Energy-Efficient Distributed Spatial Join Processing in Wireless Sensor Networks

Min Soo KIM†, Jin Hyun SON††, Members, Ju Wan KIM†, and Myoung Ho KIM†††, Nonmembers

SUMMARY In the area of wireless sensor networks, the efficient spatial query processing based on the locations of sensor nodes is required. Especially, spatial queries on two sensor networks need a distributed spatial join processing among the sensor networks. Because the distributed spatial join processing causes lots of wireless transmissions in accessing sensor nodes of two sensor networks, our goal of this paper is to reduce the wireless transmissions for the energy efficiency of sensor nodes. In this paper, we propose an energy-efficient distributed spatial join algorithm on two heterogeneous sensor networks, which performs in-network spatial join processing. To optimize the in-network processing, we also propose a Grid-based Rectangle tree (GR-tree) and a grid-based approximation function. The GR-tree reduces the wireless transmissions by supporting a distributed spatial search for sensor nodes. The grid-based approximation function reduces the wireless transmissions by reducing the volume of spatial query objects which should be pushed down to sensor nodes. Finally, we compare naive and existing approaches through extensive experiments and clarify our approach’s distinguished features.

key words: distributed spatial index, distributed spatial join, in-network query processing, wireless sensor network

1. Introduction

A sensor network is an ad hoc network composed of tiny sensor nodes having restricted battery, communication, and computation capabilities. These restrictions have made a sensor network system managed differently, compared with traditional mobile or distributed systems. A database community has viewed a sensor network as a virtual database system and has proposed various query processors such as Cougar [1], TinyDB [2], SINA [3], DSWare [4] and COSMOS [20]. The community also has proposed much work [2], [5]–[11] for energy-efficient query processing.

Spatial search and spatial join methods have been proposed in works of a distributed Spatial Index (SPIX) [12] and energy-efficient spatial join processing [15] in sensor networks. However, spatial queries for two or more different sensor networks, which we call heterogeneous sensor networks, have not been much discussed. Heterogeneous sensor networks generally come together with different kinds of sensor nodes and different communication protocols. A typical spatial query example for two heterogeneous sensor networks is as follows:

(Q1) Consider two heterogeneous sensor networks, where one network consists of sensor nodes having physical sensors for humidity and thermometer monitoring and the other consists of sensor nodes having chemical sensors for CO, CO2, and SO2 monitoring. We assume two sensor networks are laid down in the same region. However, sensor nodes of two sensor networks were produced by different companies, were installed in different time and have been managed by different organizations. Therefore, the two heterogeneous sensor networks are unable to communicate with each other in wireless networking. Here, we want to collect a set of 6-tuples of the form <h, l, id1, c, l, id2> (which indicates humidity h of sensor node id1 in location l1 and CO density c of node id2 in location l2) that satisfies the following selection predicates and a spatial join predicate: h ≥ 60%, c ≥ 8 ppm and distance (n1, n2) ≤ 30 m. Here, distance (n1, n2) denotes a physical distance between nodes n1 and n2. Note that node n1 and node n2 are in different sensor networks. Informally speaking, this query finds a set of small areas together with their humidity and CO density where both humidity and CO density exceed certain threshold values.

To answer the query Q1, distributed spatial join processing should be performed to materialize a proximity relationship between sensor nodes n1 and n2.

In conventional spatial databases, the distributed spatial join query has been extensively studied for join processing of the large volume and high complexity of spatial data. However, conventional spatial join algorithms [13], [14], [21], [22] cannot be straightforwardly applied to distributed spatial join processing on sensor networks. Most of the conventional algorithms are based on centralized spatial indexes such as the R-tree and its variants (R*-tree, R*-tree). However, the centralized indexes cannot be built on distributed sensor nodes. Moreover, the performance of the conventional algorithms are compared on the total time (composed of CPU time, IO time, and transmission time of spatial query objects), while the performance in sensor networks are compared on the number of wireless transmissions among sensor nodes. In other words, the distributed spatial join algorithm in sensor networks focuses on raising
energy efficiency of sensor nodes by reducing the wireless transmissions.

In this paper, we propose an energy-efficient distributed spatial join algorithm on two sensor networks. We also propose two optimization schemes for performance improvement of the algorithm. They are a Grid-based Rectangle tree (GR-tree) and a grid-based approximation function which can reduce the number of wireless transmissions. We conducted extensive experiments on the proposed algorithm. The experimental results show that the proposed algorithm is effective and available in comparison with existing algorithms.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: In Sect. 2, we survey researches related to spatial search and spatial join methods that have been announced in conventional spatial databases and sensor networks. In Sect. 3, we propose a distributed spatial join algorithm and we also propose the GR-tree and a grid-based approximation function. In Sect. 4, we present the experimental results of our algorithm. In Sect. 5, we discuss the scalability of our algorithm and finally, we present our conclusions in Sect. 6.

2. Related Work

Lots of distributed spatial join algorithms have been proposed on conventional spatial database management systems (SDBMS). Abel et al. [14] proposed a distributed spatial join algorithm which is based on the spatial semijoin approach. Tan et al. [13] suggested a similar approach. Their experimental study shows that the semijoin-based algorithm provides useful reductions in the total processing time of a spatial join operation. However, the algorithms [13], [14] are not directly related with our problem which focuses on reducing energy consumption of sensor nodes.

Several in-network join methods in sensor networks have been presented. Abadi et al. [10] presented REED, a system for Robust and Efficient Event Detection in sensor networks. The key idea behind REED is to form a condition table for event detection, and then to distribute the table throughout the sensor network. Once the table has been disseminated, each node performs in-network joins between the table and its sensor readings. Here, if the table is too large to reside in any node’s memory, REED distributes fragments of the table into a sensor group which is composed of several nodes. The in-network join is cooperatively performed within the sensor group. REED shows significant energy savings through the in-network join, but it does not work well when the table is too large or the density of a sensor network is not sufficiently high. For an extension of REED, Jeon et al. [24] proposed HIPaG, called the Hybrid In-network join with join Paths and join Groups. Here, a join group is the same as a sensor group in REED. A join path is a sequence of nodes in a routing tree such that every two nodes of the sequence have a parent-child relationship and the union of fragments stored at all the nodes consists of the condition table. HIPaG also performs the in-network join between sensor readings and fragments of the condition table in such a way that it utilizes join groups in high density region and join paths in low density region of a sensor network. Gil et al. [23] proposed Scoop, a system for adaptive indexing and querying stored data in sensor networks. In Scoop, a base station dynamically builds a storage index using historical statistics about a rate of queries and distribution of sensor readings. A storage index maps sensor readings to node ID. After generating a storage index, a base station disseminates the index to all nodes and each node stores specific sensor readings according to the index. Using this index, queries can be answered from specific nodes, without flooding the queries throughout the network. Zhu et al. [16] proposed an algorithm for join processing of multiple sensor readings in a sensor network. They insist that their perpendicular approach should be load-balanced, communication-efficient, and should incur near-optimal transmission cost for the special case of binary joins in grid networks. Although these algorithms [10], [16], [23], [24] show good performance through the in-network join, they cannot be directly applied to our problem in the following reasons. First, the algorithms do not present a solution for spatial join processing. In other words, the algorithms never consider important features of SDBMS such as spatial filtering and distributed spatial indexing. Second, the algorithms do not support a geographical routing, which influences on the performance of spatial filtering. They assume that a certain routing protocol exists.

Recently, there have been several works for spatial search or join processing in sensor networks. Soheili et al. [12] proposed SPIX over a sensor network by constructing the spatial index of the R-tree [18] and its variant [19]. They also presented a distributed way of optimizing the SPIX to reduce energy consumption of sensor nodes during spatial search operation. The SPIX forms a geographical routing tree with distribution on sensor nodes. Their experimental study shows that the SPIX is efficient and scalable in processing spatial search. However, it is likely to incur much overlap among MBRs of intermediate sensor nodes when applying construction strategies of the R-tree to a sensor network as it is. Meka et al. [25] proposed a distributed spatio-temporal index structure for sensor networks called DIST to trace a moving object. In DIST, a sensor network is hierarchically decomposed into levels and there is a quad-tree like partitioning at each level. Each partitioning (called cell) has a leader and the leader is connected to its four quadrant leaders. Index updates and range query executions are executed by the leader. The leader dynamically updates time interval information about a moving object and propagates the information to its parent. DIST is efficient in a spatio-temporal range query for a moving object. However, it cannot be directly applied to our problem in several reasons. First, DIST’s assumption that each leader is connected to its quadrant leaders is not realistic for a large-scale sensor network. Second, DIST uses the existing greedy perimeter stateless routing (GPSR) algorithm, without presenting a geographical routing tree. Third, temporal index is dynamically optimized for a moving object,
but spatial index is fixed to the quad-tree. Yiu et al. [15] proposed an energy-efficient approach for in-network computation of a spatial join predicate in a single sensor network. This approach shows good performance for low-selectivity join queries having a short distance constraint less than a transmission distance of a sensor node. However, it is not directly related with our problem which handles distributed join among heterogeneous networks.

There have been many works on efficient in-network join or spatial query processing in a single sensor network. However the spatial join query between heterogeneous networks, which considers both distributed spatial index and a geographical routing, has not been much discussed.

3. Distributed Spatial Join Processing

A straightforward approach to perform a distributed spatial join between two sensor networks is to process selection predicates and a spatial join predicate at a server after acquiring all sensor readings. This approach called centralization, though simple, incurs high transmission cost in accessing all sensor nodes.

A simple optimization scheme for the centralized approach is to process a selection predicate in a network. This scheme pushes down a selection predicate to a sensor network like ACQP (ACquisitional Query Processor) [17] and the filtered sensor readings which satisfy the predicate are acquired to a server. Then, the server performs a spatial join predicate. Although this may reduce transmission cost spent in acquiring sensor readings through in-network processing of the selection predicate, it still spends high transmission cost in pushing down the predicate to nodes.

The second optimization scheme is to process a spatial join predicate as well as selection predicates in sensor networks. This scheme pushes down a spatial join predicate as well as selection predicates and the filtered sensor readings from spatially filtered nodes are acquired. In this scheme, we can find two research challenges.

- The first challenge is to find out an efficient in-network spatial search method which can filter out sensor nodes which never participate in the spatial join processing.
- In order for an in-network processing of the spatial join predicate, the spatial objects of one sensor network should be sent to the other network. However, this incurs high transmission cost. The second challenge is to find out an efficient method which can reduce the volume of the spatial objects.

In this section, we propose a distributed spatial join algorithm based on the second optimization scheme. We also propose the GR-tree and a grid-based approximation function for the two research challenges.

3.1 Distributed Spatial Join Algorithm

A distributed spatial join query between two sensor networks is defined as follows:

**Definition 1: Distributed Spatial Join Query (DQ).** Let $S N_1$ and $S N_2$ be two sensor networks. There is one tuple for a sensor node $n_i (n_i \in S N_1)$, where the tuple schema consists of an attribute for a sensor location and one or more attributes for sensor readings (i.e., temperature, humidity, CO$_2$, CO, etc.). We will use $n_i$ to denote a tuple for a sensor node of a sensor network $S N_1$ if there is no ambiguity. A distributed spatial join query for $S N_1$ and $S N_2$ is defined by $DQ = \{<n_1, n_2>| n_1 \in S N_1, n_2 \in S N_2 \text{ such that } f_1(n_1), f_2(n_2) \text{ and } g(n_1, n_2) \text{ are true.}\}$. Here, $f_1$ and $f_2$ are selection predicates for sensor readings and $g$ is a spatial join predicate for sensor locations. For instance, in the query Q1 described in Sect. 1, $h \geq 60\%$ is $f_1$, $c \geq 8$ ppm is $f_2$ and distance $(n_1, n_2) \leq 30$ m is $g$.

Our proposed distributed spatial join algorithm which uses a spatial semijoin [14] concept is as follows:

**Algorithm 1: Distributed Spatial Join Algorithm Using Spatial Semijoin**

**Input:** Two sensor networks $S N_1$ and $S N_2$ with sensor locations $L_1$ and $L_2$, respectively.

**Output:** A set of $<n_1, n_2>$ that satisfies selection predicates $f_1$ and $f_2$ and a spatial join predicate $g$.

**Step 1:** First, a server acquires all sensor tuples $R$ from $S N_1$, which satisfy a selection predicate $f_1$. $R = \{n_1 | n_1 \in S N_1 \text{ such that } f_1(n_1) \text{ is true.}\}$.

**Step 2:** Then $R$ is projected on a spatial attribute $L_2$ at a server and a result set $R' \text{ is created. } R' = \{r | r \in R \}$. The second optimization scheme is to process a spatial join predicate $g$. $R'' = \{T(r') | r' \in R'\}$. $T$ is a one-to-one mapping function such that each record of $R'$ is mapped into a record in $R''$.

**Step 3:** Each record $r. L_1$ is mapped into a two-dimensional object in order to apply a spatial join predicate $g$. $R'' = \{T(r') | r' \in R'\}$. $T$ is a one-to-one mapping function such that each record of $R'$ is mapped into a record in $R''$.

**Step 4:** Then records of $R''$ are mapped into a spatially approximated object for spatial semijoin processing. $R'' = \{P(r') | r' \in R''\}$. $P$ is a many-to-one spatial approximation function such that one or several records of $R''$ are mapped into a spatial query object of $R''$.

**Step 5:** A server pushes down $R''$ and $f_2$ to $S N_2$ and then acquires sensor tuples $S$ from $S N_2$, which satisfy a selection predicate $f_2$ and a spatial semijoin predicate. $S = \{n_2 | n_2 \in S N_2 \text{ such that } f_2(n_2) \text{ is true.}\}$.

**Step 6:** A server performs a refinement phase of a spatial join predicate $g$ between $R$ and $S$ and a final result $F$ is created. $F = \{r, s | r \in R, s \in S \text{ such that } g(r, s) \text{ is true.}\}$

Figure 1 shows a processing sequence of this algorithm when processing the query Q1.

In Step 3, for example, each record $l_1$ in the query Q1 having a spatial join predicate of distance $(n_1, n_2) \leq 30$ m is mapped into a circle object whose center is $l_1$ and radius is 30 m. In Step 4, a representative spatial approximation is MBR-based approximation which maps high complexity of spatial objects into MBR (Minimum Bounding Rectangle)
Fig. 1 Processing sequence of the distributed spatial join algorithm: (a) a server acquires $R = \{4, 5, 7\}$ from $SN_1$, which satisfies $f_1$, (b) a server makes a spatially approximated objects $RP = \{\alpha, \beta, \gamma\}$ and then pushes down $RP$ and $f_2$ to $SN_2$, (c) a server acquires $S = \{a, b, d, h, j\}$ from $SN_2$, which satisfies $f_2$ and a spatial semijoin predicate, and (d) a server performs a refinement phase of a spatial join predicate $g$ between $R$ and $S$ and gives a final result set $F = \{\langle 4, j \rangle, \langle 5, d \rangle, \langle 7, a \rangle, \langle 7, b \rangle\}$. Here, an element $h$ of $S$ is filtered out in the final result.

Fig. 2 A GR-tree index structure and spatial search process: (a) sensor nodes and their fixed grid addresses, (b) GR-tree index structure and spatial query objects (spatially approximated objects) $R^D = \{\alpha, \beta, \gamma\}$, and (c) spatial search process using the GR-tree.
node. Here, the parent has to wait until its child nodes return their result, before it returns its result.

**Step 2:** Searching leaf sensor nodes

If \( n \) is a leaf sensor node in the GR-tree, check the \( n \) to determine whether the \( n \)'s location intersects with \( s \). If so, the \( n \)'s location and ID are returned to its parent node.

As shown in Fig. 2 (b) and 2 (c), spatial searches with the query objects \( \{\alpha, \beta, \gamma\} \) can be performed using the Algorithm 2. A base station checks that MBRs of \( E_A, E_G, E_K \) intersect with \( \alpha, \beta, \gamma \). Then, \( \alpha \) and \( \beta \) are forwarded to sensor node \( A \) through the GR-tree. As the same way, \( \alpha \) and \( \beta \) are forwarded to sensor node \( B \) and \( E \), respectively. Finally, the base station receives a result \( \{B, F\} \). Here, we can observe that our spatial searches reduce the wireless transmissions by visiting only \( \{A, B, E, F\} \) instead of all sensor nodes.

### 3.2.3 Building the GR-Tree

In construction of the GR-tree, we assume that sensor nodes are stationary and location-aware. We also assume all sensor nodes are deployed at a fixed area which is divided into equal-sized fixed grids. The GR-tree is built in a different manner compared with the R-tree because of the following properties.

- Base station doesn’t know locations of all sensor nodes. Each sensor node only knows its own location.
- GR-tree is built with considering geographical routing topology as well as spatial proximity among nodes.
- GR-tree index is stored with distribution on nodes.

The GR-tree is built using an advertisement and a parent selection phase. In the advertisement phase, each sensor node broadcasts an advertisement message to other sensor nodes in order to find its candidate parents and candidate children. The advertisement message \( M \) includes a node ID (\( nid \)), a tree depth (\( d \)), and location (\( l_b \)) of the advertiser and location (\( l_s \)) of the base station. In the parent selection phase, each sensor node selects its parent node among the candidate parents, which best fits both the spatial proximity and the geographical routing.

Advertisement phase starts from a base station. The base station broadcasts an advertisement message to sensor nodes in its transmission range. After receiving the message, the sensor nodes advertise themselves to other sensor nodes. This advertisement phase continues until all sensor nodes receive advertisement messages. In this phase, each sensor node performs the following works:

#### Algorithm 3: Advertisement

**Input:** Two sensor nodes \( n_1, n_2 \) and \( n_1 \)'s advertisement message \( M = \langle nid, d, l_b, l_s \rangle \)

**Output:** \( n_1 \)'s candidate children and \( n_2 \)'s candidate parents

- **Step 1:** A sensor node \( n_2 \) receives an advertisement message \( M \) from a sensor node \( n_1 \). \( n_2 \) reviews if there is an equal sensor node ID in its candidate child list for a given \( nid \). If there exist, \( n_2 \) completes this phase.

- **Step 2:** Otherwise, \( n_2 \) computes its grid address and tree depth. The grid address is easily computed using \( n_2 \)'s location, the fixed grid size and the overall area size. The tree depth is computed by adding one to \( d \).

- **Step 3:** Then, \( n_2 \) adds \( M \) to its candidate parent list and returns an acknowledgement including its node ID to \( n_1 \).

- **Step 4:** \( n_1 \) adds \( n_2 \)'s node ID to its candidate child list.

In Step 1, \( n_2 \)'s review process is performed in order to avoid cross advertisements between \( n_1 \) and \( n_2 \). It prevents a cycle in the GR-tree. In Step 2, we assume that each sensor node already knows the overall area size and a fixed grid size. Here, we set a transmission distance of a node to be a fixed grid size through experimental experiences. After the Step 3 and 4 is completed, \( n_1 \) and \( n_2 \) are going to have a candidate child list and a candidate parent list, respectively.

Parent selection phase starts from leaf sensor nodes that have no candidate children. If a node has candidate children, it waits until its children determine their parent. This parent selection continues until all sensor nodes select their parent. The base station is selected as the last parent. In this phase, a sensor node performs the following works:

#### Algorithm 4: Parent Selection

**Input:** A sensor node \( n \) having a candidate parent list

**Output:** GR-tree index structure

- **Step 1:** \( n \) finds sensor nodes \( S \) from its candidate parent list, whose locations are within \( n \)'s grid and tree depths are both less than \( n \)'s tree depth and a minimum among \( S \). Here, \( n \)'s grid is a fixed grid including \( n \).

- **Step 2:** After completing Step 1, if there is only one sensor node in \( S \), \( n \) selects the sensor node as its parent. If there are two or more sensor nodes in \( S \), \( n \) determines a sensor node as its parent, which has minimum distance to a base station. If \( S \) is empty, Step 1 and Step 2 are repeated using \( n \)'s neighboring grids instead of \( n \)'s grid.

- **Step 3:** \( n \) stores the parent and removes the candidate parent list. Then, \( n \) sends its entry to the parent.

- **Step 4:** The parent adds \( n \)'s entry information to its child list and updates its MBR in order to include \( n \)'s MBR.

In Step 1, we should note that the sensor node \( n \) first finds its parent in the grid including \( n \). It enables the GR-tree to preserve spatial proximity among sensor nodes when building a geographical routing tree. In Step 2, when \( S \) is empty, the algorithm finds a parent from sensor nodes which are within \( n \)'s neighboring grids. As shown in Fig. 3, a grid has at most eight neighboring grids and the search order for the eight grids makes a great influence on a GR-tree index. For the search order, we basically give higher priority to a grid which is near to a base station in order to reduce a depth of the GR-tree as shown in Fig. 3 (a). However, as shown in Fig. 3 (b) and 3 (c), we adapt a new parent selection criterion in the GR-tree. The new criterion gives higher priority to a grid which is adjacent to a straight line rather than a grid which is near to a base station. We adapt this criterion...
includes MBR

Input

Algorithm 5: Insertion

Output: A GR-tree index structure excluding a failed node

step 2: Sensor nodes that hear the request sends their advertisement message $M$ to $n$. $n$ adds the messages $Ms$ to its candidate parent list and computes its grid address and tree depth like the advertisement algorithm.

Step 3: For $n$’s candidate parent list, the parent selection algorithm is invoked and its parent is determined.

Step 4: If the MBR of $n$’s parent have been updated in Step 3, MBR updating is propagated from the parent to the base station until the updating doesn’t happen.

However, a deletion is not simple like the insertion. First, a sensor node failure should be found. In this paper, we find a sensor node failure using a technique which is used in the SPIX [12]. In brief, we set a timeout period on sensor nodes. When the timeout period expires, the sensor nodes verify parent-child relationships. If a parent node finds a child node that doesn’t respond to the verification, the parent determines that the child has failed. On the contrary, if a child finds a parent that doesn’t respond to the verification, the child determines that the parent has failed. Second, if a sensor node failure happens, a deletion algorithm is performed as follows:

Algorithm 6: Deletion

Input: A sensor node $n_1$ and its child node $n_2$

Output: A GR-tree index structure excluding a failed node

Step 1: If $n_2$ fails to respond, $n_1$ updates its MBR in order to exclude $n_2$’s MBR. Then, if $n_1$’s MBR is changed, MBR updating is propagated to the base station.

Step 2: If $n_1$ fails to respond, $n_2$ performs the insertion algorithm. If $n_2$’s new parent is determined from the insertion, $n_2$ completes the deletion algorithm.

Step 3: Otherwise, $n_2$ propagates an insertion message to its vicinity nodes $n_{vs}$ and receives acknowledgements including $n_{vs}$’s IDs. Here, $n_{vs}$ adds $n_2$ to its candidate child list and $n_2$ adds $n_{vs}$’s IDs to its candidate parent list.

Step 4: Each node of $n_{vs}$ performs the insertion algorithm. If each node of $n_{vs}$ finds its parent, it sends $<ID,true>$ message to $n_2$. Otherwise, it sends $<ID,false>$ message to $n_2$ and hierarchically propagates an insertion message to its vicinity nodes until its parent is found.

Step 5: If $n_2$ receives $<ID,false>$, $n_2$ removes a node having the ID from its candidate parent list. If $n_2$ receives $<ID,true>$, $n_2$ keeps its candidate parent list. After receiving all messages for $n_3$’s candidate parent list, $n_2$ performs the parent selection algorithm.

When a child node $n_2$ fails, $n_2$’s deletion can be simply performed as shown in Step 1. When a parent node $n_1$ fails, there is no overhead if $n_2$’s new parent is directly determined as shown in Step 2. However, if an insertion message is hierarchically propagated to $n_2$’s vicinity nodes in order to find a new parent, the deletion algorithm is likely to spend too much transmission cost in Step 3–5. Therefore, we should note that frequent node failures may spend much transmission cost in maintaining the GR-tree.

in order to minimize the overlap among MBRs of intermediate sensor nodes in a GR-tree index structure. For example, Fig. 4 illustrates an ideal GR-tree index structure using our new criterion, which has no overlap among MBRs. Here, we assume the MBRs coincide with the borders of fixed grids as an ideal case of the GR-tree. In Fig. 4 (a), a node in a grid 5 originally should find its parent from the grid 10. However, our criterion finds a parent in the grid 6, according to the search order as shown in Fig. 3 (c). Then this criterion creates an MBR $e$ in a parent level of the node, which includes MBR $a$, $b$, and $c$. The MBR $e$ never overlaps with MBR $d$ and $f$ which are also created by the new criterion. After the parent selection is repeated to the base station, it comes to maintain children having MBR $h$, $g$, and $i$ which have no overlap, as shown in Fig. 4 (c).

In the performance study, we will show you how the GR-tree contributes to reducing the wireless transmissions.

3.2.4 Maintaining the GR-Tree

Although we assume sensor nodes are stationary, sometimes a sensor node may fail to respond or a new sensor node may be added to a sensor network. In this case, the GR-tree should be updated through an insertion and a deletion phase. Our insertion algorithm can be easily performed using the advertisement and the parent selection algorithm as follows:

Algorithm 5: Insertion

Input: A new sensor node $n$ and a GR-tree index structure

Output: GR-tree index structure including a sensor node $n$

Step 1: A sensor node $n$ broadcasts a message to its vicinity nodes and requests for advertisement.
3.3 Proposed Spatial Approximation Function

We use a grid-based approximation function for the optimization of Step 4. The grid-based approximation function is used to map two dimensional query objects into a small volume of fixed grid addresses. Figure 5 shows an example of the grid-based approximation compared with the conventional MBR-based approximation. In Fig. 5, the left side shows raw spatial query objects \( S \), the middle shows a result set \( S_M \) of the MBR-based approximation, and the right side shows a result set \( S_G \) of the grid-based approximation.

As shown in Fig. 5 (a), under skewed distribution of the \( S \), we can see that the grid-based approximation is more efficient than the MBR-based approximation. When we assume that a numeric value needs 4 bytes, the former forms only 16 bytes (4 grid addresses \( \times \) 4 bytes) while the latter forms 256 bytes (16 MBR \( \times \) 4 coordinates \( \times \) 4 bytes). However, if the \( S \) is randomly distributed as shown in Fig. 5 (b), we can see the grid-based approximation may incur high transmission cost, since the search area occupied by \( S_G \) is significantly increased. In the performance study, we will show you how the proposed approximation function can contribute to reducing the wireless transmissions.

4. Performance Study

We executed a performance study on the distributed spatial join algorithm to answer the following questions:

- Is the proposed algorithm effective in comparison with naive and conventional algorithms?
- Is the proposed algorithm available for wireless sensor networks?

4.1 Experimental Setup

In the experiments, we performed the query Q1 having proximity relationship between two sensor networks \( SN_1 \) and \( SN_2 \). The performance was compared on the number of transmission messages. The transmission messages include messages for sending \( f_1 \) to \( SN_1 \), messages for receiving a result \( R \) from \( SN_1 \), messages for sending \( f_2 \) and \( R^T \) to \( SN_2 \), and messages for receiving a result \( S \) from \( SN_2 \). Thus, the total transmission messages are computed, as follows:

\[
N_{total} = N_{1, total} + N_{2, total} \\
N_{1, total} = N_{1, sending} + N_{1, receiving} \\
N_{2, total} = N_{2, sending} + N_{2, receiving},
\]

where \( N_{i, sending} \) and \( N_{i, receiving} \) represent the number of messages spent in sending and receiving, respectively \( (i = 1, 2) \).

In the experiments, we measure only \( N_{2, total} \) as our performance metric, since all join algorithms spend the same \( N_{1, total} \) in visiting all sensor nodes of \( SN_1 \).

In order for a performance study, we compared our algorithm with the following algorithms.

- DJ-GT-M: This is the proposed join algorithm that uses the GR-tree and the MBR-based approximation.
- DJ-GT-G: This is the proposed join algorithm that uses the GR-tree and the grid-based approximation.
- DJ-CA (Centralized Approach): This is the most naive algorithm which performs a distributed spatial join query at a server. This algorithm has to visit all sensor nodes of two sensor networks. If this algorithm runs without a distributed index, its transmission cost will be increased exponentially due to the flooding of the transmission messages. So, we assume this algorithm runs on the GR-tree.
- DJ-SP-A (Area)/DJ-SP-P (Perimeter): This is an algorithm that uses the existing SPIX and the MBR-based approximation. In [12], SP-A means the SPIX that uses the least MBR area enlargement and SP-P means the SPIX that uses the least MBR perimeter enlargement as a parent selection criterion.
- DJ-CPS (Closest Parent Selection): This is an algorithm that uses the distributed spatial index that focuses on reducing an average tree depth. In this index, a node chooses a candidate as its parent, which has the minimum distance to a base station among candidates.

Figure 6 illustrates several distributed spatial indexes that are used in the above algorithms for the same sensor nodes.

In the experiments, we intentionally created various spatial query objects (results of \( SN_1 \)) which are pushed down to \( SN_2 \). The spatial query objects were created by reflecting the following experimental constraints: number of sensor nodes, distribution of spatial query objects, size of spatial query objects, number of spatial query objects, packet size, and transmission distance of a sensor node. Detail descriptions about the constraints are summarized in Table 1. We also created a simulated sensor network for \( SN_2 \).
Fig. 6 Distributed spatial indexes for a sensor network: (a) the GR-tree, (b) the CPS, (c) the SPIX based on MBR area enlargement, (d) the SPIX based on MBR perimeter enlargement.

Table 1 Experimental constraints.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constraints</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of sensor nodes</td>
<td>Sensor nodes of SN are randomly placed in a whole area of 2,000 × 2,000 meters. The number of sensor nodes is varied from 1,000 to 10,000. Unless otherwise stated, the default number is set to 5,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution of spatial query objects (Area ratio)</td>
<td>In the experiments, the distribution of the spatial query objects (R²) means an area ratio which can be maximally occupied by the objects without overlapping. The area ratio to the whole area is varied from 1/256 to 1. Unless otherwise stated, two distributions are used. The first is a skewed distribution having the ratio of 1/16 where the query objects should be placed within one-sixteenth area of whole area. The second is a random distribution having the ratio of 1 where the query objects can be placed anywhere of whole area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of spatial query objects (Distance)</td>
<td>In the query Q1, the size of the spatial query objects is determined by $\text{distance}(n_i, n_j) &lt; d$. For example, the size becomes $d$ meters in the Q1. In the experiments, the size is varied from 25 to 200 meters. Unless otherwise stated, a default size is set to 50 meters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of spatial query objects (Selectivity)</td>
<td>In the query Q1, the number of the query objects is influenced by selectivity of the selection predicate $f_i$. For example, if the selectivity is 10% and number of nodes in SN, the number of the query objects will be 500. In the experiments, the number is varied from 50 to 500. Unless otherwise stated, a default number is set to 100.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Packet size</td>
<td>Packets that contains the $R^2$ are pushed down to SN, as described in Step 5 of Algorithm 1. In the experiments, a packet size is varied from 32 to 2,048 bytes. Unless otherwise stated, the default size is set to 128 bytes in consideration of a wireless communication protocol such as the IEEE 802.15.4 specification.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transmission distance of a sensor node</td>
<td>In the experiments, we assume that the transmission distances of all sensor nodes are the same. The transmission distance is varied from 50 to 275 meters. Unless otherwise stated, a default distance is set to 100 meters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 7 Comparisons of distributed spatial join algorithms with varying number of sensor nodes of $SN_2$: (a) random distribution and (b) skewed distribution of $SN_2$.

In $SN_2$, sensor nodes are randomly placed in a whole area of $2,000 \times 2,000$ meters.

4.2 Experimental Results for Effectiveness of the Proposed Algorithm

To study the effectiveness of the proposed algorithms, we conducted four experiments using the following constraints: number of sensor nodes, distribution of spatial query objects, size of spatial query objects, and number of spatial query objects.

The first experiment was performed in order to show that the proposed algorithms are effective in terms of the scalability on the number of sensor nodes. We measured $N_{2,total}$ with random and skewed distribution when the number of sensor nodes are 1,000, 5,000, and 10,000. The results are summarized in Fig. 7, where the lower and upper bars represent $N_{2,sending}$ and $N_{2,receiving}$, respectively.

As shown in Fig. 7, the proposed DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G perform best in most cases. We can also observe that the performance gap between the proposed algorithms and the others is sharply increased when $no_2$ is increased. This is because the GR-tree can support efficient spatial search by minimizing overlap between MBRs of sensor nodes, while the other algorithms degrades performance of spatial search in proportion to $no_2$. In Fig. 7(a), we can observe that DJ-CA tends to be more efficient than DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G, when $no_2$ is 1,000. This is because
performance loss caused by multiple packets transmission overwhelms performance gain obtained by spatial searches of the GR-tree. DJ-CA transmits only a packet (composed of 128 bytes) which includes a selection predicate $f_2$, while the others transmit at least thirteen packets which include not only $f_2$, but also $R^p$ composed of 100 rectangle objects ($100 \times 4$ coordinates $\times$ 4 bytes). In Fig. 7 (b), we can observe that DJ-GT-G outperforms the others. Note that the grid-based approximation is more efficient than the MBR-based approximation in skewed distribution. From this experiment, we can find that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G has better scalability to the number of sensor nodes.

To study the effect of the distribution of query objects, we conducted the second experiment with varying the distribution from $1/256$ to 1. Figure 8 shows the result.

As shown in Fig. 8, DJ-CA shows the same performance. This is because DJ-CA always has to visit all sensor nodes, irrespective of varying distributions of $R^p$. We can also observe that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G shows good performance compared with the others. Here, the size and the number of spatial query objects were set to 50 m and 100, respectively. It means that the small size and small number of spatial query objects compared with the whole area of $2,000 \times 2,000$ meters will not have a bad effect on the performance of DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G, although the query objects are widely distributed throughout the whole area. This is because the GR-tree can support outstanding spatial filtering by minimizing overlap between MBRs of sensor nodes, unless the query objects occupy too much area. If the area occupied by the query objects is getting close to the whole area, we think DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G performs worse than DJ-CA. In the next experiments, we will show you what is going on this issue.

To study the effect of the increase of the area occupied by the query objects, we conducted two experiments with varying the size of spatial query objects from 25 to 100 meters and with varying the number of the query objects from 50 to 500. Figure 9 and Fig. 10 show the results.

From Fig. 9 and Fig. 10, we can observe that two results have a somewhat similar pattern. In random distribution, the performance of all algorithms is getting worse than DJ-CA, when the total area occupied by the query objects is greatly increased. Even DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G is getting worse than the DJ-CA. This is because a spatial query on wide area cannot obtain performance gain from spatial filtering, no matter how the GR-tree supports outstanding spatial filtering as R*-tree in SDBMS does. In skewed distribution, however, DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G generally performs better than DJ-CA. Also, we can observe that DJ-GT-G outperforms the others. This is because the total query area can be maximally increased up to only 1/16 to the whole area in skewed distribution, as it was defined in Table 1. Moreover, DJ-GT-G consumes lower cost in $N_{2,\text{sending}}$ than DJ-GT-M. Note that the grid-based approximation is more efficient than the MBR-based approximation in skewed distribution.

From the four experiments, we can find that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G largely outperform the others. We can also find that DJ-GT-G performs best in skewed distribution. When considering practical situations such as military or environmental applications where lots of sensor nodes are widely deployed, selectivity for a spatial query is low and spatial query objects are in skewed distribution, we should note that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G perform better than the others. On the contrary, in case of less sensor nodes deployment at a small region, high selectivity of a spatial query and wide distribution of spatial query objects, we should note that DJ-CA may perform better than DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G. Healthcare application for defined patients can be an example for this case.
In other words, we cannot predict $N$ is a tradeoff concerned with the transmission distance, we can find that there degrade performance of a spatial search. Therefore, concerning the transmission distance, we can find that there is a tradeoff between the tree depth and the spatial proximity. In other words, we cannot predict $N_{\text{total}}$ for the changes of the transmission distance. Figure 12 shows the results for varying the transmission distance from 50 to 275 meters.

As shown in Fig. 12, DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G performs best in most cases fortunately, although there is a tradeoff between the tree depth and the spatial proximity. However, we can observe that DJ-CA tends to be more efficient than DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G when the distance is too short (below about 50 meters). This is because the short transmission distance prevents building an optimized GR-tree index structure. In other words, it means that a node cannot select a parent which optimizes the GR-tree index, since the node has few candidate parents. Here, the GR-tree is likely to form a general routing tree rather than a geographical routing tree.

From the two experiments, we can find that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G are generally efficient than the others. Especially, when we consider practical situations of the packet size of 128 bytes and the transmission distance of 100 meters, we can observe that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G can be directly applied to specific applications which deploy many sensor nodes. Here, we refer to a standard such as IEEE 802.15.4 specification for the practical situations. However, in case the transmission distance becomes too short in random distribution of spatial query objects, DJ-CA is more applicable to applications. This is because the parent selection for GR-tree optimization is closely related with the transmission distance.

5. Discussion

Until now we showed that our algorithms can be used at a distributed spatial join processing between two sensor networks. In addition, the algorithms can be applied to a distributed spatial join processing between a network and a spatial database. The example query is as follows:

(Q2) Consider a sensor network and a spatial database, where the network consists of sensor nodes for CO density monitoring and the database consists of a cadastral map having factories information. We want to collect a set of tuples of the form $<c, l, id_1, f, g>$ (which indicates CO density $c$ of sensor node $id_1$ in location $l$ and factory geometry $g$...
of factory name \( f \)) that satisfies the following conditions: 
\[ c \geq 8 \text{ ppm and within } (g, l) \]. Here, within \((g, l)\) means that the node location \( l \) is contained in the factory geometry \( g \). Informally speaking, this query finds a set of factories with their CO density where CO density exceeds a certain threshold value.

This query can be computed by replacing \( SN_i \) with a spatial database in Step 1 and by omitting Step 3 in the Algorithm 1. In the query Q2, we should note that the spatial approximation function of Step 4 plays more important role in processing a join query, since the factory information has more complex type of spatial objects.

6. Conclusion

In this paper, we presented the distributed spatial join algorithm using a spatial semijoin concept. In order to optimize the algorithm, we also proposed the GR-tree and the grid-based approximation function. The GR-tree can determine whether any of the sensor nodes have to participate in the in-network spatial join. The grid-based approximation can reduce the volume of spatial query objects which are pushed down to a sensor network.

Our experimental results showed that DJ-GT-M and DJ-GT-G generally outperform the others in situations where many sensor nodes are widely distributed, the selectivity for a spatial query is low, and the packet size and the transmission distance of a node is not too small. Therefore, we can apply the proposed algorithms to environmental and military applications which require wide deployment of many sensor nodes. However, our proposed algorithms cannot be applied to applications which incur the following situations:

- Too small number of nodes are sparsely deployed,
- Many packets transmissions are required owing to too small packet size,
- Too many results are selected owing to large-sized and large number of spatial query objects,
- Frequent sensor nodes failures happen in a network.

We plan to extend this work in two directions. First, we would like to extend our algorithms to continuous spatial join processing. We expect that a dynamic update scheme which is related to the GR-tree will be needed for the continuous join processing. Second, we will modify the GR-tree algorithm to support mobility of sensor nodes. We think that a new method that can preserve the GR-tree consistently on mobile nodes at low cost will be needed.

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References


Min Soo Kim received the B.S. and M.S. degrees in Computer Science from Pusan National University, Pusan, Korea in 1994 and 1996, respectively. Since 1996, he has been a research member of Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI). He is also a Ph. D. student in the Department of Computer Science, KAIST, Daejeon, Korea. His research interests include Wireless Sensor Networks, GeoSensor Networks, sensor network database, spatial database and ubiquitous computing.

Jin Hyun Son received Ph.D degree in Computer Science from KAIST, Daejeon in 2001 and M.S. degree in Computer Engineering from KAIST in 1998. He received B.S. degree in Computer Science from Sogang University in 1996. He is currently a professor in the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Hanyang University, Ansan, Korea. His research interests include business process management, database, distributed systems, and ubiquitous systems.

Ju Wan Kim received Ph.D degree in Computer Science from Chungnam National University, Daejeon in 2004 and the B.S. and M.S. degrees in Computer Engineering from Pusan National University, Pusan, Korea in 1993 and 1995, respectively. He has joined Electronic and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI) from 1995. He is currently a team leader in ETRI. His research interests include Wireless Sensor Networks, GIS, LBS, Telematics, and GeoSensor networks.

Myoung Ho Kim received Ph.D degree in Computer Science from Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, USA and the B.S. and M.S. degrees in Computer Engineering from Seoul National University, Seoul, Korea in 1982 and 1984, respectively. He is currently a professor in the Department of Computer Science, KAIST, Daejeon, Korea. In 1995, he was a visiting professor of University of Virginia. His research interests include database, distributed systems, XML, multimedia, sensor networks. He is a member of KISS and IEEE.