Meridional number of a link and shrinkability of toroidal decompositions

Jože Malešič, Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Abstract: An invariant for embeddings of links into the solid torus, called the meridional number, is introduced. Techniques are developed which produce a lower estimate of the meridional number in the case when the given link can be expressed as a satellite of another link. Such estimates yield a sufficient condition for shrinkability of toroidal decomposition.