

ON THE TRANSVERSE INVARIANT FOR BINDINGS OF OPEN BOOKS

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ABSTRACT. Let $T \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a transverse knot which is the binding of some open book, (T, π) , for the ambient contact manifold (Y, ξ) . In this paper, we show that the transverse invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}(T) \in \widehat{\text{HFK}}(-Y, K)$, defined in [LOSS08], is nonvanishing for such transverse knots. This is true regardless of whether or not ξ is tight. We also prove a vanishing theorem for the invariants \mathcal{L} and \mathcal{J} . As a corollary, we show that if (T, π) is an open book with connected binding, then the complement of T has no Giroux torsion.

1. INTRODUCTION

In a recent paper by Lisca, Ozsváth, Stipsicz, and Szabó [LOSS08], the authors define invariants of null-homologous Legendrian and transverse knots. These invariants live in the knot Floer homology groups of the ambient space with reversed orientation, and generalize the previously defined invariants of closed contact manifolds, $c(Y, \xi)$. They have been useful in constructing new examples of knot types which are not transversally simple (see [LOSS08, OS08]).

In this paper, we investigate properties of these invariants for certain transverse knots.

Theorem 1.1. *Let $T \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a transverse knot which can be realized as the binding of an open book (T, π) compatible with the contact structure ξ . Then the transverse invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}(T)$ is nonvanishing.*

Remark 1.2. In [LOSS08], it is shown that if $c(Y, \xi) \neq 0$, then $\mathcal{J}(T) \neq 0$ for any transverse knot $T \subset (Y, \xi)$. In Theorem 1.1, no restrictions are made on the ambient contact structure ξ . In particular, the theorem is true even when ξ is overtwisted. Moreover, the nonvanishing of the invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}$ implies the nonvanishing of the invariant \mathcal{J} .

Let L be a null-homologous Legendrian knot in (Y, ξ) . It is shown in [LOSS08] that the invariant $\mathcal{L}(L)$ inside $\text{HFK}^-(Y, L)$ remains unchanged under negative stabilization, and therefore yields an invariant of transverse

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knots. If T is a null-homologous transverse knot in (Y, ξ) and L is a Legendrian approximation of T , then $\mathcal{J}(T) := \mathcal{L}(L)$. We will generally state results only in the Legendrian case, even though the same results are also true in the transverse case.

Remark 1.3. There is a natural map $\mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y, L) \rightarrow \widehat{\mathrm{HFK}}(-Y, L)$, defined by setting $U = 0$. Under this map, the $\mathcal{L}(L)$ is sent to $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}(L)$. Therefore, if $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}(L)$ is nonzero, then $\mathcal{L}(L)$ must also be nonzero. Similarly, if $\mathcal{L}(L)$ vanishes, then $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}(L)$ must also vanish.

In addition to understanding when these invariants are nonzero, we are also interested in circumstances under which they vanish. In [LOSS08], it was shown that if the complement of the Legendrian knot contains an overtwisted disk, then the Legendrian invariant for that knot vanishes. Here, we generalize this result by proving:

Theorem 1.4. *Let L be a Legendrian knot in a contact manifold (Y, ξ) . If the complement $Y - L$ contains a compact submanifold N with convex boundary such that $c(N, \xi|_N) = 0$ in $SFH(-N, \Gamma)$, then the Legendrian invariant $\mathcal{L}(L)$ vanishes.*

Since I -invariant neighborhoods of convex overtwisted disks have vanishing contact invariant (Example 1 of [HKM07]), Theorem 1.4 generalizes the vanishing theorem from [LOSS08].

In [GHV07], Ghiggini, Honda, and Van Horn-Morris show that a closed contact manifold with positive Giroux torsion has vanishing contact invariant. They show this by proving that the contact element for a 2π -torsion layer vanishes in sutured Floer homology. Thus, as an immediate corollary to Theorem 1.4, we have:

Corollary 1.5. *Let L be a Legendrian knot in a contact manifold (Y, ξ) . If the complement $Y - L$ has positive Giroux torsion, then the Legendrian invariant $\mathcal{L}(L)$ vanishes.*

Remark 1.6. A similar result has been established for the invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}$ by Stipsicz and Vértesi [SV08] using slightly different arguments.

Remark 1.7. Theorem 1.1 and Corollary 1.5 are both true in the transverse case as well.

Combining the transverse version of Corollary 1.5 with Theorem 1.1, we conclude the following interesting fact about complements of connected bindings:

Theorem 1.8. *Let (T, π) be an open book with a single binding component. Then the complement of T has no Giroux torsion.*

Of course, this theorem only applies to connected bindings of open books. Although we have yet to finish the proof in the general case, we propose the following conjecture:

Conjecture 1.9. *Let (B, π) be an open book for a contact manifold (Y, ξ) . Then the complement of B has no Giroux torsion.*

This paper is organized as follows: in Section 2, we briefly review some of the basic concepts in contact geometry and knot Floer homology. Section 3 is devoted to proving Theorem 1.1. In Section 4, we conclude with a proof of Theorem 1.4.

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2. BACKGROUND

2.1. Contact Geometry Preliminaries. Recall that a contact structure on an oriented 3-manifold is a plane field ξ satisfying a certain nonintegrability condition. We assume that our plane fields are cooriented, and that ξ is given as the kernel of some global 1-form: $\xi = \ker(\alpha)$ with $\alpha(N_p) > 0$ for each oriented normal vector N_p to ξ_p . Such an α is called a *contact form* for ξ . In this case, the nonintegrability condition is equivalent to the statement $\alpha \wedge d\alpha > 0$.

A primary tool used in the study of contact manifolds has been Giroux's correspondence between contact structures on 3-manifolds and open book decompositions up to an equivalence called *positive stabilization*. An *open book decomposition* of a contact 3-manifold (Y, ξ) is a pair (B, π) , where B is an oriented, fibered, transverse link and $\pi : (Y - B) \rightarrow S^1$ is a fibration of the complement of B by oriented surfaces whose oriented boundary is B .

An open book is said to be *compatible* with a contact structure ξ if, after an isotopy of the contact structure, there exists a contact form α for ξ such that:

- (1) $\alpha(v) > 0$ for each (nonzero) oriented tangent vector v to B , and
- (2) $d\alpha$ restricts to a positive area form on each page of the open book.

Given an open book decomposition of a 3-manifold Y , Thurston and Winkelnkemper [TW75] show how one can produce a compatible contact structure on Y . Giroux proves in [Gir02] that two contact structures which are compatible with the same open book are, in fact, isotopic as contact structures. Giroux also proves that two contact structures are isotopic if and only if they are compatible with open books which are related by a sequence of positive stabilizations.

Definition 2.1. A knot L smoothly embedded in a contact manifold (Y, ξ) is called *Legendrian* if $T_p L \subset \xi_p$ for all p in L .

Definition 2.2. An oriented knot T smoothly embedded in a contact manifold (Y, ξ) is called *transverse* if it always intersects the contact planes transversally with each intersection positive.

We say that two Legendrian knots are *Legendrian isotopic* if they are isotopic through Legendrian knots; similarly, two transverse knots are *transversally isotopic* if they are isotopic through transverse knots. Given a Legendrian knot L , one can produce a canonical transverse knot nearby to L , called the *transverse pushoff* of L . On the other hand, given a transverse knot T , there are many nearby Legendrian knots, called *Legendrian approximations* of T . Although there are infinitely many distinct Legendrian approximations of a given transverse knot, they are all related to one another by sequences of negative stabilizations. These two constructions are inverses to one another, up to the ambiguity involved in choosing a Legendrian approximation of a given transverse knot (see [EFM01, EH01]).

If I is an invariant of Legendrian knots which remains unchanged under negative stabilization, then I is also an invariant of transverse knots: if T is a transverse knot and L is a Legendrian approximation of T , define $I(T)$ to be equal to the invariant $I(L)$ of the Legendrian knot L . This is how the authors define the transverse invariants $\mathcal{T}(T)$ and $\widehat{\mathcal{T}}(T)$ in [LOSS08].

For more on open book decompositions and on Legendrian and transverse knots, we refer the reader to [Etn06, Col07] and, respectively, [Etn05].

2.2. Heegaard Floer Preliminaries. This paper is primarily concerned with two versions of Heegaard Floer homology, which are invariants of (null-homologous) knots inside closed 3-manifolds. These homologies, called knot Floer homology, are denoted $\text{HFK}^-(Y, K)$ and $\widehat{\text{HFK}}(Y, K)$. In knot Floer homology, the basic input is a doubly-pointed Heegaard diagram; that is, a Heegaard diagram (Σ, α, β) , together with two basepoints $w, z \in \Sigma - (\alpha \cup \beta)$, in the complement of the α - and β -curves. These diagrams are required to satisfy certain admissibility conditions which depend on the version of the theory which one is working.

Given a doubly pointed Heegaard diagram, one can produce a knot in the resulting 3-manifold. To do this, connect z to w by an arc in the complement of the α -curves, and w to z by an arc in the complement of the β -curves. After depressing the interiors of these arcs into the β - and α -handlebodies, respectively, the result is an oriented knot inside the closed 3-manifold specified by the Heegaard diagram (Σ, α, β) . Using a bit of elementary Morse theory, one can show that any knot in any closed 3-manifold can be represented by a doubly-pointed Heegaard diagram.

If the genus of Σ is g , then the chain groups for $\text{HFK}^-(Y, K)$ are generated as a $\mathbb{Z}/2[U]$ -module by the intersection points between the two g -dimensional subtori $\mathbb{T}_\alpha = \alpha_1 \times \cdots \times \alpha_g$ and $\mathbb{T}_\beta = \beta_1 \times \cdots \times \beta_g$ inside $\text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$. Given a complex structure on Σ , $\text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$ inherits a natural complex structure from the projection $\times_g \Sigma \rightarrow \text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$. The boundary map counts certain holomorphic disks in $\text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$, with boundary lying on $\mathbb{T}_\alpha \cup \mathbb{T}_\beta$, connecting

these intersection points:

$$\partial^- \mathbf{x} = \sum_{\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{T}_\alpha \cap \mathbb{T}_\beta} \sum_{\substack{\phi \in \pi_2(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}), \mu(\phi)=1, \\ n_z(\phi)=0}} \# \widehat{\mathfrak{M}}(\phi) \cdot U^{n_w(\phi)} \cdot \mathbf{y}.$$

Here $n_v(\phi)$ is equal to the algebraic number of times the disk ϕ intersects the subspace $\{v\} \times \text{Sym}^{g-1}(\Sigma)$; $\pi_2(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y})$ is the set of homotopy classes of disks connecting \mathbf{x} to \mathbf{y} with boundaries lying on \mathbb{T}_α and \mathbb{T}_β .

The chain groups for $\widehat{\text{HFK}}(Y, K)$ are generated as a $\mathbb{Z}/2$ -vector space by the intersection points between \mathbb{T}_α and \mathbb{T}_β in $\text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$. In this case, the boundary map counts holomorphic disks in $\text{Sym}^g(\Sigma)$, with boundaries lying on $\mathbb{T}_\alpha \cap \mathbb{T}_\beta$, missing both z and w :

$$\widehat{\partial} \mathbf{x} = \sum_{\mathbf{y} \in \mathbb{T}_\alpha \cap \mathbb{T}_\beta} \sum_{\substack{\phi \in \pi_2(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}), \mu(\phi)=1, \\ n_z(\phi)=0, n_w(\phi)=0}} \# \widehat{\mathfrak{M}}(\phi) \cdot \mathbf{y}.$$

For more information on Heegaard Floer homology and knot Floer homology, we refer the reader to [OS04c, Lip06] and [OS04a, Ras03], respectively.

2.3. Invariants of Legendrian and Transverse Knots. Let L be a Legendrian knot with knot type K , and let T be a transverse knot in the same knot type. In [LOSS08], the authors define invariants $\mathcal{L}(L)$ and $\mathcal{T}(T)$ in $\text{HFK}^-(-Y, K)$ and $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}(L)$ and $\widehat{\mathcal{T}}(T)$ in $\widehat{\text{HFK}}(-Y, K)$. These invariants are constructed in a similar fashion to the contact invariants in [HKM06, HKM07]. Below we describe how to construct the invariant for a Legendrian knot.

Let $L \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a null-homologous Legendrian knot. Consider an open book decomposition of (Y, ξ) containing L on a page S . Choose a basis $\{a_0, \dots, a_n\}$ for S (i.e a collection of disjoint, properly embedded arcs $\{a_0, \dots, a_n\}$ such that $S - \bigcup a_i$ is homeomorphic to a disk) with the property that L intersects only the basis element a_0 , and does so transversally in a single point. Let $\{b_0, \dots, b_n\}$ be a collection of properly embedded arcs obtained from the a_i by applying a small isotopy so that the endpoints of the arcs are isotoped according to the induced orientation on ∂S and so that each b_i intersects a_i transversally in the single point x_i . If $\phi : S \rightarrow S$ is the monodromy map representing the chosen open book decomposition, then our Heegaard diagram is given by

$$(\Sigma, \alpha, \beta) = (S_{1/2} \cup -S_1, (a_i \cup a_i), (b_i \cup \phi(b_i))).$$

The first basepoint, z , is placed on the page $S_{1/2}$ in the complement of the thin strips of isotopy between the a_i and b_i . The second basepoint, w , is placed on the page $S_{1/2}$ inside the thin strip of isotopy between a_0 and b_0 . The two possible placements of w correspond to the two possible orientations of L .

The Legendrian invariant $\mathcal{L}(L)$ is defined, up to isomorphism, to be the element $[\mathbf{x}] = [(x_0, \dots, x_n)]$ in $\text{HFK}^-(\Sigma, \beta, \alpha, w, z)$. A picture of this

construction in the case at hand is given in Figure 4. If T is a transverse knot, the transverse invariant $\mathcal{J}(T)$ is defined to be the Legendrian invariant of a Legendrian approximation of T .

One interesting property of these invariants is that they do not necessarily vanish for knots in an overtwisted contact manifold; this is why we do not need to assume tightness in Theorem 1.1. Another property, which will be useful in Section 3, is that these invariants are natural with respect to contact (+1)-surgeries.

Theorem 2.1 (Ozsváth-Stipsicz, [OS08]). *Let $L \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a Legendrian knot. If (Y_B, ξ_B, L_B) is obtained from (Y, ξ, L) by contact (+1)-surgery along a Legendrian knot B in (Y, ξ, L) , then, under the natural map*

$$F_B : \mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y, L) \rightarrow \mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y_B, L_B),$$

$\mathcal{L}(L)$ is mapped to $\mathcal{L}(L_B)$.

An immediate corollary to this fact is the following:

Corollary 2.2. *Let $L \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a Legendrian knot, and suppose that (Y_B, ξ_B, L_B) is obtained from (Y, ξ, L) by Legendrian surgery along a Legendrian knot B in (Y, ξ, L) . If $\mathcal{L}(L) \neq 0$ in $\mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y, L)$, then $\mathcal{L}(L_B) \neq 0$ in $\mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y_B, L_B)$.*

Remark 2.3. Theorem 2.1 and Corollary 2.2 are also true for the invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{L}}(L)$ and for the invariants $\mathcal{J}(T)$ and $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}(T)$ in the case of a transverse knot.

In addition, the invariant \mathcal{L} directly generalizes the original contact invariant $c(Y, \xi) \in \widehat{\mathrm{HF}}(-Y)$ (see [OS05]). Under the natural map $\mathrm{HFK}^-(-Y, L) \rightarrow \widehat{\mathrm{HF}}(-Y)$ obtained by setting $U = 1$, $\mathcal{L}(L)$ maps to $c(Y, \xi)$, the contact invariant of the ambient contact manifold.

We encourage the interested reader to look at [LOSS08, OS08] to learn about other properties of these invariants.

3. PROOF OF THEOREM 1.1

Let $T \subset (Y, \xi)$ be a transverse knot. Recall that Theorem 1.1 states that if T is the binding for some open book (T, π) for (Y, ξ) , then the transverse invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}(T) \in \widehat{\mathrm{HFK}}(-Y, T)$ is nonvanishing.

In this section, we prove Theorem 1.1 in three steps. In Section 3.1 we construct an open book on which a Legendrian approximation L of the transverse knot T sits. Then we show in Section 3.2 that the Heegaard diagram obtained in Section 3.1 is weakly admissible. Finally, in Section 3.3, we prove the theorem in the special case where the monodromy map ϕ_n consists of a product of n negative Dehn twists along a boundary-parallel curve.

An arbitrary monodromy map differs from some such ϕ_n by a sequence of positive Dehn twists, or Legendrian surgeries, along curves contained in pages of the open book. By Corollary 2.2, since the transverse invariant is

nonvanishing for the monodromy maps ϕ_n , it must also be nonvanishing for an arbitrary monodromy map.

3.1. Obtaining the pointed diagram. By hypothesis, T is the binding of an open book (T, π) for (Y, ξ) . In order to compute the transverse invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{J}}(T)$, we need to find a Legendrian approximation L of T , realized as a curve on a page of an open book for (Y, ξ) .

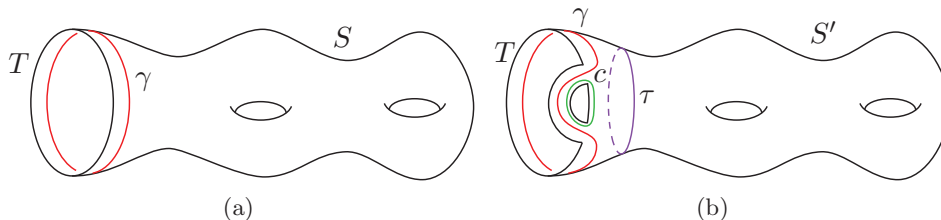


FIGURE 1.

In Figure 1(a), we see a page of the open book (T, π) . Here, T appears as the binding $\partial S = T$. Assuming the curve γ could be realized as a Legendrian curve, it would be the natural choice for the Legendrian approximation L . Unfortunately, since γ is zero in the homology of the page, γ cannot be made Legendrian on the page.

To fix this problem, stabilize the diagram. The result of such a stabilization is illustrated in Figure 1(b). To see that this solves the problem, we prove the following lemma:

Lemma 3.1. *The stabilization depicted in Figure 1(b) can be performed while fixing T as the “outer” boundary component.*

Assume the truth of Lemma 3.1 for the moment. Then the curve γ depicted in Figure 1(b) can now be Legendrian realized, as it now represents a nonzero element in the homology of the page. By construction, if we orient this Legendrian coherently with T , then T is the transverse pushoff of γ .

Proof. Consider S^3 with its standard tight contact structure. Let (H_+, π_+) be the open book for (S^3, ξ_{std}) whose binding consists of two perpendicular Hopf circles and whose pages consist of negative Hopf bands connecting these two curves. In this case, each binding component is a transverse unknot with self linking number equal to -1 .

Let T be a transverse knot contained in a contact manifold (Y, ξ) and let U be a transverse unknot in $(S^3, \xi|_{\text{std}})$ with self-linking number equal to -1 . Observe that the complement of a standard neighborhood of a point contained in U is itself a standard neighborhood of a point contained in a transverse knot. Therefore, if we perform a transverse connected sum of T with the transverse unknot of self linking number equal to -1 in (S^3, ξ_{std}) , we do not change the transverse knot type of T .

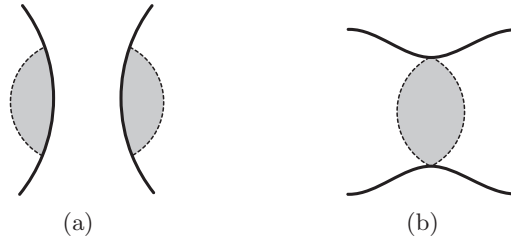


FIGURE 2.

Let (B, π) be an open book with connected binding for a contact manifold (Y, ξ) . Consider the contact manifold obtained from (Y, ξ) by Murasugi summing the open book (B, π) with the open book (H_+, π_+) along bigon regions bounded by boundary-parallel arcs contained in pages of the respective open books. The summing process is depicted in Figure 2. Figure 2(a) shows the open books before the Murasugi sum, while Figure 2(b) shows the resulting open book after the sum.

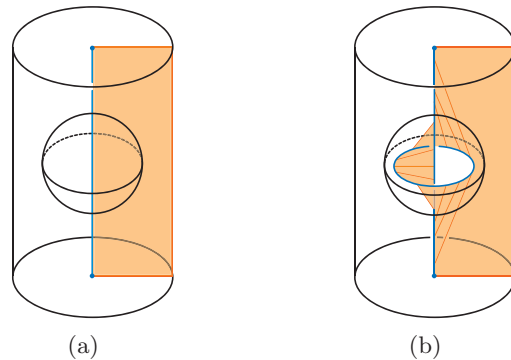


FIGURE 3.

The Murasugi sum operation has the effect of performing a contact connected sum of (Y, ξ) with (S^3, ξ_{std}) and a transverse connected sum of the binding component B with one of the binding components of H_+ (see [Tor00]). Before and after pictures of this operation are shown in Figures 3(a) and 3(b), respectively. Since both of the binding components of the open book (H_+, π_+) are transverse unknots with self linking number equal to -1 , this connected sum has no effect on the transverse knot type of the “outer” boundary component of the open book in Figure 1. \square

Since the curve γ can now be Legendrian realized and approximates T as desired, we will denote γ by L from this point forward. The new monodromy map $\phi' : S' \rightarrow S'$ is equal to the old monodromy map, ϕ , composed with one positive Dehn twist along the curve c shown in Figure 1(b). For notational ease, we continue denoting the monodromy map by ϕ , and the page by S .

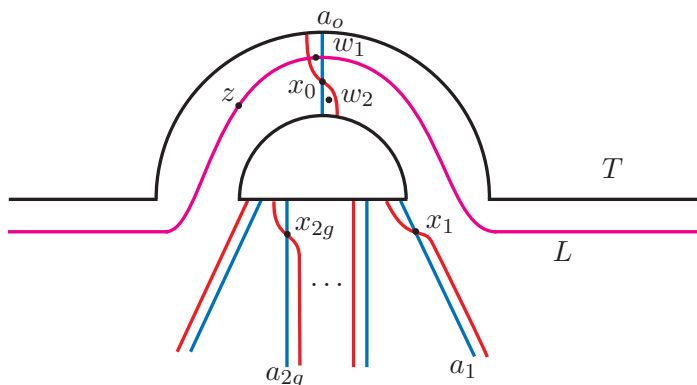


FIGURE 4.

We choose a basis for our surface whose local picture near the stabilization is depicted in Figure 4. There are two possible choices for the placement of the second basepoint w : w_1 and w_2 . In order for L to be oriented coherently with T , we must choose $w = w_1$.

3.2. Admissibility. In this section, we construct a weakly admissible, doubly-pointed Heegaard diagram from the open book described in Section 3.1.

Before we continue, let us discuss some notation. We are concerned with open book decompositions whose pages are twice-punctured surfaces. We picture a genus g surfaces as a $4g$ -sided polygon with certain boundary edges identified. We choose the standard identification scheme, where the first and third edges are identified, as are the second and fourth edges, the fifth and seventh edges, and so on. For convenience, we always assume that the first edge appears in the 12 o'clock position, at the top of each diagram.

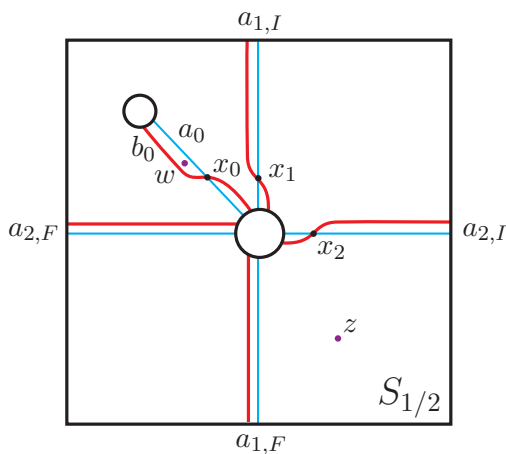


FIGURE 5.

Our punctures are always situated so that one of the punctures is in the center of the polygon, with the other close by. We choose our basis elements, a_1, \dots, a_{2g} , to be straight arcs emanating from the center of the polygon and passing out the corresponding edge. If we were to forget about the identifications being made at the boundary, the basis element a_i would break into two straight arcs emanating from the center of the diagram. For ease of exposition in what follows, we label the first segment that we see as we move clockwise around the diagram $a_{i,I}$, and the second $a_{i,F}$. The subscript I stands for “initial”, while the subscript F stands for “final”.

According to these conventions, the second boundary component of our surface lies in the region between the curves $a_{2g,F}$ and $a_{1,I}$. The last basis element a_0 is a straight line segment connecting the two boundary components of the surface.

We have adopted the practice of Honda, Kazez and Matić of placing surrogate basepoints throughout the diagram whenever it is convenient. The points signal that no holomorphic disk is allowed to cover that region of the diagram.

We have restricted our figures to the case where our page is a twice-punctured torus, and our monodromy map ϕ consists of two negative Dehn twists along the curve τ in Figure 1(b). The resulting doubly-pointed Heegaard diagram is shown in Figures 5 and 6.

Figure 5 shows the $S_{1/2}$ page of our open book, while Figure 6 shows the $-S_1$ page (note the reversed orientation). The invariant appears in Figure 5 as the intersection point $\mathbf{x} = (x_0, x_1, x_2)$.

Consider the small region southeast of x_0 in Figure 5. This region is equal to the region R in Figure 6. Let γ be the dashed arc connecting the region R to the z -pointed region. Denote by $(a_{i,*})$, the intersection point between $a_{i,*}$ and γ .

Lemma 3.2. *The doubly-pointed Heegaard diagram described above, and appearing in Figures 5 and 6, is weakly admissible.*

Proof. Let P be a periodic domain for the pointed Heegaard diagram $(\Sigma, \beta, \alpha, w)$. Suppose P has nonzero multiplicity in the z -pointed region. Without loss of generality, we assume that this multiplicity is $+1$. In particular, the multiplicity of the region just above the point $(a_{2,F})$ in Figure 6 is $+1$. In order for the w -pointed region to have multiplicity zero, the α_0 - and β_0 -curves must be contained in the boundary of the periodic domain P and must appear with multiplicity ± 1 (depending on the chosen orientations of α_0 and β_0). This forces the small region southeast of x_0 in Figure 5 to have multiplicity $+2$. Since this region is the same as the region R in Figure 6, R must also have multiplicity $+2$.

Consider the dashed arc γ connecting R to the z -pointed region. In order for P to exist, the multiplicities of the regions intersected by γ must go from $+2$ in the region R to $+1$ in the z -pointed region.

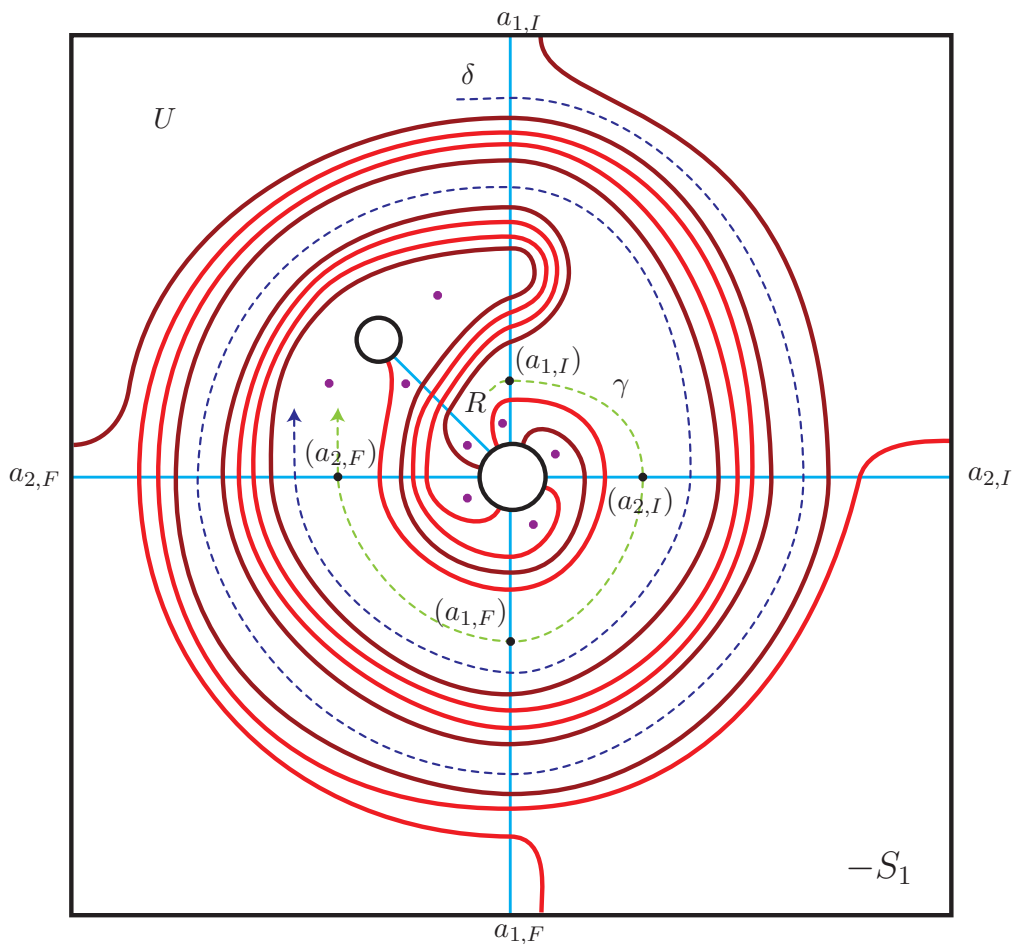


FIGURE 6.

However, the curve γ intersects each α -curve (other than α_0) in two points, each with opposite sign. The boundary of a periodic domain must be a sum of full α - and β -curves, so if the multiplicity increases (or decreases) by a factor of n as γ passes one of the intersection points, it must decrease (or increase) by that same factor as γ passes the other intersection point. Therefore, the net change in multiplicity of the periodic domain P along γ between the region R and the z -pointed region is zero. We have seen that the multiplicity of the region R is $+2$, whereas the multiplicity of the z -pointed region was assumed to be $+1$. From this contradiction, we conclude that P must have multiplicity zero in the z -pointed region.

Since each α - and each β -curve bound the z -pointed region on either side, and since P has multiplicity zero in the z -pointed region, we conclude that P must have positive and negative coefficients. \square

3.3. Computing $\widehat{\mathcal{T}}(T)$. Let $\mathbf{x} = (x_0, \dots, x_{2g})$; we show that the transverse invariant $\widehat{\mathcal{T}}(T) = [(x_0, \dots, x_{2g})]$ is nonzero. To prove this, we show that the set $\pi_2(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{x})$ has no holomorphic representatives unless $\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{x}$, in which case we have only the trivial holomorphic disk. This is equivalent to showing that, if we reverse the roles of the α - and β -curves, $\pi_2(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y})$ has no holomorphic representatives for all $\mathbf{y} \neq \mathbf{x}$.

Let \mathbb{D} be a holomorphic representative of some homotopy class $\phi \in \pi_2(\mathbf{y}, \mathbf{y}')$ with $n_z(\phi) = 0$. As is common in Heegaard Floer homology, we consider the “shadow” of \mathbb{D} on our Heegaard surface Σ . This shadow is a sum of regions in the complement of the α - and β -curves, and is denoted $D = \sum_i c_i D_i$. Because everything in this story is holomorphic, each of the c_i are nonnegative.

Suppose R_1 and R_2 are two adjacent regions in a Heegaard diagram (i.e. R_1 and R_2 share an edge), and D is as above. In general, the multiplicities of R_1 and R_2 can differ arbitrarily. In our case, however, the multiplicities of any two adjacent regions can differ by at most one. This is true because each of the α - and β -curves in a Heegaard diagram coming from an open book decomposition bound the z -pointed region to either side. Therefore, the boundary of any such region D can never contain a full α or β curve, and the multiplicities of R_1 and R_2 can differ by at most one.

Consider the region R in Figure 6, and the curve γ connecting R to the z -pointed region.

Lemma 3.3. *The net change in multiplicity between the region R and the z -pointed region along γ is nonnegative.*

Proof. The proof of Lemma 3.3 is similar to the proof of the admissibility lemma in Section 3.2. Recall that the curve γ intersects each α_i -curve in two points: $(a_{i,I})$ and $(a_{i,F})$. We show that if the multiplicity of the regions intersected by γ decrease by a factor of -1 at the point $(a_{i,I})$, then there must be a corresponding increase in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,F})$. Similarly, we show that if the multiplicity of the regions intersected by γ decrease by a factor of -1 at the point $(a_{i,F})$, then there must be a corresponding increase in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,I})$.

Observe that the multiplicity along γ cannot decrease as γ passes over the point $(a_{1,I})$. Recall that we are only considering holomorphic disks which emanate from the intersection point (x_0, \dots, x_{2g}) . Thus, if there is a decrease in multiplicity at $(a_{1,I})$, a segment of the α_1 -curve between the intersection point $(a_{1,I})$ and x_1 must be contained in the boundary of the holomorphic disk. Looking at the diagram in Figure 6, we see that any such arc has z -pointed region to the west, contradicting its existence.

In the genus one case, a similar argument shows that there can be no decrease in multiplicity at the point $(a_{2,I})$. So assume that either the genus of S is greater than one, or that we are considering an intersection point (a) beyond $(a_{2,I})$ along γ .

Suppose that $(a) = (a_{i,I})$, and that the multiplicity along γ decreases by a factor -1 as it passes over at the point (a) . Then the segment of the α_i -curve beginning at the point (a) and traveling away from the center of the diagram to the point x_i is contained in the boundary of the holomorphic disk. This implies that the region just past the intersection point $(a_{i,F})$ along γ gains a $+1$ boost in multiplicity. Therefore, the increase in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,F})$ balances the decrease in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,I})$.

Similarly, if $(a) = (a_{i,F})$ and if the multiplicity along γ decreases by a factor of -1 as γ passes over (a) , then the segment of the α_i -curve beginning at the point $(a_{i,I})$ and traveling away from the center of the diagram to the point x_i is contained in the boundary of the holomorphic disk. This implies that the region just past the intersection point $(a_{i,I})$ gains a $+1$ boost in multiplicity. Thus, the decrease in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,F})$ is balanced by the increase in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,I})$.

Since each decrease in multiplicity along γ is balanced by a corresponding increase in multiplicity somewhere else along γ , we have that the net change in multiplicity between the region R and the z -pointed region along the curve γ is nonnegative. \square

Consider the region U in Figure 6, and the curve δ connecting U to the z -pointed region. By an argument similar to the proof of Lemma 3.3, we have the following:

Lemma 3.4. *The net change in multiplicity between the region U and the z -pointed region along δ is nonnegative.*

\square

Proof of Theorem 1.1. There are two main cases to consider.

Case 1: Assume that the holomorphic disk emanating from $\mathbf{x} = (x_0, \dots, x_{2g})$ is nonconstant near the intersection point x_0 . In this case, the region R in Figure 6 has multiplicity $+1$. By Lemma 3.3, this implies that the multiplicity of the z -pointed region must be at least $+1$, a contradiction.

Case 2: Now suppose that the holomorphic disk is constant at the point x_0 , meaning that the multiplicity of the region R is zero. We investigate the possible ways that holomorphic disks can emanate from the center of Figure 6.

Suppose, for the moment, that all the regions bordered by the β_0 -curve have zero multiplicity. Then a holomorphic disk emanating from the center of Figure 6 is (locally) constrained to lie within the strip bounded by the darkened portions of the β -curves.

In order for this to be the case, the boundary of the disk must have veered off the α -curves while still contained within this strip. Therefore, all the α -curves are “used up” close to the center of the diagram (i.e. by the time they first intersect a darkened β -curve). This, in turn, forces the multiplicity of the region U in Figure 6 to be positive.

By Lemma 3.4, this implies that the multiplicity of the z -pointed region must be positive, a contradiction. Therefore, in order for such a nontrivial holomorphic disk to exist, at least one of the regions bordered by β_0 must have nonzero multiplicity.

Recall that in Case 2 we are assuming that the holomorphic disk is constant near x_0 . This means that the curve β_0 cannot be involved in the boundary of the holomorphic disk, so at least one of the regions intersected by γ must have positive multiplicity. Let R' be the first region along γ with positive multiplicity, and let (a) be the $(a_{i,*})$ immediately preceding R' .

If $(a) = (a_{i,F})$, then by an argument similar to the proof of Lemma 3.3, it can be shown that the net change in multiplicity between the region R' and the z -pointed region must be nonnegative. The fact that (a) is a final point ensures that there can be no decrease in multiplicity at the point $(a_{i,I})$ since, by the definition of R' , the regions to both sides of this point have multiplicity zero.

On the other hand, suppose $(a) = (a_{i,I})$. An argument similar to that in Lemma 3.3 demonstrates that for each decrease in multiplicity, there is a corresponding increase in multiplicity, except possibly at the point $(a_{i,F})$. If the multiplicity decreases at the point $(a_{i,F})$, then the segment of the α_i -curve from $(a_{i,F})$ to (a) must be contained in the boundary of the holomorphic disk. This then implies that the multiplicity of the region U is at least one.

Again, by Lemma 3.4, this forces the multiplicity of the z -pointed region to be positive, a contradiction. \square

This completes the proof of Theorem 1.1.

4. THE VANISHING THEOREM

In this section, we prove Theorem 1.4. The proof in this case is very similar to the proof of Theorem 4.5 in [HKM07]. The key differences are that we must include the Legendrian knot L when choosing a Legendrian skeleton for the complement of the submanifold N , and that we must be cautious about the changes made to the diagram in the spinning process used to make the diagram strongly admissible.

Proof of Theorem 1.4. We begin by constructing a partial open book decomposition for the contact submanifold $(N, \xi|_N)$, which can be extended to an open book decomposition for all of (Y, ξ) . Following [HKM07], we must show that the basis $\{a_1, \dots, a_r\}$ for the partial open book decomposition of $(N, \xi|_N)$ can be extended to a basis $\{a_1, \dots, a_r, a'_0, a'_1, \dots, a'_s\}$ for the extended open book decomposition of (Y, ξ) , where $L \cap (\bigcup a_i \cup \bigcup a'_j) = L \cap a'_0 = 1\text{pt}$.

Claim: We may assume without loss of generality that the complement of N is connected.

Proof of claim. Let (M, ξ) be a compact manifold with possibly nonempty boundary, and let $(M', \xi|_{M'})$ be a compact submanifold of (M, ξ) with convex boundary. In [HKM08], the authors show that the vanishing of the contact invariant for $(M', \xi|_{M'})$ implies the vanishing of the contact invariant for (M, ξ) .

Suppose the complement of N is disconnected. Then, since $c(N, \xi|_N) = 0$, the contact manifold obtained by gluing the components of $Y - N$ not containing L to N must also have vanishing contact invariant. In particular, we may assume without loss of generality that $Y - N$ is connected. \square

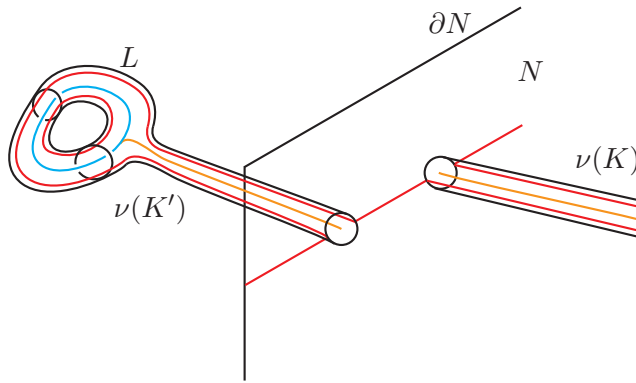


FIGURE 7.

Let K be a Legendrian skeleton for N , and let K' be an extension of the Legendrian knot L to a Legendrian skeleton for $N' = Y - N$ (see Figure 7). Assume that the univalent vertices of K and K' in ∂N do not intersect.

The Legendrian skeleton K gives us a partial open book decomposition for $(N, \xi|_N)$. Let $\nu(K)$ be a standard neighborhood of K inside of N , and let $\nu(K')$ be a standard neighborhood of K' inside of $Y - N$. We can build an open book decomposition for all of Y by considering the handlebodies $(N' - \nu(K')) \cup \nu(K)$ and $\nu(K') \cup (N - \nu(K))$. By construction, each of these handlebodies are disk decomposable. A page S of the open book for (Y, ξ) is constructed from the page of the partial open book for $(N, \xi|_N)$ by repeatedly attaching 1-handles away from the portions of the open book coming from the boundary of $\nu(K)$. A picture of this construction is depicted in Figure 8.

In Figure 8, the portion of the page of the open book coming from the boundary of N is shown in black, and has its boundary lines thickened. The portion of the page coming from the boundary of $\nu(K)$ is lightly colored (orange), and appears in the lower right portion of the figure. Finally, the portion of the page coming from the extension of the open book to all of Y is also lightly colored (green), and appears in the lower left corner of the figure.

Let $\{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ be a basis for the partial open book coming from $(N, \xi|_N)$, and let ϕ be the corresponding partially defined monodromy map for this

open book. Consider a new partial open book, whose page is equal to S , and whose partially defined monodromy map is equal to ϕ . Because this new partial open book only differs from the partial open book coming from $(N, \xi|_N)$ by handle attachments away from $\partial\nu(K)$, the contact element for this new partial open book vanishes along with $c(N, \xi|_N)$.

Since $Y - N$ is connected, the basis $\{a_1, \dots, a_n\}$ can, after a suitable number of stabilizations, be extended to a basis for all of Y .

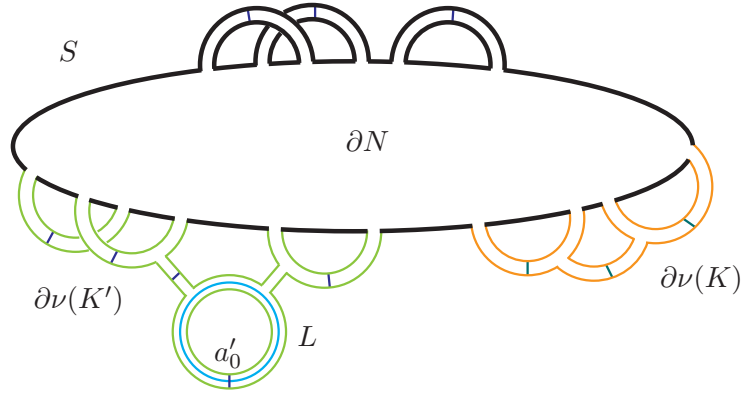


FIGURE 8.

By construction, the new monodromy map ϕ' extends ϕ , the monodromy map for N . We can see our Legendrian L on the page S . The local picture around $L \subset S$ (shown in blue) must look like that in Figure 8.

As was observed in [LOSS08], the “spinning” isotopies needed to make this Heegaard diagram strongly admissible can be performed on the portion of the Heegaard diagram coming from the page S_1 . This changes the monodromy map ϕ' , but only within its isotopy class.

If we delete the α - and β -curves coming from $\{a'_0, a'_1, \dots, a'_s\}$, then we are left with a diagram which is essentially equivalent to that coming from the partial open book (S, ϕ) , but whose monodromy has been changed by an isotopy. Since altering the monodromy map by an isotopy cannot change whether or not the contact element vanishes in sutured Floer homology, we know that the contact element corresponding to the partial open book (S, ϕ') vanishes. That is, if $\mathbf{x} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$, then there exist c_i and \mathbf{y}_i such that $\partial(\sum_i c_i \mathbf{y}_i) = \mathbf{x}$ in the sutured Floer homology of the manifold obtained from the partial open book (S, ϕ') .

Let $\mathbf{x}' = (x'_0, x'_1, \dots, x'_s)$; we claim that $\partial(\sum_i c_i (\mathbf{y}_i, \mathbf{x}')) = (\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{x}')$ in $\text{HFK}^-(-Y, L)$. The intersection points coming from \mathbf{x}' must map to themselves via the constant map. This allows us to ignore the α - and β -curves corresponding to these intersection points, leaving us with a diagram which is essentially equivalent to the partial open book (S, ϕ') . \square

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