



Research article

Multi-solitons in the model of an inhomogeneous optical fiber

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Abstract: This paper was concerned with the inhomogeneous optical fiber model, which was governed by a nonlinear Schrödinger equation with variable coefficients. By spectral analysis for Lax pair of the equation, a corresponding Riemann-Hilbert problem was formulated. By solving the Riemann-Hilbert problem with simple poles, the formula of multi-soliton solutions was derived. Finally, we considered a soliton control system and obtained the one-soliton and two-soliton.

Keywords: nonlinear Schrödinger equation; soliton solutions; Riemann-Hilbert problem; soliton control; optical fibers

Mathematics Subject Classification: 35C08, 35Q51, 37K15

1. Introduction

Multi-solitons are a type of wave packet with soliton properties in nonlinear systems, which have self-similarity and stable transmission properties. Different from simple solitons, multi-solitons exhibit more complex interactions and nonlinear dynamic properties [1, 2]. In 1972, Zakharov and Shabat [3] obtained multi-soliton solutions of the nonlinear Schrödinger equation by the inverse scattering method. Subsequently, different types of multi-soliton solutions for nonlinear integrable systems were extensively studied [4–7].

The soliton control system is a technology that effectively manages and controls the state of nonlinear physical systems by adjusting and controlling solitons [8]. The optical fiber communication system controls and regulates the transmission of solitons [9, 10]. Since the first soliton dispersion management experiment [11], the various soliton management mechanisms have been theoretically predicted through different methods [12–15].

The realistic optical fiber is inhomogeneous, which can influence various effects such as the amplification or absorption, group velocity dispersion, and self-phase modulation [16]. The problem of soliton control in nonlinear systems is described by the following nonlinear Schrödinger equation with variable coefficients:

$$iq_z + \frac{1}{2}D(z)q_{tt} + R(z)|q|^2q = i\Gamma(z)q, \quad (t, z) \in \mathbb{R}^2, \quad (1.1)$$

where $q(t, z)$ is the complex envelope of the electrical field in a co-moving frame, $D(z)$ is the group velocity dispersion, $R(z)$ is the nonlinearity coefficient, $\Gamma(z)$ is the amplification or absorption coefficient, z is the propagation distance, and t is the retarded time. Equation (1.1) describes the amplification or absorption of pulse propagation in a single-mode optical fiber with distributed dispersion and nonlinearity [17].

Joshi [18] obtained the integrability constraint of (1.1) by the Painlevé test. Serkin and Hasegawa [19] studied the one-soliton solution of (1.1) from the integrable point of view. Then, Hao et al. [20] studied soliton solutions of (1.1) by Darboux transformation. Tian and Gao [21] obtained soliton solutions of (1.1) by symbolic computation. Lü et al. [22, 23] studied soliton solutions of (1.1) by the Hirota method. Sun et al. [24] obtained rogue-wave solutions of (1.1) by hierarchy reduction.

In this paper, we obtained the new multi-soliton solutions of (1.1) by using the Riemann-Hilbert method [25–30]. These solutions are useful not only in designing transmission lines for soliton management, but also in some femtosecond laser experiments [14, 15]. Additionally, the inverse scattering transform presented in this paper will pave a way for investigating the long-time asymptotic behavior of the solution to (1.1) by the nonlinear steepest descent method.

This paper is organized as follows: In Section 2, we provide some elementary preliminaries for constructing a Riemann-Hilbert problem. In Section 3, we solve the Riemann-Hilbert problem with simple pole and obtain soliton solutions for (1.1). Moreover, we discuss the properties of optical solitons by numerical simulations. Section 4 gives our conclusions.

2. Preliminaries

We first construct a Riemann-Hilbert problem by spectral analysis of Lax pair. Generally, Eq (1.1) is not integrable. We consider the following relationship [12]:

$$\Gamma(z) = \frac{1}{2} \frac{R(z)D_z(z) - D(z)R_z(z)}{R(z)D(z)}, \quad (2.1)$$

where the subscript denotes taking the derivative of z . Then, Eq (1.1) admits the Lax pair

$$\phi_t = X\phi, \quad \phi_z = T\phi, \quad (2.2)$$

where $\phi = \phi(t, z, k)$ is a 2×2 matrix function, $k \in \mathbb{C}$ is a spectral parameter, and

$$X = -ik\sigma_3 + Q, \quad Q = \sqrt{\frac{R}{D}} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & q \\ -q^* & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad \sigma_3 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix},$$

$$T = -ik^2D(z)\sigma_3 + kD(z)Q + \frac{i}{2}(R(z)|q|^2\sigma_3 + D(z)\sigma_3Q_t).$$

Here and in the following content, the asterisk indicates complex conjugate. Considering the initial condition $\lim_{z \rightarrow \pm\infty} q(0, z) = 0$, the Lax pair (2.2) becomes

$$\phi_t = X_0\phi, \quad \phi_z = T_0\phi, \quad (2.3)$$

where $X_0 = -ik\sigma_3$ and $T_0 = kD(z)X_0$. We obtain the Jost solutions $\phi_{\pm}(t, z, k)$ of Eq (2.3)

$$\phi_{\pm}(t, z, k) = e^{i\theta(t,z,k)\sigma_3} + o(1), \quad z \rightarrow \pm\infty,$$

where $\theta(t, z, k) = -k(t + kzD(z))$. By making transformation

$$\phi_{\pm}(t, z, k) = \mu_{\pm}(t, z, k)e^{i\theta(t,z,k)\sigma_3}, \quad (2.4)$$

it has

$$\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k) \rightarrow I, \quad \text{as } z \rightarrow \pm\infty.$$

Moreover, $\mu(t, z, k)$ satisfies the following Lax pair:

$$\begin{aligned} \mu_t &= -ik[\sigma_3, \mu] + Q\mu, \\ \mu_z &= -ik^2D(z)[\sigma_3, \mu] + \Delta T\mu, \end{aligned} \quad (2.5)$$

where $[\sigma_3, \mu] = \sigma_3\mu - \mu\sigma_3$, $\Delta T = T - T_0$. The Jost solution $\mu(t, z, k)$ can be solved by the following Volterra integrable equations:

$$\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k) = I + \int_{\pm\infty}^t e^{-ik(t-y)\hat{\sigma}_3} (Q(y, z)\mu_{\pm}(y, z, k))dy, \quad (2.6)$$

where $e^{\hat{\sigma}_3 A} = e^{\sigma_3 A} e^{-\sigma_3}$. For convenience, we define D^+ , D^- , and Σ on the \mathbb{C} -plane as

$$D^{\pm} = \{k \in \mathbb{C} \mid \pm \text{Im}k > 0\}, \quad \Sigma = i\mathbb{R} \cup \mathbb{R}.$$

Proposition 2.1. *Suppose that $u(t, z) \in L^1(\mathbb{R})$ and $\mu_{\pm,j}(t, z, k)$ represent the j -th column of $\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k)$. Then, the Jost solutions $\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k)$ have the following properties:*

- $\mu_{-,1}$ and $\mu_{+,2}$ can be analytically extended to D^+ and continuously extended to $D^+ \cup \Sigma$.
- $\mu_{+,1}$ and $\mu_{-,2}$ can be analytically extended to D^- and continuously extended to $D^- \cup \Sigma$.

Proof. We define $\mu_{\pm} = \begin{pmatrix} \mu_{\pm,11} & \mu_{\pm,12} \\ \mu_{\pm,21} & \mu_{\pm,22} \end{pmatrix}$. Then, taking μ_- as an example, Eq (2.6) can be rewritten as

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mu_{-,11} & \mu_{-,12} \\ \mu_{-,21} & \mu_{-,22} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} + \sqrt{\frac{R}{D}} \int_{-\infty}^t \begin{pmatrix} q\mu_{-,21} & e^{-2ik(t-y)}q\mu_{-,22} \\ -e^{2ik(t-y)}q^*\mu_{-,11} & -q^*\mu_{-,12} \end{pmatrix} dy.$$

Note that $e^{2ik(t-y)} = e^{2i(t-y)\text{Re}(k)} e^{2(y-t)\text{Im}(k)}$. Since $y - t < 0$ and $\text{Im}(k) > 0$, we obtain that $\mu_{-,1}$ is analytically extended to D^+ . Moreover, since $\text{Im}(k) = 0$, when $k \in \Sigma$, it is shown that $\mu_{-,1}$ is continuously extended to $D^+ \cup \Sigma$. In the same way, we also obtain the analyticity and continuity of $\mu_{-,2}$, $\mu_{+,1}$, and $\mu_{+,2}$. This completes the proof. \square

According to the method in [30], the Jost solution $\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k)$ admits the symmetry

$$\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k) = \sigma_2 \mu_{\pm}^*(t, z, k^*) \sigma_2, \quad (2.7)$$

where $\sigma_2 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}$, and its asymptotic behavior is

$$\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k) \rightarrow I, \text{ as } k \rightarrow \infty. \quad (2.8)$$

Since $\phi_{\pm}(t, z, k)$ are two fundamental matrix solutions of Lax pair (2.2), one can define a constant scattering matrix $S(k) = (s_{ij}(k))_{2 \times 2}$ such that

$$\phi_+(t, z, k) = \phi_-(t, z, k) S(k), \quad (2.9)$$

where $s_{ij}(k)$ is called scattering coefficients and $\det S(k) = 1$. From Eq (2.7), one has

$$S(k) = \sigma_2 S^*(k^*) \sigma_2. \quad (2.10)$$

According to the analyticities of $\mu_{\pm}(t, z, k)$, we obtain that $s_{11}(k)$ analytic in D^- and $s_{22}(k)$ analytic in D^+ . From Eq (2.8), the scattering matrix $S(k)$ satisfies $S(k) \rightarrow I$, as $k \rightarrow \pm\infty$.

Now, we construct the Riemann-Hilbert problem for Eq (1.1). Define the following sectionally meromorphic matrices:

$$M(t, z, k) = \begin{cases} M^- = \begin{pmatrix} \mu_{+,1} \\ s_{11} \end{pmatrix}, & k \in D^-, \\ M^+ = \begin{pmatrix} \mu_{-,1} \\ s_{22} \end{pmatrix}, & k \in D^+. \end{cases} \quad (2.11)$$

Then, a multiplicative matrix Riemann-Hilbert problem is proposed:

$$\begin{cases} M^{\pm}(t, z, k) \text{ are respectively analytic in } D^{\pm}; \\ M^-(t, z, k) = M^+(t, z, k)(I - G(t, z, k)); \\ M(t, z, k) \sim I, \quad k \rightarrow \infty, \end{cases} \quad (2.12)$$

where

$$G(t, z, k) = \begin{pmatrix} \rho(k)\tilde{\rho}(k) & e^{2i\theta(k)}\tilde{\rho}(k) \\ -e^{-2i\theta(k)}\rho(k) & 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

$$\rho(k) = \frac{s_{21}(k)}{s_{11}(k)} \text{ and } \tilde{\rho}(k) = -\rho^*(k^*).$$

3. Multi-soliton solutions

In what follows, we will solve the Riemann-Hilbert problem with simple poles and present the multi-soliton solutions for Eq (1.1).

We suppose that $s_{22}(k)$ has N simple zeros k_n ($n = 1, 2, \dots, N$) in D^+ , which means $s_{22}(k_n) = 0$ and $s'_{22}(k_n) \neq 0$. Here and in the following ' represents taking the derivative of a function variable.

According to Eq (2.10), one has $s_{22}(k_n) = s_{11}(k_n^*) = 0$. Then, the corresponding discrete spectrum can be collected as

$$K = \{k_n, k_n^*\}_{n=1}^N. \quad (3.1)$$

Solving the above Riemann-Hilbert problem requires us to regularize it by subtracting out the asymptotic behaviors and the pole contributions. Then, one has

$$M^- - I - \sum_{n=1}^N \left\{ \frac{\text{Res } M^+}{k - k_n} + \frac{\text{Res } M^-}{k - k_n^*} \right\} = M^+ - I - \sum_{n=1}^N \left\{ \frac{\text{Res } M^+}{k - k_n} + \frac{\text{Res } M^-}{k - k_n^*} \right\} - M^+ G,$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Res}_{k=k_n} M^+ &= \left(0 \quad \tilde{C}_n e^{2i\theta(k_n)} \mu_{-,1}(t, z, k_n) \right), \quad n = 1, 2, \dots, N, \\ \text{Res}_{k=k_n^*} M^- &= \left(C_n e^{-2i\theta(k_n^*)} \mu_{-,2}(t, z, k_n^*) \quad 0 \right), \quad n = 1, 2, \dots, N, \end{aligned}$$

$$C_n = -\tilde{C}_n^* = \frac{b_n}{s'_{11}(k_n^*)}, \text{ and } b_n \text{ is a constant.}$$

With the help of Plemelj's formula, the solution of Eq (2.12) can be written as

$$M = I + \sum_{n=1}^N \left\{ \frac{\text{Res } M^+}{k - k_n} + \frac{\text{Res } M^-}{k - k_n^*} \right\} + \frac{1}{2\pi i} \int_{\Sigma} \frac{M^+(\xi)G(\xi)}{\xi - k} d\xi. \quad (3.2)$$

Taking $M = M^-$ and comparing the (1,2) position element of matrices (3.2), we get

$$q(t, z) = 2i \sqrt{\frac{D(z)}{R(z)}} \sum_{n=1}^N \tilde{C}_n e^{2i\theta(k_n)} \mu_{-,11}(t, z, k_n) - \frac{1}{\pi} \sqrt{\frac{D(z)}{R(z)}} \int_{\Sigma} (M^+ G)_{12}(\xi) d\xi,$$

$$\text{where } \tilde{C}_n = \frac{b_n}{s'_{11}(k_n^*)}.$$

Now, we focus on the potentials $q(t, z)$ with the reflection coefficient $\rho(k) = 0$. By some algebraic calculations, we obtain the multi-soliton solutions formula

$$q(t, z) = -2i \sqrt{\frac{D(z)}{R(z)}} \frac{\det \hat{H}}{\det H}, \quad (3.3)$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{H} &= \begin{bmatrix} 0 & \mathbf{P} \\ \mathbf{B} & H \end{bmatrix}_{(N+1) \times (N+1)}, \quad H = \left(I + \sum_{j=1}^N c_j(k_n) c_l^*(k_j) \right)_{N \times N}, \\ c_j(t, z, k) &= \frac{C_j}{k - k_j^*} e^{-2i\theta(t, z, k_j^*)}, \quad \mathbf{B} = (1, 1, \dots, 1)_{1 \times N}^T, \\ \mathbf{P} &= (P_1, \dots, P_N) \text{ and } P_n = \tilde{C}_n e^{2i\theta(t, z, k_n)}, \quad n = 1, \dots, N. \end{aligned}$$

Now, we consider a periodic distributed amplification system with the varying group velocity dispersion parameter

$$D(z) = \frac{1}{d_0} e^{\gamma z} R(z), \quad (3.4)$$

and the nonlinearity parameter

$$R(z) = r_0 + r_1 \sin(cz), \quad (3.5)$$

where r_0 , r_1 , and c are the parameters described by the Kerr nonlinearity, and d_0 is the parameter related to initial peak power in the system.

Now, as an application of formula (3.3), we first present the one-soliton solution. Let $N = 1$, $k_1 = \alpha + i\beta$, and one has

$$q(t, z) = -2i \sqrt{\frac{D(z)}{R(z)}} \frac{4\beta^2 C_1^* e^{2i\theta(k_1)}}{4\beta^2 + |C_1|^2 e^{-2i\theta(k_1^*)} e^{2i\theta(k_1)}}, \quad (3.6)$$

where $C_1 = \frac{b_1}{s'_{11}(k_1^*)}$, $\theta(k_1) = -k_1(t + k_1 z D(z))$.

Figure 1 exhibits the dynamical structures of the one-soliton solution (3.6). Due to the value of parameter γ , the soliton group velocity is changed in propagating along the fiber, but the shape of the soliton remains unchanged. This is an important property of solitons.

By setting $N = 2$, from (3.3), we obtain the two-soliton solution

$$q(t, z) = -2i \sqrt{\frac{D(z)}{R(z)}} \frac{\det \begin{pmatrix} 0 & P_1 & P_2 \\ 1 & 1 + A_{11} & A_{12} \\ 1 & A_{21} & 1 + A_{22} \end{pmatrix}}{\det \begin{pmatrix} 1 + A_{11} & A_{12} \\ A_{21} & 1 + A_{22} \end{pmatrix}}, \quad (3.7)$$

where

$$P_n = \tilde{C}_n e^{2i\theta(t, z, k_n)}, \quad A_{nl} = \sum_{j=1}^2 c_j(k_n) c_l^*(k_j), \quad n, l = 1, 2,$$

$$\theta(t, z, k_j) = -k_j(t + k_j z D(z)), \quad c_j(t, z, k) = \frac{C_j}{k - k_j^*} e^{-2i\theta(k_j^*)}, \quad j = 1, 2.$$

Figure 2 exhibits the dynamical structures of the two-soliton solution (3.7). From it we observe that two solitons propagate at the same speed in the fiber and exhibit periodic oscillations.

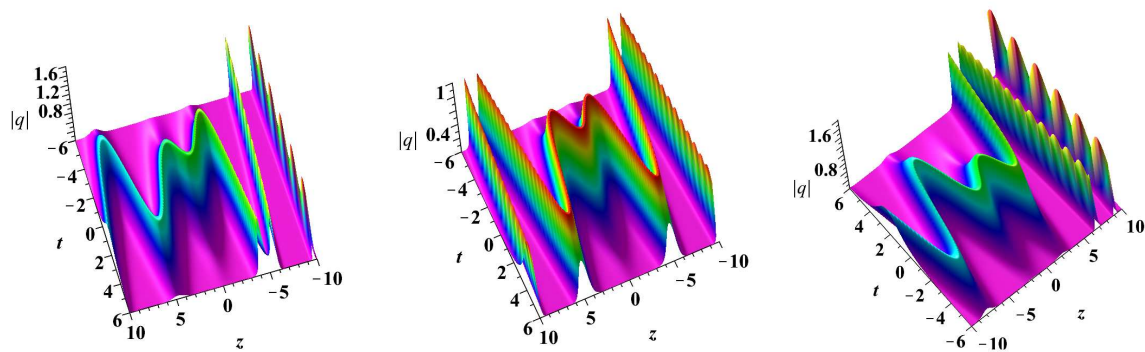


Figure 1. The one-soliton solution given by (3.6) for system parameters $d_0 = r_1 = c = 1$, $r_0 = 0$. The other parameters adopted are $C_1 = 1$, $k_1 = \frac{1}{2}(1 + i)$. Left: $\gamma = -0.5$; Middle: $\gamma = 0$; Right: $\gamma = 0.5$.

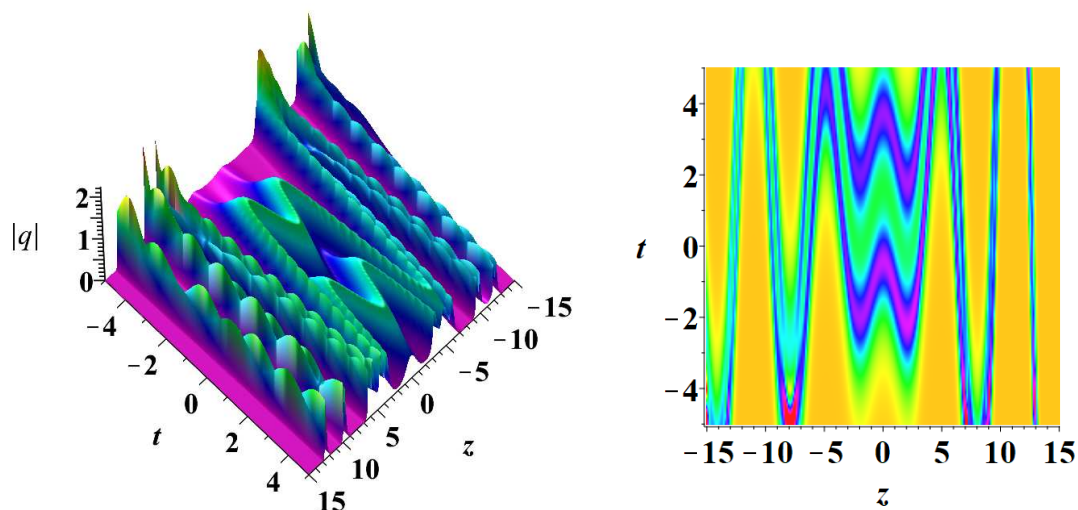


Figure 2. The two-soliton solution given by (3.7) for system parameters $d_0 = r_1 = c = 1$, $r_0 = \gamma = 0.03$. The other parameters adopted are $C_1 = C_2 = 1$, $k_1 = \frac{1}{2}(1 + i)$, $k_2 = \frac{1}{2}(1 + \sqrt{2}i)$. Left: Three-dimensional plot; Right: Density plot.

4. Conclusions

This paper is concerned with the multi-solitons in an inhomogeneous optical fiber model. The formula of multi-soliton solutions and inverse scattering transform are obtained by the Riemann-Hilbert method. Furthermore, we consider a soliton control system and obtain the one-soliton and two-soliton. Comparing our results with the solutions in [20, 22], we confirm that the obtained soliton solutions are new. Finally, the inverse scattering transformation presented in this paper will pave a way for the study of the long-time asymptotic behavior of the solution to Eq (1.1).

Author contributions

Jinfang Li: Conceptualization, Investigation, Writing-original draft, Writing-review & editing. Chunjiang Wang: Methodology, Supervision. Li Zhang: Visualization, Data creation, Software, Validation. Jian Zhang: Methodology, Supervision.

Use of Generative-AI tools declaration

The authors declare they have not used Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in the creation of this article.

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Conflict of interest

All authors declare no conflicts of interest in this paper.

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