

Some Reduction Operations to Pairwise Compatibility Graphs

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Abstract

A graph $G = (V, E)$ with a vertex set V and an edge set E is called a pairwise compatibility graph (PCG, for short) if there are a tree T whose leaf set is V , a non-negative edge weight w in T , and two non-negative reals $d_{\min} \leq d_{\max}$ such that G has an edge $uv \in E$ if and only if the distance between u and v in the weighted tree (T, w) is in the interval $[d_{\min}, d_{\max}]$. PCG is a new graph class motivated from bioinformatics. In this paper, we give some necessary and sufficient conditions for PCG based on cut-vertices and twins, which provide reductions among PCGs.

Key words. Pairwise Compatibility Graph; Graph Theory; Reduction

1 Introduction

An unweighted simple undirected graph $G = (V, E)$ with a vertex set V and an edge set E is called a *pairwise compatibility graph* (PCG, for short) if there exist a tree T with edges weighted by non-negative reals and two non-negative real numbers d_{\min} and d_{\max} such that: the leaf set of T is V , and two vertices $u, v \in V$ are adjacent in G if and only if the distance between u and v in T is at least d_{\min} and at most d_{\max} . The tree T is also called a *pairwise compatibility tree* (PCT, for short) of the graph G . The same tree T can be a PCT of more than one PCG. Figure 1 shows an edge-weighted tree (T, w) and two PCGs for (T, w) with $(d_{\min}, d_{\max}) = (5, 7)$ and $(d_{\min}, d_{\max}) = (4, 8)$ respectively. The concept of PCG was first introduced by Kearney et al. [11] to model evolutionary relationships among a set of organisms in bioinformatics. However, it is a challenging problem to construct a pairwise compatibility tree for a given graph. Recognition and characterization of PCGs became interesting problems in graph theory recently.

Not every graph is a PCG. Yanhaona, Bayzid and Rahman [13] constructed the first non-PCG, which is a bipartite graph with 15 vertices. Later, an example with 8 vertices was found in [8]. This is the smallest non-PCG, since it has been checked that all graphs with at most seven vertices are PCGs [1]. Currently no polynomial-time algorithm is known to the problem of testing whether a given graph is a PCG or not. It is widely believed that recognizing PCGs is NP-hard [7, 8].

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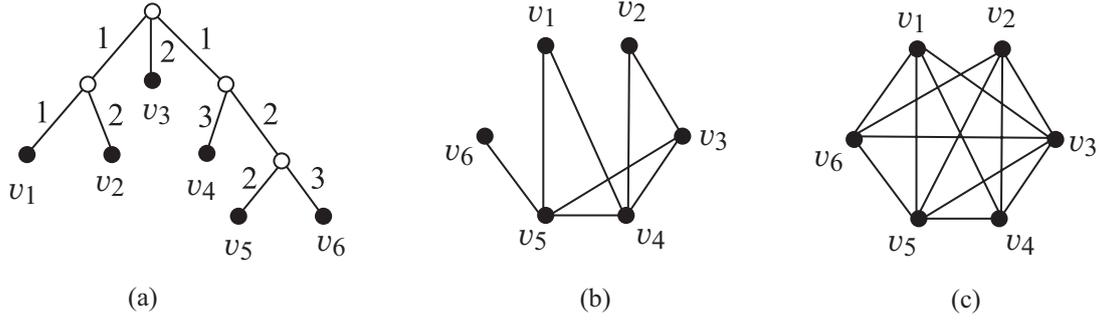


Figure 1: (a) An edge-weighted tree (T, w) , (b) The PCG obtained from (T, w) and $(d_{\min}, d_{\max}) = (5, 7)$, and (c) The PCG obtained from (T, w) and $(d_{\min}, d_{\max}) = (4, 8)$.

In the literature, there are several contributions to recognizing some subclasses of PCG. It is not difficult to see that every tree is a PCG [9]. Every cycle with at most one chord has also been shown to be a PCG [14]. Other subclasses of graphs currently known as PCGs are power graphs of trees [13], threshold graphs [5], triangle-free outerplanar 3-graphs [12], a special subclasses of split matrogenic graphs [6], Dilworth 2 graphs [3, 4], the complement of a forest [9], the complement of a cycle [2] and so on. Some conditions for a graph not being a PCG have also been developed [8, 9, 13, 10]. However, there is still few known method for generating PCGs and PCTs with complicated structures.

In this paper, we will give more necessary and sufficient conditions for PCG. The first one is related to cut-vertices, where we show that a graph is a PCG if and only if each biconnected component of it is a PCG. The second one is about a pair of vertices with the same neighbors, called “twins.” We will show some conditions under which we can add a copy v' of a vertex v into a PCG so that v' and v form twins to get another PCG. One of our results answers an open problem on “true twins” [2]. These properties provide simple reductions rules, by which we can reduce some graph into a smaller graph to check if it is a PCG and find more subclasses of PCGs as well as non-PCGs with an arbitrary large size. For examples, our results imply that complete k -partite graphs, cacti, and some other graphs are subclasses of PCG.

2 Preliminary

Let a graph $G = (V, E)$ stand for an unweighted simple undirected graph with sets V and E of vertices and edges, respectively. An edge with end-vertices u and v is denoted by uv . For a graph G , let $V(G)$ and $E(G)$ denote the sets of vertices and edges in G , respectively, and let $N_G(v)$ be the set of neighbors of a vertex v in G and let $N_G[v] = N_G(v) \cup \{v\}$. Two vertices u and v in a graph G are *true twins* (resp., *false twins*) if $N_G[v] = N_G[u]$ (resp., $N_G(v) = N_G(u)$). For a subset $X \subseteq V(G)$, let $G - X$ denote the graph obtained from G by removing vertices in X together with all edges incident to vertices in X , where $G - \{v\}$ for a vertex v may be written as $G - v$. Let $G[X]$ denote the graph induced by a subset $X \subseteq V(G)$, i.e., $G[X] = G - (V(G) \setminus X)$.

A vertex is called a *cut-vertex* if deleting it increases the number of connected component of the graph. A graph is *biconnected* if it has no cut-vertex. Note that a graph consisting of a single edge is biconnected. A *biconnected component* in a graph is a maximal biconnected subgraph. A *cactus* is a connected graph in which any two simple cycles have at most one vertex in common. Note that each biconnected component of a cactus is either a cycle or an edge. A graph is called a *complete k -partite graph* if the vertex set can be partitioned into k disjoint non-empty vertex subsets such that no two vertices in the same subset are adjacent whereas any two vertices from different subsets are adjacent. A complete k -partite graph with k subsets V_1, V_2, \dots, V_k with $|V_i| = s_i$ is denoted by K_{s_1, s_2, \dots, s_k} .

Let T be a tree. A vertex in a tree is called an *inner vertex* if it is incident to at least two edges and is called a *leaf* otherwise. Let $L(T)$ denote the set of leaves in the tree T . An edge incident to a leaf in T is called a *leaf edge* of T . For a subset $X \subseteq V(T)$ of vertices, let $T\langle X \rangle$ denote a minimal subtree of T subject to the condition that any two vertices $u, v \in X$ remain connected in $T\langle X \rangle$. Note that for a given subset X , the minimal subtree is unique.

An edge-weighted graph (G, w) is defined to be a pair of a graph G and a non-negative weight function $w : E(G) \rightarrow \mathfrak{R}_+$. For a subgraph G' of G , let $w(G')$ denote the sum $\sum_{e \in E(G')} w(e)$ of edge weights in G' .

Let (T, w) be an edge-weighted tree. For two vertices $u, v \in V(T)$, the *distance* $d_{T,w}(u, v)$ between them is defined to be $w(T\langle \{u, v\} \rangle)$, i.e., the sum of weights of edges in the path between u and v in T .

For a tuple $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ of an edge-weighted tree (T, w) and two non-negative reals d_{\min} and d_{\max} , define $G(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ to be the simple graph $(L(T), E)$ such that, for any two distinct vertices $u, v \in L(T)$, $uv \in E$ if and only if $d_{\min} \leq d_{T,w}(u, v) \leq d_{\max}$. We define E to be an empty set if $|V(T)| = 1$. Note that $G(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ is not necessarily connected. For a subset $X \subseteq V(T)$, let $w_X : E(T\langle X \rangle) \rightarrow \mathfrak{R}_+$ be a function such that $w_X(e) = w(e)$, $e \in E(T\langle X \rangle)$, where we regard w_X as null if $|X| \leq 1$.

A graph G is called a *pairwise compatibility graph* (PCG, for short) if there exists a tuple $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ such that G is isomorphic to the graph $G(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$, where we call such a tuple a *pairwise compatibility representation* (PCR, for short) of G , and call a tree T in a PCR of G a *pairwise compatibility tree* (PCT, for short) of G . We call d_{\min} and d_{\max} the *lower and upper bounds* of a PCR.

3 Some Structures on PCR

We start to review the following property, which has been frequently used in literature. The correctness of it immediately follows from the definition of PCG.

Lemma 1 *Let $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ be a PCR of a graph G . For any subset $X \subseteq V(G)$, the tuple $(T\langle X \rangle, w_X, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ is a PCR of the induced graph $G[X]$.*

A PCR $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ of a PCG is called *non-singular* if T contains at least three vertices, $0 < d_{\min} < d_{\max}$, and $w(e) > 0$ holds for all edges $e \in E(T)$.

Lemma 2 *Let G be a PCG with at least two vertices. Then G admits a non-singular PCR. Given a PCR of G , a non-singular PCR of G can be constructed in linear time.*

Proof. Let G be a PCG with $|V(G)| \geq 2$ and $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ be an arbitrary PCR of G . We will construct a non-singular PCR of G by four steps below.

First, if there is a non-leaf edge e such that $w(e) = 0$, we can shrink it by identifying the two end-vertices of it. The resulting graph is still a tree, a leaf in the original is still a leaf in this tree, and the distance between any two vertices in the tree remains unchanged. So the new tree is still a PCT of the graph G . Now we assume that the edge weight of any non-leaf edge in the tree is positive.

By assumption of $|V(G)| \geq 2$, it holds that $|V(T)| \geq |L(T)| = |V(G)| \geq 2$. Next if $|V(T)| = 2$, then we subdivide the unique edge uv in T with a new inner vertex v^* so that $w'(uv^*) + w'(v^*v) = w(uv)$ in the new tree T' obtained by subdividing the edge uv . It is easy to see that the new tuple $(T', w', d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ is still a PCR of G , and $|V(T')| \geq 3$. In the following we assume that a PCT has at least three vertices.

In a PCR $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ with $|V(T)| \geq 3$, each path between two leaves contains exactly two leaf edges. As for the third step, if $w(e) = 0$ for some leaf edge $e \in E(T)$ or $d_{\min} = 0$, then we can change all leaf edge weights and d_{\min} positive if necessary, by increasing the weight of each leaf edge by a positive real $\delta > 0$ and increasing each of d_{\min} and d_{\max} by 2δ . The resulting tuple is a PCR of the same graph G . Now all of edge weights, d_{\min} and d_{\max} are positive.

Finally, if the lower and upper bounds are same, i.e., $d_{\min} = d_{\max}$, then we augment the upper bound d_{\max} to $d'_{\max} := d_{\max} + \varepsilon$ by choosing a sufficiently small positive real ε so that every two leaves u and v in T such that $d_{T,w}(u, v) > d_{\max}$ still satisfies $d_{T,w}(u, v) > d_{\max} + \varepsilon (= d'_{\max})$. Obviously the resulting tuple with d'_{\max} is a PCR of the same graph G and satisfies $d_{\min} \neq d'_{\max}$.

After executing the above four steps, we can get a non-singular PCR of the graph G . Furthermore, all the four steps can be done in linear time. ■

A PCR $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ of a PCG is called *normalized* if $0 < d_{\min} < 1$, $d_{\max} = 1$, $w(e) > 0$ holds for all edges $e \in E(T)$, and $w(e) > 1/4$ holds for all leaf edges e in T . We have the following lemmas.

Lemma 3 *Let G be a PCG with at least two vertices. Then there is a positive constant c_G with $1/2 < c_G < 1$ such that for any real α with $c_G < \alpha < 1$, G admits a normalized PCR with $(d_{\min}, d_{\max}) = (\alpha, 1)$. Given a PCR of G , such a normalized PCR of G can be constructed in linear time.*

Proof. By Lemma 2, we know that a non-singular PCR $(T, w, d_{\min}, d_{\max})$ of G can be constructed in linear time. For $c_G = \frac{d_{\min} + d_{\max}}{d_{\max} + d_{\max}}$, where $1/2 < c_G < 1$, let α be any real such that $c_G < \alpha < 1$. To prove the lemma, it suffices to show that a normalized PCR $(T, w', \alpha, 1)$ can be constructed in linear time.

Let δ be the positive real such that $\frac{d_{\min} + \delta}{d_{\max} + \delta} = \alpha$, where $\delta > d_{\max}$ holds. We increase the weight of each leaf edge in T by $\delta/2$, which increases the weight of each path between two leaves

in T by δ . We scale the weight in the tuple so that the lower and upper bounds become α and 1; i.e., we divide by $d_{\max} + \delta$ the weight of each edge in T and each of $d_{\min} + \delta$ and $d_{\max} + \delta$. This results in a tuple $(T, w', \alpha, 1)$ of G such that $w'(e) \geq (\delta/2)/(d_{\max} + \delta) > 1/4$ for each leaf edge e in T . ■

Most of our arguments are based on normalized PCR, since it will be helpful for us to simplify some proofs.

4 Properties on Induced Subgraphs of PCGs

In this section, we derive some sufficient conditions for induced subgraphs of a PCG to remain PCGs, and show how to reduce a PCG to smaller PCGs or construct a larger PCG (resp., non-PCG) from a given PCG (resp., non-PCG). For this, we first review the case when an induced subgraph of a PCG G is a connected component of the graph.

Components. It is known that a graph is a PCG if and only if each connected component of it is a PCG. The only if part trivially follows from Lemma 1. The if part is also easy to see: choose an inner vertex from the PCT of a PCR of each connected component of G , where we assume that $d_{\max} = 1$ for all PCRs, and join the inner vertices to a new vertex with an edge weighted by a positive real > 1 to get a single tree whose leaf set is $V(G)$. We easily see that the resulting tree is a PCT for a PCR to G , showing that G is a PCG. It would be natural to consider similar properties on 2-edge-connected components (resp., biconnected components) of graphs with bridges (resp., cut-vertices). In fact, we show that the above property also holds for biconnected components.

Lemma 4 *Let a graph G consist of biconnected components B_i , $i = 1, 2, \dots, p$. Then G is a PCG if and only if each biconnected component B_i of G is a PCG.*

Proof. The only if part trivially follows from Lemma 1. To show the if part, it suffices to consider the case where G consists of two PCG graphs G_1 and G_2 such that $|V(G_1) \cap V(G_2)| = 1$.

Let $v^* \in V(G_1) \cap V(G_2)$. By Lemma 3, we see that, for a real $\alpha > 0$, each PCG G_i ($i = 1, 2$) admits a normalized PCR $(T_i, w_i, d_{\min} = \alpha, d_{\max} = 1)$, as illustrated in Figure 2(a). Since they are normalized, it holds that $w_i(e) > 1/4$ for each leaf edge e in T_1 and T_2 .

Now we join the two PCRs by replacing the leaf edge $u_i v^*$ in T_i ($i = 1, 2$) with a new inner vertex v' and three edges $u_1 v'$, $u_2 v'$ and $v' v^*$ setting their weights by $w(u_1 v^*) := w_1(u_1 v^*)$, $w(u_2 v^*) := w_2(u_2 v^*)$ and $w(v' v^*) := 0$, respectively. See Figure 2(b) for an illustration of the operation. Let (T, w) denote the resulting edge-weighted tree, and let G' be the graph $G(T, w, \alpha, 1)$. We will show that G' is isomorphic to the graph G .

Since $w_i(e) > 1/4$ for each leaf edge e in T_i with $i = 1$ and 2, we see that $d_{T,w}(u, v) > 4 \cdot (1/4) = 1 = d_{\max}$ for any pair of vertices $u \in L(T_1) - \{v^*\}$ and $v \in L(T_2) - \{v^*\}$. This implies that $uv \notin E(G')$. Obviously for each $i = 1, 2$ and any pair $\{u, v\} \subseteq V(T_i)$, it holds that $uv \in E(G')$ if and only if $uv \in E(G_i)$. Therefore G' is isomorphic to G , and G is a PCG. ■

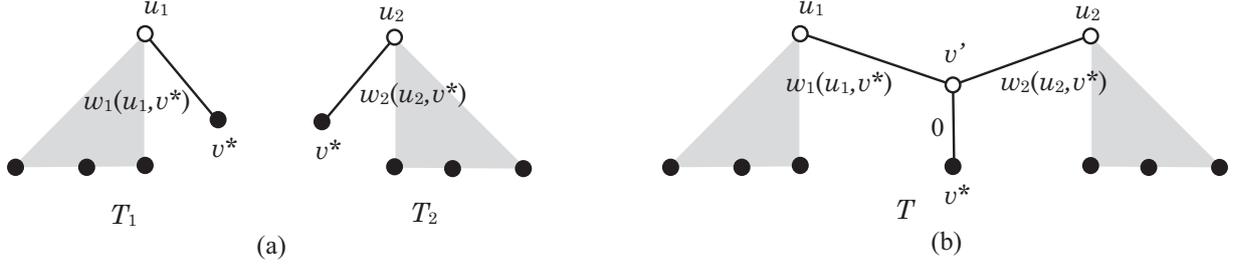


Figure 2: (a) A normalized PCR $(T_i, w_i, d_{\min} = \alpha, d_{\max} = 1)$ for each $i = 1, 2$, (b) The weighted tree (T, w) obtained from (T_i, w_i) , $i = 1, 2$ by joining edges u_1v^* and u_2v^* with a new inner vertex v' , where $w(u_1v') = w_1(u_1v^*)$, $w(u_2v') = w_2(u_2v^*)$ and $w(v'v^*) = 0$

Lemma 4 is a powerful tool to construct PCGs. We can use it to ‘join’ small PCGs into a large PCG to find new subclasses of PCGs. An edge or a single cycle has been shown to be a PCG [14], and a cactus is a graph with each biconnected component being a cycle or an edge. By simply applying Lemma 4, we see the next.

Lemma 5 *Every cactus is a PCG.*

A special case of cacti (where each biconnected component is a cycle) was shown to be a subclass of PCG [14]. However, by using Lemma 4, we can greatly simplify the proofs [14]. Furthermore, Lemma 4 can be used to construct PCGs of more complicated structures.

Twins. Since twins have similar structures, we are interested to know whether PCG remains close under the operation of adding a twin of a vertex. This problem has been considered by Calamoneri et al. [2]. They found that this property holds for false twins and raised the case for true twins as an interesting open problem. We will answer their question by exploring the property of true twins.

For false twins, the following lemma has been proven [2]. We show that this can be proven by using normalized PCR.

Lemma 6 *Let G be a graph with false twins v_1 and v_2 . Then G is a PCG if and only if $G - v_1$ is a PCG.*

Proof. The only if part trivially follows from Lemma 1. We show the if part assuming that $G' = G - v_1$ is a PCG. By Lemma 3, we know that there is a normalized PCR $(T', w', \alpha > 0, 1)$ of $G' = G - v_1$. We replace the leaf edge $v'v_2$ in T' with a new leaf v_1 and a new inner vertex v'' and three edges $v'v''$, $v''v_2$ and $v''v_1$, setting their weights by $w(v'v'') := w'(v'v_2)$ and $w(v''v_2) := w(v''v_1) := 0$. Let (T, w) denote the resulting edge-weighted tree. Since $d_{T,w}(v_1, v_2) = 0 < \alpha$, v_1v_2 is not an edge in the graph $G(T, w, \alpha, 1)$. For any other leaf $v \in L(T)$, it holds $d_{T,w}(v, v_1) = d_{T',w'}(v, v_2)$; and for any leaves $u, v \in L(T) - \{v_1, v_2\}$, it holds $d_{T,w}(u, v) = d_{T',w'}(u, v)$. Therefore $(T, w, \alpha, 1)$ is a PCR of G . ■

Lemma 6 can also be used to construct PCGs. Based on Lemma 4, we can construct large PCGs having cut-vertices. By using Lemma 6, we can increase the connectivity of PCGs. For example, for each cut-vertex in a PCG, we can add a false twin of it to the graph to get another PCG. Lemma 6 also implies the following result.

Lemma 7 *Every complete k -partite graph is a PCG.*

Note that for a complete k -partite graph, if we iteratively delete a vertex in a pair of false twins as long as false twins exist, finally we will get a clique of k vertices. It is trivial that a clique is a PCG. By Lemma 6, we know that any complete k -partite graph is a PCG. In fact, complete k -partite graphs contain many interesting graphs. For examples, $K_{1,2,2}$ is a 5-wheel, $K_{2,2,2}$ is an octahedron, $K_{1,2,4}$ is a (4, 3)-fan, $K_{2,2,5}$ is a (4, 5)-cone, $K_{4,4,4}$ is a circulate graph $Ci_{12}(1, 2, 4, 5)$, and so on. Some of them have been shown to be PCGs by using different techniques in the literature.

Next, we consider true twins. In fact, the statement in Lemma 6 for true twins is no longer correct because there is an example of a non-PCG G such that deleting a vertex in true twins results in a PCG.

The graph G in Figure 3(a) has only seven vertices. This is a PCG since it has been proved that any graph with at most seven vertices is a PCG [1]. The graph G' in Figure 3(b) is obtained from the graph G by a copy v' of vertex v so that v and v' form true twins in G' . The graph G' has been shown to be a non-PCG [8].

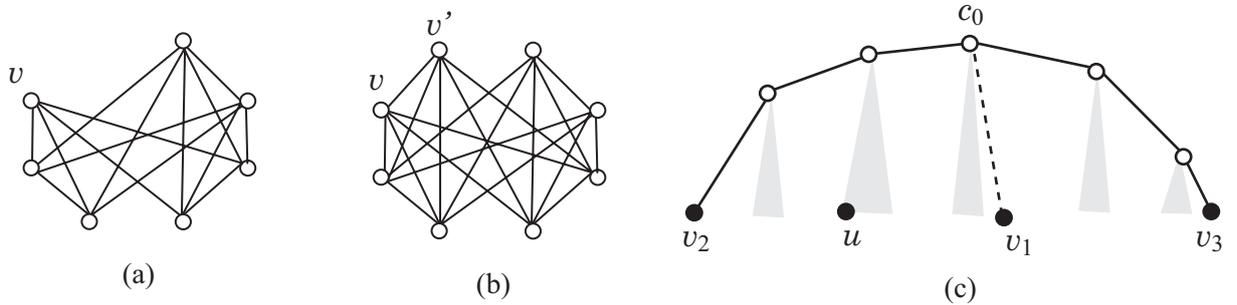


Figure 3: (a) A graph G with seven vertices, and (b) A graph G' obtained from G by adding a vertex v' so that v and v' are true twins in G' , (c) A PCT T obtained from T' with a new leaf edge c_0v_1

We show that a non-PCG remains to be a non-PCG after removing one of three true twins.

Lemma 8 *Let G be a graph with three true twins v_1, v_2 and v_3 , i.e., $N_G[v_1] = N_G[v_2] = N_G[v_3]$. Then G is a PCG if and only if $G - v_1$ is a PCG.*

Proof. The only if part trivially follows from Lemma 1. We show the if part assuming that $G' = G - v_1$ is a PCG. Let $(T', w', d'_{\min}, d'_{\max})$ be a PCR of G' , where $|V(T')| \geq |L(G)| \geq 2$. We will construct a PCR $(T, w, d'_{\min}, d'_{\max})$ of G .

Let c_0 be the middle point of the path between v_2 and v_3 in T' , i.e., c_0 is an inner vertex or an interior point on an edge such that $d_{T',w'}(v_2, c_0) = d_{T',w'}(c_0, v_3)$.

We add v_1 to T' as a new leaf creating a new edge between v_1 and c_0 in T' to construct a tree T with $L(T) = V(G)$. We set the edge weight $w(v_1c_0) := \frac{1}{2}d_{T',w'}(v_2, v_3)$. If c_0 is an interior point on an edge u_1u_2 in T' , then we subdivide u_1u_2 into two edges u_1c_0 and c_0u_2 setting their weights so that $w(u_1c_0) + w(c_0u_2) = w'(u_1u_2)$ and c_0 is still the middle point of the path between v_2 and v_3 in T . For all other edges e in T' , we set $w(e) := w'(e)$. Note that $d_{T,w}(v_1, c_0) = d_{T,w}(v_2, c_0) = d_{T,w}(v_3, c_0) = \frac{1}{2}d_{T,w}(v_2, v_3) = \frac{1}{2}d_{T',w'}(v_2, v_3)$. To prove that $(T, w, d'_{\min}, d'_{\max})$ is a PCR of G , it suffices to prove that for each vertex $u \in V(G) \setminus \{v_1\}$, $d_{T,w}(v_1, u)$ is equal to $d_{T,w}(v_i, u)$ for $i = 2$ or 3 , which implies that $v_1u \in E(G)$ if and only if $v_iu \in E(G')$. Recall that $v_2u \in E(G')$ if and only if $v_3u \in E(G')$ by assumption of $N_G[v_2] = N_G[v_3]$.

Let $u \in V(G) \setminus \{v_1\}$, where we assume without loss of generality that $d_{T,w}(v_2, u) \leq d_{T,w}(v_3, u)$, which means that the path between u and v_3 passes through c_0 in T' , as illustrated in Figure 2(c). Hence $d_{T,w}(v_3, u) = d_{T,w}(v_1, u)$ holds, as required. ■

Lemma 8 implies that a PCG with true twins u_1 and u_2 can be augmented to a larger PCG with any number of new vertices u_2, \dots, u_k so that every two vertices u_i and u_j , $1 \leq i < j \leq k$ form true twins.

5 Conclusions

In this paper, we have introduced some reduction rules on PCGs. By using these rules, we can find more subclasses of PCG and simplify some arguments in previous papers. Also the reduction rules can be used to find a class of non-PCGs by constructing larger non-PCGs from a given non-PCG in a similar way. All graphs with at most seven vertices are known to be PCGs, and a non-PCG with eight vertices has been found. To find all non-PCGs with $n = 8$ vertices, the reduction rules can be used to eliminate graphs with false twins or cut-vertices from the class of simple graphs with $n = 8$ vertices, because such graphs are reduced to graphs with at most seven vertices which are all PCGs. It is interesting to find more reduction rules on PCG.

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