A Community Based Mobility Model for Ad Hoc Network Research

Mirco Musolesi
Department of Computer Science
University College London
Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
United Kingdom
m.musolesi@cs.ucl.ac.uk

Cecilia Mascolo
Department of Computer Science
University College London
Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT
United Kingdom
c.mascolo@cs.ucl.ac.uk

ABSTRACT

Validation of mobile ad hoc network protocols relies almost exclusively on simulation. The value of the validation is, therefore, highly dependent on how realistic the movement models used in the simulations are. Since there is a very limited number of available real traces in the public domain, synthetic models for movement pattern generation must be used. However, most widely used models are currently very simplistic, their focus being ease of implementation rather than soundness of foundation. As a consequence, simulation results of protocols are often based on randomly generated movement patterns and, therefore, may differ considerably from those that can be obtained by deploying the system in real scenarios. Movement is strongly affected by the needs of humans to socialise or cooperate, in one form or another. Fortunately, humans are known to associate in particular ways that can be mathematically modelled and that have been studied in social sciences for years.

In this paper we propose a new mobility model founded on social network theory. The model allows collections of hosts to be grouped together in a way that is based on social relationships among the individuals. This grouping is then mapped to a topographical space, with movements influenced by the strength of social ties that may also change in time.

We have validated our model with real traces by showing that the synthetic mobility traces are a very good approximation of human movement patterns.

General Terms

Experimentation, Design

Categories and Subject Descriptors

C.2.1 [**Network Architecture and Design**]: Wireless Communication; C.4 [**Performance of Systems**]: Modelling techniques

Keywords

Mobility model, mobile ad hoc networking, social networks

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1. INTRODUCTION

The definition of realistic mobility models is one of the most critical and, at the same time, difficult aspects of the simulation of applications and systems designed for mobile environments. Currently, there are very few and very recent public data banks capturing node movement in real large-scale mobile ad hoc environments.

For example, researchers at Intel Research Laboratory in Cambridge and the University of Cambridge distributed Bluetooth devices to people, in order to collect data about human movements and to study the characteristics of the co-location patterns among people. These experiments were firstly conducted among students and researchers in Cambridge [4] and then among the participants of InfoCom 2005 [9]. Other similar projects are the Wireless Topology Discovery project at the UCSD [16] and the campus-wide WaveLan traffic measurement and analysis exercises that have been carried out at Dartmouth College [6]. At this institution, a project with the aim of creating a repository of publicly available traces for the mobile networking community has also been started [13].

Until now, in general, real movement traces have been rarely used for evaluation and testing of protocols and systems for mobile networks, with the only exception of [26] and [8], in which the authors used, respectively, the movement traces collected from a campus scenario and direct empirical observations of the movements of pedestrians in downtown Osaka as a basis of the design of their models.

In general, synthetic models have been largely preferred [3]. The reasons of this choice are many. First of all, as mentioned, the available data are limited. Second, these traces are related to very specific scenarios and their validity is difficult to generalize. However, as we will discuss later in the paper, these data show surprising common statistical characteristics, such as the same distribution of the duration of the contacts and inter-contacts intervals. Third, the available traces do not allow for sensitivity analysis of the performance of the algorithm, since the values of the parameters that characterize the simulation scenarios, such as the distribution of the speed or the density of the hosts, cannot be varied. Finally, in some cases, it may be important to have a mathematical model that underlines the movement of the hosts in simulations, in order to study its impact on the design of protocols and systems.

Many mobility models for the generation of synthetic traces have been presented (a survey can be found in [3]). The most widely used of such models are based on random individual movement; the simplest, the Random Walk mobility model (equivalent to Brownian motion), is used to represent pure random movements of the entities of a system [5]. A slight enhancement of this is the Random Way-Point mobility model [11], in which pauses are introduced between changes in direction or speed. More recently, a large number of more sophisticated mobility models for ad hoc network research have been presented [2, 10, 14].

However, all synthetic movement models are suspect because it is quite difficult to assess to what extent they map reality. It is not hard to see, even only with empirical observations, that the random mobility models generate behaviour that is most unhuman-like. This analysis is confirmed by the examination of the available real traces. As we will discuss later in this paper, mobility models based on random mechanisms generate traces that show properties (such as the duration of the contacts between the mobile nodes and the inter-contacts time) very distant from those extracted from real scenarios.

Our work is based on a simple observation. In mobile ad hoc networks, mobile devices are usually carried by humans, so the movement of such devices is necessarily based on human decisions and socialization behaviour. For instance, it is important to model the behaviour of individuals moving in groups and between groups, as clustering is likely in the typical ad hoc networking deployment scenarios of disaster relief teams, platoons of soldiers, groups of vehicles, etc. In order to capture this type of behaviour, we define a model for group mobility that is heavily dependent on the structure of the relationships among the people carrying the devices. Existing group mobility models fail to capture this social dimension [3].

Fortunately, in recent years, social networks have been investigated in considerable detail, both in sociology and in other areas, most notably mathematics and physics. In fact, in the recent years, various types of networks (such as the Internet, the World Wide Web and biological networks) have been investigated by researchers especially in the statistical physics community. Theoretical models have been developed to reproduce the properties of these networks, such as the so-called small worlds model proposed by Watts and Strogatz [28] or various scale-free models [21, 27]. Excellent reviews of the recent progress in complex and social networks analysis may be found in [1] and [21].

However, as discussed by Newman and Park in [23], social networks appear to be fundamentally different from other types of networked systems. In particular, even if social networks present typical small-worlds behaviour in terms of the average distance between pairs of individuals (the so-called *average path length*), they show a greater level of clustering. In particular, in [23] the authors observe that the level of clustering seen in many non-social systems is no greater than in those generated using pure random models. Instead in social networks, clustering appears to be far greater than in networks based on stochastic models. The authors suggest that this is strictly related to the fact that humans usually organize themselves into *communities*. Examples of social networks used for these studies are rather diverse and include, for instance, networks of coauthorships of scientists [20] and the actors in films with Kevin Bacon [28].

In this paper, we propose a new mobility model that is founded on social network theory. One of the inputs of the mobility model is the social network that links the individuals carrying the mobile devices based on these results in order to generate realistic synthetic network structures [28] . The model allows collections of hosts to be grouped together in a way that is based on social relationships among the individuals. This grouping is only then mapped to a topographical space, with topography biased by the strength of social ties. The movements of the hosts are also driven by the social relationships among them. The model also allows for the definition of different types of relationships during a certain period of time (i.e., a day or a week). For instance, it might be important to be able to describe that in the morning and in the afternoon of weekdays, relationships at the workplace are more

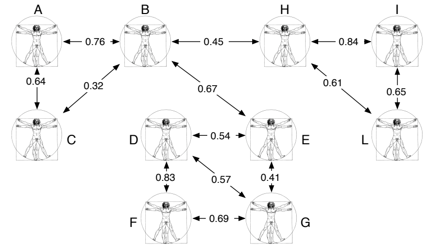

Figure 1: Example of social network.

important than friendships and family one, whereas the opposite is true during the evenings and weekends.

We evaluate our model using real mobility traces provided by Intel Research Laboratory in Cambridge and we show that the model provides a good approximation of real movements in terms of some fundamental parameters, such as the distribution of the contacts duration and inter-contacts time. In particular, the data show that an approximate power law holds over a large range of values for the inter-contacts time. Instead, contacts duration distribution follows a power law for a more limited range. These characteristics of distribution are also very similar to those observed by the researchers at the University of California at San Diego and Dartmouth College [4].

The proposed model is partially based on the work presented in [17]. With respect to that short paper, targeted to the simulation of mobile ad hoc networks, many aspects of the model have been revised to try to map reality with more accuracy. More specifically, in this work the formation of the groups is based on an algorithm for the detection of communities in social networks [19]. The placement of the groups and the dynamics of the hosts in the geographic space have also been completely re-designed. Furthermore, this paper presents a thorough evaluation of the model and a comparison with real traces, which is not presented in [17].

The paper has the following structure: Section 2 shows how these results can be used to design a social network founded mobility model. Section 3 illustrates the results of the evaluation of the model based on the comparison with real traces. In Section 4 we compare the proposed mobility model with the current state of the art. Section 5 concludes the paper, summarizing the original contribution of our work.

2. DESIGN OF THE MOBILITY MODEL

In this section we show how we designed a mobility model which is founded on the results of social network theories briefly introduced. The description of the mobility model, mirroring its conceptual steps, is organized as follows:

- Firstly, we describe how we model social relationships and, in particular, how we use *social networks as input* of the mobility model.

- Secondly, we present the *establishment of the model*: we discuss how we identify communities and groups in the network and how the communities are associated to a geographical space. Our observation here is that people with strong social links are likely to be geographically colocated often or from time to time.

- Thirdly, we describe the algorithm that is at the basis of the *dynamics* of the nodes, that, again, is based on the strength of social relationships. We argue that individuals with strong social relationships move towards (or within) the same geographical area.

2.1 Using Social Networks as Input of the Mobility Model

2.1.1 Modelling Social Relationships

One of the classic ways of representing social networks is *weighted graphs*. An example of social network is represented in Figure 1. Each node represents one person. The weights associated with each edge of the network is used to model the strength of the interactions between individuals [24]. It is our explicit assumption that these weights, which are expressed as a measure of the strength of social ties, can also be read as a measure of the likelihood of geographic colocation, though the relationship between these quantities is not necessarily a simple one, as will become apparent. We model the degree of social interaction between two people using a value in the range $[0, 1]$. 0 indicates no interaction; 1 indicates a strong social interaction. Different social networks can be valid for different parts of a day or of a week[1].

As a consequence, the network in Figure 1 can be represented by the 10×10 symmetric matrix **M** showed in Figure 2, where the names of nodes correspond to both rows and columns and are ordered alphabetically. We refer to the matrix representing the social relationships as *Interaction Matrix*.

$$\mathbf{M} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 0.76 & 0.64 & 0.11 & 0.05 & 0 & 0 & 0.12 & 0.15 & 0 \\ 0.76 & 1 & 0.32 & 0 & 0.67 & 0.13 & 0.23 & 0.45 & 0 & 0.05 \\ 0.64 & 0.32 & 1 & 0.13 & 0.24 & 0 & 0 & 0.15 & 0 & 0 \\ 0.11 & 0 & 0.13 & 1 & 0.54 & 0.83 & 0.57 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0.05 & 0.67 & 0.24 & 0.54 & 1 & 0.2 & 0.41 & 0.2 & 0.23 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.13 & 0 & 0.83 & 0.2 & 1 & 0.69 & 0.15 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0.23 & 0 & 0.57 & 0.41 & 0.69 & 1 & 0.18 & 0 & 0.12 \\ 0.12 & 0.45 & 0.15 & 0 & 0.2 & 0.15 & 0.18 & 1 & 0.84 & 0.61 \\ 0.15 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0.23 & 0 & 0 & 0.84 & 1 & 0.65 \\ 0 & 0.05 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0.12 & 0.61 & 0.65 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Figure 2: Example of an Interaction Matrix representing a simple social network.

The generic element $m_{i,j}$ represents the interaction between two individuals i and j. We refer to the elements of the matrix as the *interaction indicators*. The diagonal elements represent the relationships that an individual has with himself and are set, conventionally, to 1. In Figure 1, we have represented only the links associated to a weight equal to or higher than 0.25.

The matrix is symmetric since, to a first approximation, interactions can be viewed as being symmetric. However, it is worth underlining that we are using a specific measure of the strength of the relationships. It is probable that by performing psychological tests, the importance of a relationship, such as a friendship, will be valued differently by the different individuals involved; in our modelization, this would lead to an asymmetric matrix. We plan to investigate this issue further in the future.

The Interaction Matrix is also used to generate a *Connectivity Matrix*. From matrix **M** we generate a binary matrix **C** where a 1 is placed as an entry c_{ij} if and only if $m_{i,j}$ is greater than a specific threshold t (i.e., 0.25). The Connectivity Matrix extracted by the Interaction Matrix in Figure 2 is showed in Figure 3. The idea behind this is that we have an "interaction" threshold above which we say that two people are interacting as they have a strong relationship. The Interaction Matrix (and, consequently, the Connectivity Matrix) can be derived by available data (for example, from a sociological investigation) or using mathematical models that are able to reproduce characteristics of real social networks. As we will discuss in Section 3.2.1, the default implementation of our model uses the so-called Caveman model [28] for the generation of synthetic social networks with realistic characteristics (i.e, high clustering and low average path length). However, this is a customizable aspect and, if there are insights on the type of scenario to be tested, a user-defined matrix can be inputed.

$$\mathbf{C} = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 & 1 & 1 \end{bmatrix}$$

Figure 3: Example of a Connectivity Matrix representing a simple social network.

2.1.2 Detection of Community Structures

The simulation scenario is established by mapping groups of hosts to certain areas in geographical space. After the definition of the social graph described above, groups, i.e., the highly connected set of nodes in the graph, need to be isolated. Fortunately, some algorithms can be exploited for this purpose.

We use the algorithm proposed by Newman and Girvan in [22] to detect the presence of community structures in social networks represented by matrices, like the Connectivity Matrix that we have defined in the previous section. This algorithm is based on the calculation of the so-called *betweenness* of edges. This provides a measure of the centrality of nodes. For example, considering two communities connected by few inter-community edges, all the paths through the nodes in one community to nodes in the other must traverse one of these edges, that, therefore, will be characterised by a high betweenness. Intuitively then, one of the possible estimation of the centrality of an edge is given by the number of shortest (geodesic) paths between all pairs of vertices that run along it. In other words, the average distance between the vertices of the network has the maximum increase when the nodes with the highest betweenness are removed.

Therefore, in order to extract the communities from the network, nodes characterized by high values of centrality are progressively detected in subsequent rounds. At each round, one of the edges of the host with the highest centrality is removed. The final result is a network composed of (fairly distinguishable) groups of hosts (i.e., the communities).

The complexity of this algorithm is $O(mn^2)$, considering a graph with m edges and n vertices. The calculation of the shortest path between a particular pair of vertices can be perfomed using a breadth-first search in time $O(m)$ and there are $O(n^2)$ vertices. However, in [22], Newman and Girvan proposed a faster algorithm with a complexity equal to $O(mn)$.

As we said, the algorithm can be run a number of times on the graph, severing more and more links and generating a number of distinguishable communities. However we also need a mechanism to stop the algorithm when further cuts would decrease the quality of the results: this would mean that we have reached a state when we have meaningful communities already. We adopted a solution based on the calculation of an indicator defined as *modularity* Q [22]. This quantity measures the proportion of the edges in the network that connect vertices within the same community minus the expected value of the same quantity in a network with

[1]Let us consider a family of three people, with one child. During the days, when the child is at school and the parents at their workplaces, their social relationship is weak (i.e., represented with low values in the matrix). During the evening, the social ties are stronger as the family members tend to be co-located (i.e., high values in the matrix). The relationship between two colleagues sharing the same office will be represented with a value higher than these family relationships during the working hours in week days.

the same community division but random connections between the vertices. If the number of edges within the same community is no better than random, the value of Q is equal to 0. The maximum value of Q is 1; such a value indicates very strong community structure. In real social networks, the value of Q is usually in the range $[0.3, 0.7]$. The analytical definition of the modularity of a network division can be found in [22]. At each run the algorithm severs one edge and measures the value of Q. The algorithm terminates when the obtained value of Q is less than the one obtained in the previous edge removal round. This is motivated by the fact that Q presents one or, at maximum, but much more rarely, two local peaks: therefore, we can stop when the first local peak is reached. This is clearly an approximation since the value of the other possible local peak (if exists) may be higher, but it has been observed that the quality of the division that we obtain is, in the vast majority of the cases, very good [22]. Also, by adopting this technique, we considerably simplify the computational complexity of the algorithm.

In order to illustrate this process, let us now consider the social network in Figure 1. Three communities (that can be represented by sets of hosts) are detected by running the algorithm: $C_1 = \{A, B, C\}$, $C_2 = \{D, E, F, G\}$ and $C_3 = \{H, I, L\}$. Now that the communities are identified given the matrix, there is a need to associate them with a location.

2.2 Establishment of the Model: Placement of the Communities in the Simulation Space

After the communities are identified, each of them is randomly associated to a specific location (i.e., a square) on a grid[2]. We use the symbol $S_{p,q}$ to indicate a square in position p, q. The number of rows and columns are inputs of the mobility model.

Going back to the example, in Figure 4 we show how the communities we have identified can be placed on a 3x4 grid (the dimension of the grid is configurable by the user and influences the density of the nodes in each square). The three communities C_1, C_2, C_3 are placed respectively in the grid in the squares $S_{a,2}$, $S_{c,2}$ and $S_{b,4}$.

Once the nodes are placed on the grid, the model is established and the nodes move around according to social-based attraction laws as explained in the following.

2.3 Dynamics of the Mobile Hosts

As described in the previous section, a host is initially associated to a certain square in the grid. Then, in order to drive movement, a goal is assigned to the host. More formally, we say that a host i is associated to a square $S_{p,q}$ if its goal is inside $S_{p,q}$. Note that host i is not necessarily always positioned inside the square $S_{p,q}$, despite this association (see below).

The goal is simply a point on the grid which acts as *final destination* of movement like in the Random Way-Point model, with the exception that the selection of the goal is not as random.

2.3.1 Selection of the first goal

When the model is initially established, the goal of each host is randomly chosen inside the square associated to its community (i.e, the first goals of all the hosts of the community C_1 will be chosen inside the square $S_{a,2}$).

2.3.2 Selection of the subsequent goals

[2]A non random association to the particular areas of the simulation area can be devised, for example by deciding pre-defined *areas of interest* corresponding for instance to real geographical space. However, this aspect is orthogonal to the work discussed in this paper.

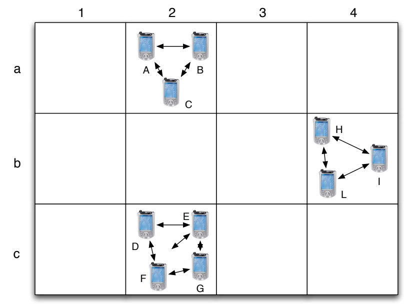

Figure 4: Example of initial simulation configuration.

When a goal is reached, the new goal is chosen according to the following mechanism. A certain number of hosts (zero or more) is associated to each square $S_{p,q}$ at time t. Each square (i.e., place) exterts a certain *social attractivity* for a certain host. The social attractivity of a square is a measure of its importance in terms of the social relationships for the host taken into consideration. The social importance is calculated by evaluating the strength of the relationships with the hosts that are moving towards that particular square (i.e., with the hosts that have a current goal inside that particular square). More formally, given $C_{S_{p,q}}$ (i.e., the set of the hosts associated to square $S_{p,q}$), we define *social attractivity* of that square towards the host, i SA_{p,q_i}, as follows

$$SA_{p,q_i} = \frac{\sum_{\substack{j=1 \\ j \in C_{S_{p,q}}}}^{n} m_{i,j}}{w}$$

where w is the cardinality of $C_{S_{p,q}}$ (i.e., the number of hosts associated to the square $S_{p,q}$). In other words, the social attractivity of a square in position (p, q) towards a host i is defined as the sum of the interaction indicators that represent the relationships between i and the other hosts that belong to that particular square, normalized by the total number of hosts associated to that square. If $w = 0$ (i.e., the square is empty), the value of SA_{p,q_i} is set to 0.

The new goal is then randomly chosen inside the square characterised by the highest social attractivity; it may be again inside the same square or in a different one. New goals are chosen inside the same area when the input social network is composed by loosely connected communities (in this case, hosts associated with different communities have, in average, weak relationships between each others). On the other hand, a host may be attracted to a different square, when it has strong relationships with both communities. From a graph theory point of view, this means that the host is located between two (or more) clusters of nodes in the social network[3].

Let us suppose, for example, that host A has reached its first goal inside the square $S_{a,2}$. The new goal is chosen by calculating the social attractivities of all the squares that compose the simulation space and then by choosing the highest. If, say, square $S_{c,2}$ exerts the highest attractivity (for example, because a host with strong relationship with node A has joined that community), the new goal will then be selected inside that square.

2.3.3 Social Network Reconfigurations and their Effects on the Dynamics of Mobile Hosts

[3]This is usually the case of hosts characterised by a relatively high betweenness that, by definition, are located *between* two (or more) communities.

Like in everyone's life, the day movement are governed by different patterns of mobility which depend on the people we need to interact with. For example, most people spend a part of their day at work, interacting with colleagues, and another part at home with their families. In order to model this, we allow the association of different social networks to different periods of a simulation.

Periodically, the social networks at the basis of the mobility model can be changed. The interval of time between changes is an input of the model. When the reconfiguration of the underlying social network happens, nodes are assigned to the new communities that are detected in the network using the algorithms described in Section 2.1.2. Communities are then randomly associated to squares in the simulation space. This assignement does not imply immediate relocation of the nodes, instead, it conditions the choice of the next goal. In fact, goals are chosen inside the square of the grid to which the community they belong to is assigned. So hosts will move towards their destination gradually. The nodes start moving towards the geographical region where other nodes that have strong interactions with them will converge. This mirrors the behaviour, for instance, of commuters who travel home every evening to join their families.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

In order to evaluate our model we have performed a number of tests, in particular, we have taken real mobility traces collected by Intel Research Laboratory in Cambridge. We have then tested our model using realistic social networks and compared the mobility patterns with the Intel traces. In this section, we will present and discuss the results of our simulations comparing them with these data from real scenarios.

3.1 Implementation of the model

We implemented a movement patterns generator that produce primarily traces for the ns-2 simulator [15], one of the most popular in the ad hoc network research community. However, the generator is also able to produce traces in a XML meta-format that can be parsed and trasformed into other formats (for example, by using XSLT) such as the one used by GlomoSim/Qualnet [29]. The model is available for downloading at the following URL: http://ww.cs.ucl.ac.uk/staff/m.musolesi/mobilitymodels.

3.2 Validation of the Model using Real Movement Traces

In this section, we present a comparison of the properties of the movement patterns generated by our mobility model with those of the real traces provided by Intel Research Laboratory in Cambridge. The description of these measurement exercise is presented in [4]. In that paper, the authors also compare their results with other publicly available data sets provided by McNett and Voelker from University of California at San Diego [16] and by Henderson et alii from Dartmouth College [6] showing evident similarities between the patterns movements collected by the three different groups. For this reason, we decided to compare the traces obtained by using our mobility model only with the data provided by the researchers in Cambridge.

3.2.1 Description of the Simulation

We tested our mobility model using several runs generating different mobile scenarios and we compared the results with the real movement patterns provided by Intel and synthetic traces generated using a Random Way-Point model.

We tested our model considering a scenario composed of 100 hosts in a simulation area of 5 $km \times 5$ km, divided into a grid composed of 625 squares of 200 m (i.e., the numbers of rows and columns of the grid were set to 25). We chose a relatively large simulation scenario, with a low population density, in order to better see the differences in the results obtained with a Random Way-Point model. In fact, in small simulation areas, the limited possible movements and the higher probability of having two nodes in the same transmission range may affect the simulation results introducing side-effects that are not entirely due to the mobility model.

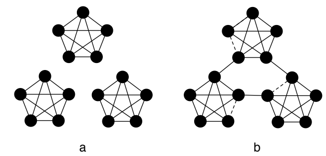

Figure 5: Generation of the social network in input using the Caveman model: (a) initial configuration with 3 disconnected 'caves'. (b) generated social network after the rewiring process.

We also assumed that each device is equipped with an omnidirectional antenna with a transmission range of 250 m, modeled using a free space propagation model. The speeds of the nodes were randomly generated according to a uniform distribution in the range $[1-6]$ m/s. The duration of the simulation is one day and the reconfiguration interval is equal to 8 hours. These values have not been chosen to reproduce the movements described by the traces provided by Intel, rather, we were more interested in observing if similar patterns could be detected in synthetic and real traces. In other words, our goal has mainly been to verify whether the movement patterns observed in Intel traces were reproduced by our mobility model.

A key aspect of the initialization of our model is the selection of the social network in input. We implemented a generator of synthetic social networks using the so-called Caveman Model proposed by Watts [28]. The social network is built starting from K fully connected graphs (representing communities living in isolation, like primitive men in caves). According to this model, every edge of the initial network in input is re-wired to point to a node of another cave with a certain probability p. The re-wiring process is used to represent random interconnections between the communities. Figure 5.a shows an initial network configuration composed by 3 disconnected communities (*caves*) composed by 5 individuals; a possible social network after random rewiring is represented in Figure 5.b.

Individuals of one cave are closely connected, whereas populations belonging to different caves are sparsely connected. Therefore, the social networks generated using this model are characterized by a high clustering coefficient and low average path length. It has been proved that this model is able to reproduce social structures very close to real ones [28]. We generated social networks with different rewiring probabilities, also considering the case of disconnected communities (i.e., $p = 0$).

We also implemented a movement patterns generator based on the Random Way-Point model. We generated traces with the same simulation scenarios in terms of size of the area and characteristics of the mobile devices, with hosts that move with a speed uniformly distributed in the range $[1-6]$ m/s and stop time equal to $[1-10]$ m/s. We repeated the experiments using a number of runs sufficient to achieve a 10% confidence interval.

3.2.2 Simulation Results

The emergent structure of the network derived by analyzing the Intel traces is typically exponential [1]; in fact, the *degree of connectivity* shows a local peak near the average. Our mobility model

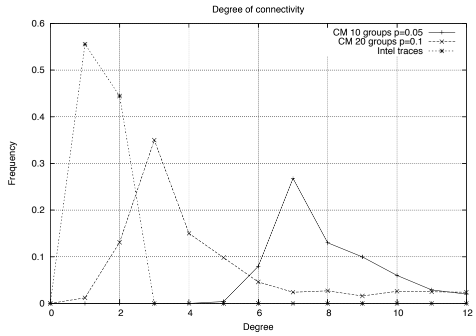

Figure 6: Distribution of the degree of connectivity.

(indicated with CM) produces a similar type of distribution as shown in Figure 6. The peak shifts to the right as the density of the squares increases. We analyzed two further properties of the movement patterns, the contact duration and the inter-contacts time. We adopt the same definitions used by the authors of [4] in order to be able compare the results. We define *contact duration* as the time interval in which two devices are in radio range. We define *inter-contacts time* as the time interval between two contacts. These indicators are particularly important in ad hoc networking and, in particular, in *opportunistic mobile networks*, such as delay tolerant mobile ad hoc networks [18, 12]: inter-contacts times define the frequency and the probability of being in contact with the recipient of a packet or a potential carrier in a given time period.

Figure 7 shows the comparison between the inter-contacts time and the contact duration cumulative distributions[4] using log-log coordinates. These distributions are extracted from the real and synthetic traces generated by the Random Way-Point (indicated with RWP) and our Community based mobility model with different rewiring probabilities p.

With respect to the inter-contacts time, our traces (excluding the case with $p = 0$ that we will discuss separately) shows an approximate power law behaviour for a large range of values like those extracted from Intel data. A similar pattern can be observed in UCSD and Dartmouth traces [4]. The cumulative distribution related to Random Way-Point, instead, shows a typical exponential distribution. The same behaviour can be observed for the traces generated using our Community based mobility model with a probability of rewiring equal to 0. In fact, in this case, the only movements of the hosts outside the assigned square happen when a reconfiguration takes place (i.e., a new generation of the social networks takes place and a consequent new assignment to different squares in the grid are performed). However, the case of disconnected and isolated communities is not so realistic. As far as the contacts time distribution is concerned, we observe a power law behaviour for a much more limited range of values and, in general, with a lower angular coefficient of the interpolating line. The traces from Dartmouth College and UCSD also show a power law distribution with different angular coefficients [4]. It seems that data related to different scenarios are characterized by different types of power law distribution.

By plotting the same distributions using semi-log coordinates (see Figure 8), the differences between the curves corresponding to real traces and those generated using the Random Way-Point mobility model are even more evident. The exponential nature of the cumulative distribution of the inter-contacts time[5] extracted by the latter is clearly reflected by the approximated straight line that is shown in the figure.

Figure 9.a and 9.b show the influence of the speed respectively on the cumulative distributions of the inter-contacts time and contacts duration. We simulated scenarios with host speed uniformly distributed in the range $[1-6]$, $[1-10]$ and $[1-20]m/s$. The cumulative distributions related to all these scenario can be approximated with a power law function for a wide range of values.

In many of our experiments, the coefficient of the power law of the distribution of the Intel traces is different from those related to synthetic traces generated using our model. Different coefficients can be observed in the available sets of real traces. In a sense, it seems that the values of these coefficients characterize the various mobile settings. It is worth noting that currently there are not available theoretical models that justify the emergence of these distributions.

The impact of the density of the population in the simulation scenario is presented in Figure 10. We simulated scenarios composed of 100, 200, 300 nodes with a starting number of groups for the Caveman model, respectively equal to 10, 20, 30, and a rewiring probability of 0.2. Also in these scenarios, the inter-contacts time and contacts duration distributions follow a similar pattern. As discussed previously, our aim was not to exactly reproduce the traces provided by Intel. However, quite interestingly, we observe that the inter-contacts time distribution lie in between the curves representing the scenario composed of 100 and 200 nodes. The number of nodes recorded in the Intel experiments was in fact 140. Instead, the contacts duration distribution is bounded by the curves extracted by these two synthetic traces for a smaller range of values.

4. RELATED WORK

Many mobility models have been presented with the aim of allowing scalability testing of protocols and algorithms for mobile ad hoc networking. A comprehensive review of the most popular mobility models used by the mobile ad hoc research community can be found in [3]. However, it is interesting and, at the same time, surprising to note that even the best solutions and approaches have only been tested using completely random models such as the Random Way-Point model, without grouping mechanisms.

The work most directly related to ours can be found in [7]. This model is predicated upon similar assumptions, but is considerably more limited in scope. In that model hosts are statically assigned to a particular group during the initial configuration process, whereas our model accounts for movement between groups. Moreover, the authors claim that mobile ad hoc networks are scale-free, but the typical properties of scale-free networks are not exploited in the design of the model presented by the authors. With respect to this work, we allow the setting of the initial social network, which conditions the movement patterns, this enables different kinds of networks to emerge, including small world and scale free.

In recent years, many researchers have tried to refine existing models in order to make them more realistic. In [10], a technique for the creation of a mobility models that include the presence of obstacles is presented. The specification of obstacles is based on the use of Voronoi graphs in order to derive the possible pathways in the simulation space. This approach is orthogonal to ours; this

[4]Cumulative distributions are generally used instead of frequency distributions to avoid the issues related to the choice of the bins of the plot. It is possible to prove that if a set of data shows a power law behaviour using a frequency histogram, its cumulative distribution also follows the same pattern.

[5]This behaviour has been theoretically studied and predicted by Sharma and Mazumdar in [25].

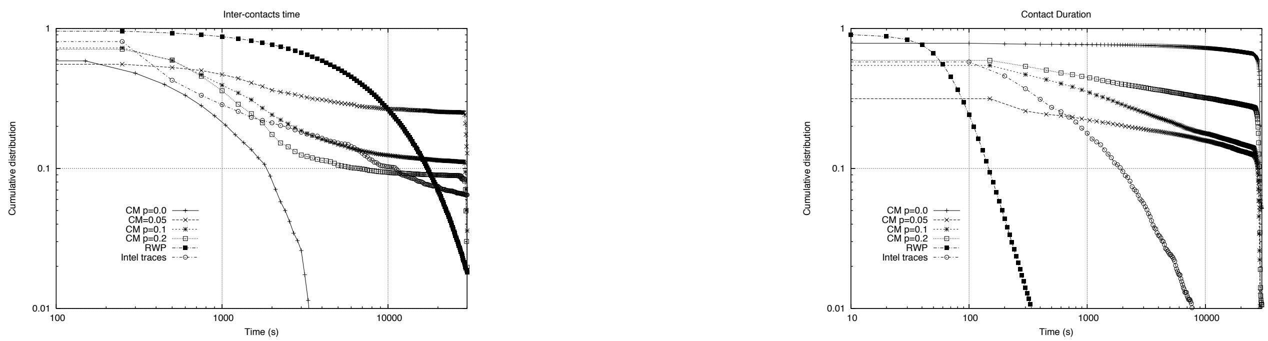

Figure 7: Comparison between synthetic and real traces (log-log coordinates) : (a) cumulative distribution of inter-contacts time in seconds; (b) cumulative distribution of contacts duration in seconds.

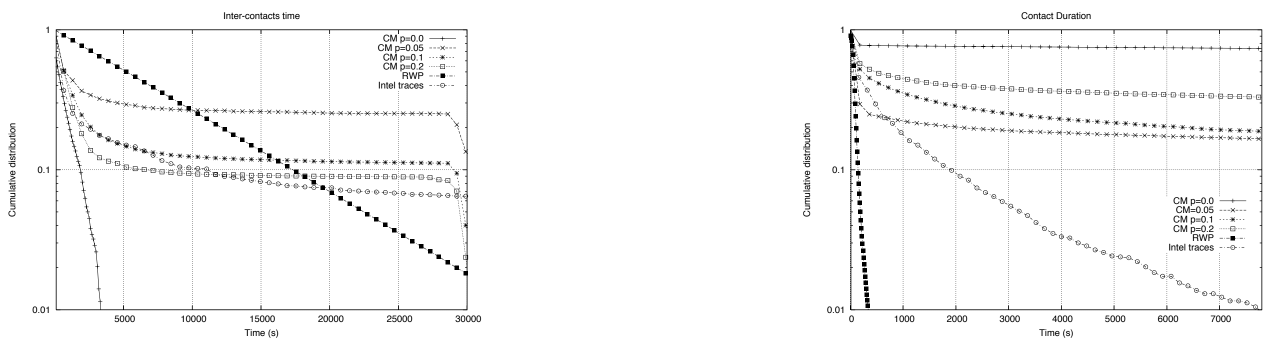

Figure 8: Comparison between synthetic and real traces (semi-log coordinates): (a) cumulative distribution of inter-contacts time in seconds; (b) cumulative distribution of contacts duration in seconds.

would be an interesting extension of the model as discussed in the next section.

Tuduce and Gross in [26] present a mobility model based on real data from the campus wireless LAN at ETH in Zurich. They use a simulation area divided into squares and derive the probability of transitions between adjacent squares from the data of the access points. Also in this case, the session duration data follow a power law distribution. This approach can be a refined version of the Weighted Way-Point Mobility Model [8], based on the probability of moving between different areas of a campus using a Markov model. Moreover, Tuduce and Gross' model represents the movements of the devices in an infrastructure-based network and not ad hoc settings. In [14], the authors try to reproduce the movements of pedestrians in downtown Osaka by analysing the characteristics of the crowd in subsequent instants of time and maps of the city using an empirical methodology. In general, the main goal of these works is to try to reproduce the specific scenarios with a high degree of accuracy. We focus, instead, on the cause of these movements, trying to capture the social dimensions that lead to general emergent human movement patterns.

5. CONCLUSIONS

We have presented a new mobility model based on social network theory and predicated on the assumption that mobility patterns are driven by the fact that devices are carried by humans and that the movements are strongly affected by the relationships between them.

The paper has described the generation of the mobility model, its implementation and an evaluation based on the comparison between our approach, existing random mobility models and real movement traces. We have shown that our mobility model generates traces that present characteristics similar to real ones, in terms of inter-contacts time and contacts duration.

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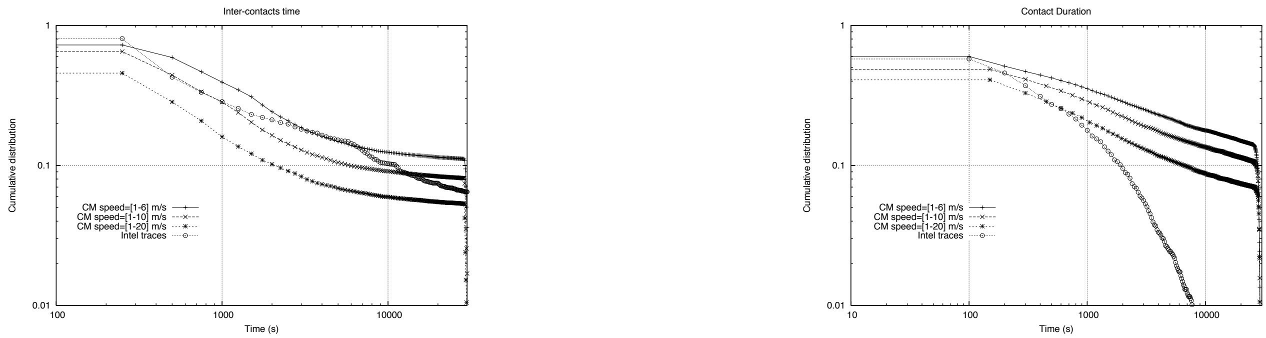

Figure 9: Influence of the hosts speed: (a) cumulative distribution of inter-contacts time in seconds; (b) cumulative distribution of contacts duration in seconds.

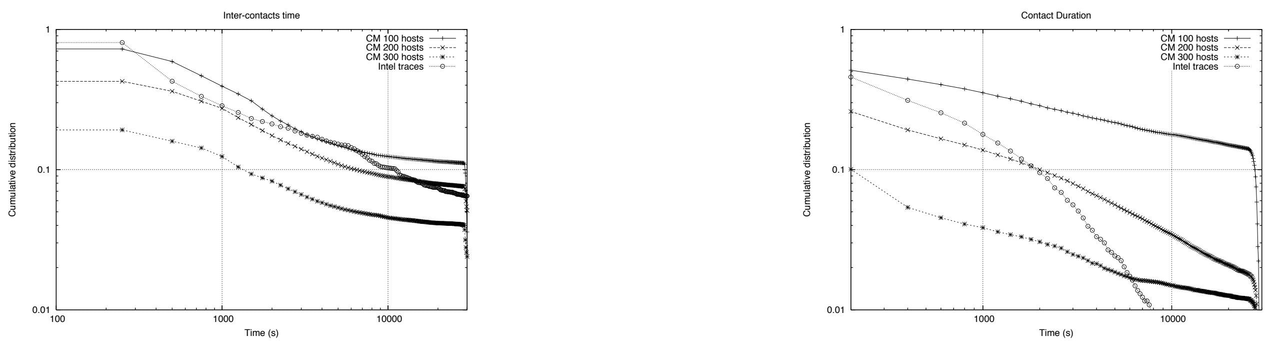

Figure 10: Influence of the density of population: (a) cumulative distribution of inter-contacts time in seconds; (b) cumulative distribution of contacts duration in seconds.

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