Lower Bound of Message Complexity for Election Algorithm in a Complete Network with Intermittent Faults

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ABSTRACT

Election is a fundamental problem in the distributed computing. We consider n nodes in the network with f maximum number of faulty links incident on each node, where f ≤ \((n-1)/2\). In general, electing a leader, finding the maximum identifier and constructing a spanning tree belong to the same class in the distributed computing because of the same order of the message complexity. Using a spanning tree, we prove that the lower bound of message complexity for a leader election algorithm in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent link faults is \(O(n^2)\).

1. Introduction

The complete network is a network of n identical nodes except that each node has its own unique identifier from a totally ordered set. In this network, each node has \(n - 1\) incident links. Communication can be executed in either a synchronous or an asynchronous mode. We consider the election problems in an asynchronous complete network. Election is a fundamental problem in the distributed computing. This problem is choosing a unique node as the leader of a network. Before starting election algorithm, no node knows the identifier of any other node. Therefore, the network cannot choose a predetermined leader. However, it is possible to elect a predetermined node as the leader of a network. In the latter case, if the leader fails or malfunctions, for instance, in the distributed file system, then it needs to choose a new
leader from the rest nodes in the network in order to maintain the proper operation of the whole system. The other applications of the electing leader problem contain regeneration of a lost unique token, concurrency control, recovery by electing a new central lock coordinator after crashing a coordinator in a distributed database system, and replacement of a primary site in a replicated file system[1][2].

Before or during execution of the election algorithms, failures, which complicate the election problem, of nodes and communication links may occur. Fischer, Lynch and Paterson[3] proved that there is no election algorithm to solve the choosing leader problem if a node fails by crashing in an asynchronous complete network even though all the links are reliable. Hence, we consider only link failures under all reliable nodes of network. Owing to the asynchronous nature of the network, a node cannot distinguish between a slow link and a faulty link. Hence, the nodes cannot detect the faulty links. It means that the link delays are unbounded and unpredictable, and a link will not change the contents of a message at any rates. This type of fault is called intermittent [1][4]. If two adjacent nodes wish to communicate, then they send messages to each other on the link connecting them. If two nonadjacent nodes separated by a faulty link want to communicate, then they have to communicate through nodes adjacent to both of them.

In this paper, we prove the lower bound of message complexity in asynchronous complete networks with intermittent faulty links. Let \( n \) be the number of nodes in the network and \( f \) be the maximum number of faulty links incident on each node, where \( f \leq \frac{(n-1)}{2} \). Therefore, asynchronous intermittent faulty links in a complete network are up to \( n f / 2 \)[4].

Because the asynchronous complete network with intermittent faults is so complicated, it is difficult to prove the exact lower bound of message complexity for electing a leader. In general, electing a leader, finding the maximum identifier and constructing a spanning tree belong to the same class in the distributed algorithms[5]. Hence, they have the same order of the message complexity. We use a spanning tree to prove the lower bound of message complexity in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent link faults.

The complete network is considered as an undirected graph \( G=(P, L) \), where \( P \) is a finite set of nodes \((|P|=n)\) and \( L \) is a set of links connecting two adjacent nodes, and we assume that the graph \( G \) is connected. We refer to election algorithm for a complete network as algorithm executing on the underlying graph. To prove the lower bound we count the edges which carry messages during performances of algorithms instead of the actual number of messages communicated by each edge as in [5]. In this paper, we prove that the lower bound of message complexity in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent faults is \( \Theta(n^2) \).

Many researchers have proposed several synchronous and asynchronous election algorithms for networks that have reliable nodes and links. In particular, Gafni[6] proposed an asynchronous election algorithm for general networks that uses \( \theta(m + n \log n) \) messages, where \( m \) is total number of links in the network. For the case of asynchronous complete networks, Afek and Gafni[7], and Korach, Moran and Zaks[5] showed distributed algorithms of \( \Theta(n \log n) \) message complexity.

Several election algorithms have been presented for networks with faulty links. Cimet and Kumar[8] proposed an algorithm when communication links fail detectably with fail-stop mode. Golreich and Shriram[9] presented an election algorithm in asynchronous rings with one intermittently faulty link. If \( n \) is already known to all the nodes, then their algorithm uses \( \Theta(n \log n) \) messages; otherwise, \( \Theta(n^2) \) messages. Abu-Amaral[1] has studied an algorithm for election in asynchronous complete networks that uses minimally \( O(n^2 + n \log n) \) messages, with \( f \leq [n/2-3] \). In his paper, \( f \) is the maximum total number of intermittently faulty links in the network. Abu-Amaral and Lokshtanov[4] have, in advance, develop-
ed a distributed election algorithm in asynchronous complete networks that uses $O(n^2 + nf^{-2})$ messages. In their algorithm, each node has at most $f$ faulty links incident on it, where $f \leq \lfloor (n-1)/2 \rfloor$. Therefore, their algorithm introduces the tolerance up to $nf/2$ faulty links in the network. We use above mentioned proposition by Abu-amara and Loker, and prove the lower bound message complexity is $O(n^2)$ using spanning trees.

2. Model

Our model follows Goldreich and Shrir’s model [9]. Consider an asynchronous complete network of $n$ processors. We model the network as a complete graph on $n$ nodes, in which each node represents a processor, and each link represents a bidirectional communication channel. Henceforth, we will not distinguish between a node and the processor it represents, and we will not distinguish between a link and the channel it represents. Each node $u$ has a unique identifier, $ID(u)$, chosen from a totally ordered set. No node initially knows the identifier of any other node, but the nodes know that the network is complete. When a node $u$ wishes to communicate with a node $v$, then $u$ sends a message to $v$ on the link $l(u,v)$ joining them. We assume that each message consists of at most $O(\log |T|)$ bits, where $|T|$ is the cardinality of the set of node identifiers.

A distributed algorithm on the network is a set of $n$ deterministic local programs, each assigned to a node. Each local program consists of computation statements and communication statements. The computation statements control the internal computation of a node. The communication statements are of the form “send message $M$ on link $l$” or “receive message $M'$ on link $l$”. Each node $u$ has a Send-Buffer($u,l$) and a Receive-Buffer($u,l$) associated with each link $l$ incident on $u$, where the buffer is not necessarily first-in first-out. Let $l$ be $l(u,v)$. When $u$ wishes to send message $M$ on $l$, $u$ places $M$ in Send-Buffer($u,l$). We call this event a send event.

To capture the asynchronous nature of our network, messages may remain in the send-buffers for arbitrary lengths of time. A transmission event in $l$ occurs when $l$ places $M$ in Receive-Buffer($u,l$). We assume that $u$ cannot inspect Send-Buffer($u,l$) to check whether $M$ was removed from the buffer. Hence, $M$ is in transit from $u$ to $v$ if $M$ is in Send-Buffer($u,l$). If $u$ wishes to process a message $M'$ from Receive-Buffer($u,l$), we call this event a receive event. For convenience, we assume that it takes one time unit to remove $M'$ from Receive-Buffer($u,l$) and to execute the computation statements on $M'$. If $M'$ is not in Receive-Buffer($u,l$), then $u$ either waits for $M'$, or receives some other message, depending on $u$’s local program. Note that when we say that node $u$ receives a message, we mean that $u$ removes the message from a Receive-Buffer and processes the message. A loss event in a link $l$ is the event of $l$ discarding a message.

A link is faulty during or before a particular execution of the algorithm if $l$ experiences at least one loss event in the execution of the algorithm. Links may fail intermittently at any time during the execution of the algorithm. If a link $l$ is not faulty, then it is reliable. A reliable link is a link that never loses messages. Recall that each node is adjacent to at most $f$ faulty links. Therefore, if $l$ is faulty, and $l$ connects nodes $u$ and $v$, both $u$ and $v$ can be adjacent to at most $f - 1$ faulty links in addition to a faulty link $l$.

All the nodes in the network are reliable. It is not necessary for all nodes to start the execution of the algorithm simultaneously; some node may be initially asleep. We assume that, if a dormant node receives a message from some other node, then it wakes up and processes the received message. The processing time at each node is assumed to be negligible compared with link delays. There may be two statuses of a node during execution of the algorithm, live or dead. Initially, all the nodes are live. If a node $u$ finds that there is a larger $ID(v)$ than $ID(u)$ at some time $t$, then $u$ is dead at $t$. A
dead node cannot participate in the competition for the leader. However, a dead node may send messages to some nodes after receiving messages from other nodes. If there is only one live node, a unique node is elected as a leader of the network.

Consider a particular execution $E$ of a distributed computing. Let $\text{Events}(E)$ be the multiset of the events in $E$. For convenience, we assume the existence of a global clock that gives the time at which each event in $E$ occurs. Although this clock is available to an observer of the network, the nodes do not know of its existence. We will assume that each event in $E$ occurs at some discrete unit of time starting from zero. Let $\text{Events}(u)$ be the multiset of $u$’s send and receive events in $E$. The local program in $u$ induces a total ordering on $\text{Events}(u)$.

Two events, each in a distinct node, may occur at the same time. However, two events cannot occur at the same time in the same node.

In this paper, we follow Korach, Moran and Zaks’s definitions[5] to prove the lower bound of message complexity. The communication network is viewed as an undirected graph $G=(P, L)$ with $|P|=n$, and we assume that the graph $G$ is connected. We refer to an algorithm for a given network as the algorithm on the underlying graph.

$E$ is acting on a graph $G=(P, L)$. With each execution we can associate a sequence $\text{SEND}=\langle send_1, send_2, \ldots, send_k \rangle$ that includes all the events in their order of occurrence. We identify each event $send_i$ with the 4-tuple $\langle \text{Porigin}(send_i), \text{Pforward}(send_i), l(send_i), m_i \rangle$, where $\text{Pforward}(send_i)$ is the node sending the forward message $m_i$ originated by $\text{Porigin}(send_i)$ on the link $l(send_i)$. If the two live nodes communicate each other directly, we represent the event such as $\langle \text{Porigin}(send_i), \emptyset, l(send_i), m_i, send_i \rangle$ occurred at time $t_i$, where $t_i > t_{i-1}$ for $i > 1$.

Let $SEND(t)$ be the prefix of length $t$ of the sequence $SEND$, namely $SEND(t)=\langle send_1, \ldots, send_t \rangle$. If $t < t'$ then we say that $SEND(t')$ is an extension of $SEND(t)$, and we denote $SEND(t) < SEND(t')$. $SEND$ is called a completion of $SEND(t)$.

Let $NEW=\text{NEW}(SEND)$ be the subsequence $\langle new_1, new_2, \ldots, new_m \rangle$ of the sequence $SEND$ that consists of all the events in $SEND$ that use previously unused links. A link is used if a message has already been sent along it from either side. This means that the message $send_i=\langle \text{Porigin}(send_i), \text{Pforward}(send_i), l(send_i), m_i \rangle$ belongs to $NEW$ if and only if $l(send_i) \neq l(send_j)$ for all $j < i$. $\text{NEW}(t)$ denotes the prefix of size $t$ of the sequence $\text{NEW}$. Define the graph $G(\text{NEW}(t))=(P, L(\text{NEW}(t)))$, where $L(\text{NEW}(t))$ is the set of links used in $\text{NEW}(t)$, and call it the graph induced by the sequence $\text{NEW}(t)$. The link complexity $l(E)$ of $E$ acting on a graph $G$ is the maximal length of a sequence $\text{NEW}$ over all executions. The message complexity $m(E)$ if $E$ acting on a graph $G$ is the maximal length of a sequence $SEND$ over all executions. It is clear that $m(E) \geq l(E)$.

3. The lower bound

Before proving the lower bound in our model, we show that it is impossible for the lower bound to be $\Omega(n^2)$.

Claim 1. Why does a dead node send forward messages?

We choose arbitrarily two live nodes, $p_i$ and $p_j$, $i < j$. At first, the node $i$ sends messages to all neighbors. If it receives $\lfloor(n-1)/2 \rfloor$ successful replies from other nodes which have smaller $ID$ than $ID(i)$, the node will be a candidate for a leader, and all nodes that sent successful replies to node $i$ are dead. Next, the node $j$ also sends messages to all its neighbors. Eventually it enters candidate state like the node $i$. In the worst case, we assume the status of all links is unchanged. If there are $n$ live nodes, there can be $\lfloor(n-1)/2 \rfloor+1$ candidate state nodes at most. Due to the unchanged status of all links, the algorithm cannot elect the leader. It means the network is in deadlock. Therefore, when dead
Claim 2. Why is not the lower bound of message complexity \( O(n^2) \) ?

We assume there are \( n \) processors, \( p_1 < p_2 < \cdots < p_n \). We define that the suppressor is the largest ID node that ever visited to the arbitrary dead node. When a dead node receives a message from the largest ID node visited on it, if that node sends a forward message only to his suppressor, the lower bound of message complexity is \( O(n^2) \). For example, we assume \( p_1 \) is dead and \( p_2, p_3, \) and \( p_4 \) are live nodes. Eventually node \( p_2 \) and \( p_3 \) will be dead, sometimes through the dead node \( p_1 \), and \( p_4 \) will recognize the status of \( p_3 \). However, \( p_4 \) cannot know the status of \( p_2 \). Therefore, we see that \( O(n^2) \) is not sufficient to elect a leader in our model.

We show above that it needs forward messages and the lower bound of message complexity may be larger than \( O(n^2) \) in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent faults. From now on, let us prove the lower bound. We assume that there are \( n \) identical nodes in the complete asynchronous networks with maximally \((n/2) [(n-1)/2]\) intermittent faulty links. These identical nodes but different identifier are \( p_1 < p_2 < \cdots < p_n \). Under this model, we look at the link complexity in the worst case. Initially all nodes are in live state and start a distributed algorithm separately.

To be the worst case, the smallest ID node is dead at first, and the second smallest ID node is dead next, finally there is one live node, the largest ID node, because of eliminating the smallest ID node in the live nodes one-by-one. When the smallest ID(\( p_1 \)) competes one another node except the second smallest ID(\( p_2 \)), \( p_1 \) will be dead. This situation has a fewer number of messages than the case that \( p_1 \) is the suppressor of \( p_1 \). For example, when \( p_3 \) is the suppressor of \( p_1 \), since \( p_3 \) cannot construct a spanning tree, \( p_1 \) is dead by \( p_2 \) and \( p_2 \) is dead by \( p_3 \) to get more link complexity.

We let \( n \) be \( 2k + l \). We consider that \( k \) is the maximum number of faulty links. After the \( k \) smallest ID nodes are dead, \( p_{k+1} \) node has \( k \) son nodes. The live nodes can compete each other through their sons. If a node is dead, then it has to inform that its status is changed. Also the sons of the dead node must send the result to their new suppressor. At this time, the dead node and its sons communicate through new links.

Therefore, the maximum number of link complexity to construct a spanning tree is as following:

1. All nodes broadcast when the distributed algorithm starts. At first each node which has \( n - 1 \) incident links acts as a root of a spanning tree. The order of message complexity is \( O(n^3) \).
2. The dead nodes send forward messages to construct a spanning tree. We assume that \( p_1, p_2, p_3, \ldots \) is dead respectively. When \( p_1 \) is dead by \( p_2 \), there is no forward messages. After that, when the dead node \( p_1 \) receives a message originated from the live node \( p_3 \), it sends a forward message to the live node \( p_2 \) to compete both \( p_2 \) and \( p_3 \). \( p_2 \) would be dead by \( p_3 \). Next, the messages originated from \( p_4 \) are arrived at the dead nodes, \( p_1 \) and \( p_2 \). \( p_1 \) sends the forward messages to \( p_2 \) and \( p_3 \) and \( p_2 \) sends the forward message to \( p_3 \). Eventually \( p_3 \) will remain as an only live node.

\[
1 + (1 + 2) + (1 + 2 + 3) + \cdots + (1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + (k - 2) + 1 + 2 + 3 + \cdots + (k - 2) + (k - 1)) + \cdots + (k - 2) + (k - 1) + k \cdot (k \cdot (k - 1) + k) + (2 + 3 + 4 + \cdots + (k - 1) + k + (k + 1)) + \cdots + (k + \cdots + (k + (k - 2)) + (k + (k - 1)) = (1/6)(7k^3 - k) = O(n^3).
\]
(3) When one node is dead, this node informs of its sons to change their suppressor.

\[ 1 + 2 + \cdots + (n-2) = O(n^2). \]

Therefore, totally link complexity \( l(E) = n(n - 1) + O(n^3) + O(n^2). \)

We conclude that the lower bound of message complexity is \( O(n^2) \), for a leader election algorithm in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent link faults using a spanning tree.

4. Conclusion

Election is the problem of choosing a unique processor as the leader of a network of processors. No node knows the identifier of any other node at first phase. The network cannot thus elect a predetermined leader. The processors do not have shared memory and can communicate with each other only by sending messages to each other on the communication links connecting them. We consider election algorithm in an asynchronous complete of \( n \) identical nodes except that each node has its own unique identifier from a totally ordered set. Hence, a node cannot distinguish between a slow link and a faulty link because of the asynchronous nature of the network. We call this type of link failures the intermittent fault. Let \( f \) be the maximum number of faulty links incident on each node, where \( f \leq [(n-1)/2] \).

Thus asynchronous intermittent faulty links in a complete network are up to \( n f/2 \). In this paper, after showing that it is impossible for the lower bound to be \( O(n^2) \) we proved that the lower bound of message complexity in an asynchronous complete network with intermittent link failures is \( O(n^3) \), using a spanning tree.

References


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