j=2}^3 c_j^2 v'_j(0+) - c_1^2 v'_1(0-) = 0 \right\},$$

(A.3)

with $\delta_{j,k}$ being the Kronecker symbol. Then, the deficiency indices are $n_\pm(\mathcal{M}) = 1$. Therefore, we have that all the self-adjoint extensions of $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$, namely, $(\mathcal{J}_Z, D(\mathcal{J}_Z))$, $Z \in \mathbb{R}$, are defined by $\mathcal{J}_Z \equiv \mathcal{M}$ and $D(\mathcal{J}_Z)$ by (1.12).

**Proof.** We show initially that the adjoint operator $(\mathcal{M}^*, D(\mathcal{M}^*))$ of $(\mathcal{M}, D(\mathcal{M}))$ is given by

$$\mathcal{M}^* = \mathcal{M}, \quad D(\mathcal{M}^*) = \{ u \in H^2(\mathcal{Y}) : u_1(0-) = u_2(0+) = u_3(0+) \}.$$  

(A.4)

Indeed, formally for $u = (u_1, u_2, u_3), v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \in H^2(\mathcal{Y})$ we have

$$\langle \mathcal{M}v, u \rangle = -c_1^2 v'_1(0-) u_1(0-) + c_1^2 v_1(0-) u'_1(0-) + \sum_{j=2}^3 c_j^2 v'_j(0+) u_j(0-) - \sum_{j=2}^3 c_j^2 v_j(0+) u'_j(0+)$$

$$+ \langle v, \mathcal{M}u \rangle.$$  

(A.5)
From (A.5), we obtain immediately for \( u = (u_1, u_2, u_3), v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \in D(M) \) the symmetric property of \( M \). Next, we denote by \( D^* = \{ u \in H^2(G) : u_1(0-) = u_2(0+) = u_3(0+) \} \) and we will show \( D^* = D(M^*) \). Indeed, from (A.5) we obtain for \( u \in D^* \) and \( v \in D(M) \) that \( \langle Mv, u \rangle = \langle v, Mu \rangle \) and so \( u \in D(M^*) \) with \( M^* u = Mu \). Let us show the inverse inclusion \( D^* \supseteq D(M^*) \). Take \( u = (u_1, u_2, u_3) \in D(M^*) \), then for any \( v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \in D(M) \) we have from (A.5)

\[
\langle Mv, u \rangle = -c_1^2 v_1'(0-)u_1(0-) + \sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 v'_j(0+)u_j(0+) + \langle v, Mu \rangle = \langle v, M^* u \rangle = \langle v, Mu \rangle.
\]  

(A.6)

Thus, we arrive for any \( v \in D(M) \) at the equality

\[
\sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 v'_j(0+)u_j(0+) - c_1^2 v'_1(0-)u_1(0-) = 0
\]  

(A.7)

Next, it consider \( v = (v_1, v_3) \in D(M) \) then \( c_1^2 v'_1(0-) = c_2^2 v'_2(0+) \). Then, from (A.7) we obtain

\[
[u_3(0+) - u_1(0-)] e c_1^2 v'_1(0-) = 0.
\]

So, by choosing \( v'_1(0-) \neq 0 \) we obtain \( u_1(0-) = u_3(0+) \). Then (A.7) is reduced to \( [u_2(0+) - u_1(0-)] e c_2^2 v'_2(0+) = 0 \). Therefore, by choosing \( v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \in D(M) \) with \( v'_2(0+) \neq 0 \) we conclude that \( u \in D^* \). This shows relations in (A.4).

From (A.4), we obtain that the deficiency indices for \( (M, D(M)) \) are \( n_\pm(M) = 1 \). Indeed, \( \ker(M^* \pm iI) = [\Psi_\pm] \) with \( \Psi_\pm \) defined by

\[
\Psi_\pm = \left( e^{ik_\pm x}, e^{-ik_\pm x}, e^{-ik_\pm x} \right),
\]  

\[
k_\pm = \mp i, \quad \text{Im}(k_-) < 0 \text{ and } \text{Im}(k_+) < 0.
\]

Moreover, \( \|\Psi_\pm\|_{L^2(\gamma)} = \|\Psi_\pm\|_{L^2(\gamma)} \).

Next, let us show that the domain of any self-adjoint extension \( \hat{M} \) of the operator \( (M, D(M)) \) in (A.3) (and acting on complex-valued functions) is given by \( D(\hat{M}) = D(J_Z) \) in (1.11). Indeed, we recall from extension theory for symmetric operator that \( D(\hat{M}) \) is a restriction of \( D(M^*) \) (von-Neumann decomposition above), so \( D(\hat{M}) \subset D(M^*) \) (continuity at the vertex \( \nu = 0 \)). Next, due to Proposition A.4 follows

\[
D(\hat{M}) = \left\{ u \in H^2(\gamma), \ u = u_0 + \zeta \Psi_- + \zeta e^{i\theta} \Psi_+: u_0 \in D(M), \zeta \in \mathbb{C}, \theta \in [0, 2\pi] \right\},
\]

Thus, it is easily seen that for \( u = (u_1, u_2, u_3) \in D(\hat{M}) \), we have

\[
\sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 u'_j(0+) - c_1^2 u'_1(0-) = -\zeta \sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j \left( e^{i\xi_j} + e^{i(\theta - \xi_j)} \right), \quad u_1(0-) = \zeta(1 + e^{i\theta}).
\]  

(A.9)

From the last equalities it follows that

\[
\sum_{j=2}^{3} c_j^2 u'_j(0+) - c_1^2 u'_1(0-) = Zu_1(0-), \quad \text{where } Z = Z(\theta) = -\sum_{j=1}^{3} c_j \frac{e^{i\xi_j} + e^{i(\theta - \xi_j)}}{1 + e^{i\theta}} \in \mathbb{R},
\]  

(A.10)

with \( \theta \in [0, 2\pi) - \{ \pi \} \). Thus, the set of self-adjoint extensions \( (\hat{M}, D(\hat{M})) \) of the symmetric operator \( (M, D(M)) \) can be seen as one-parametrized family \( (J_Z, D(J_Z)) \) defined by (1.12). This finishes the proof.
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