

# A General Characterization of Representing and Determining Fuzzy Spatial Relations

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**Abstract:** A considerable amount of fuzzy spatial data emerged in various applications leads to investigation of fuzzy spatial data and their fuzzy relations. Because of complex requirements, it is challenging to propose a general fuzzy spatial relationship representation and a general algorithm for determining all fuzzy spatial relations. This paper, presents a general characterization of representing fuzzy spatial relations assuming that fuzzy spatial regions are all fuzzy. On the basis of it, correspondences between fuzzy spatial relations and spatial relations are investigated. Finally, a general algorithm for determining all fuzzy spatial relations is proposed.

**Keywords:** Fuzzy spatial data, fuzzy point, fuzzy line, fuzzy region, fuzzy spatial relations.

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## 1. Introduction

Spatial relations play a fundamental role in various application areas, ranging from Geographic Information System (GIS) systems [10] to image understanding [6]. It can be divided into topological (e.g., “overlap”, “meet”, etc.), directional (e.g., “north of”, “south of”, etc.) and metric (e.g., “3km away from”, etc.) relations [2]. Due to topological relations having great significances to spatial reasoning and spatial analysis, it has received increasing attentions in a quantitative way: Both the Region Connection Calculus (RCC) [8] and the 9-intersection model [3] provide a formal characterization of qualitative spatial relations.

However, spatial data is usually fuzzy in the real world applications since their values are subjective in real applications [1, 7]. Thus, the problems that emerge are how fuzzy spatial data should be modeled to determine their fuzzy topological relations [13]. To fill this gap, various definitions of spatial relations between fuzzy spatial data extend either the RCC or the 9-intersection model by considering a *FR* as being composed of two components [9]: One consists of the points that are definitely in *FR* and one consists of the points that are definitely not in the fuzzy region.

A straightforward Fuzzification of the definitions in RCC-8 relations is proposed in [5]. Esterline *et al.* [5] presented a fuzzy version of crisp spatial logic developed by Randell *et al.* [8] that takes the single relation connected-with as primitive. Unfortunately, many properties of the original RCC-8 relations are lost. Moreover, it is unclear how to apply definitions proposed in [5] to calculate the values of the fuzzy spatial relations between two given fuzzy regions. In order to solve these problems, Schockaert *et al.* [12] extend the RCC by providing generalized definitions

of the spatial relations as fuzzy relations, which allows expressing the degree to which a particular spatial relation between two regions holds.

Concerning on fuzzification of 9-intersection model, several researches extend 9-intersection approach based on the interior, boundary and exterior of the simple fuzzy spatial regions [14, 15, 16]. Tang *et al.* [16] studied definitions in fuzzy boundary and their relations and then extend the 9-intersection approach to the 3\*3 intersection matrix. Furthermore, 4\*4 intersection matrixes are formalized based on different topological parts of two fuzzy sets in [14]. In [15] a framework for dealing with fuzzy spatial objects was theoretically proposed, which was also compatible with non-fuzzy spatial object.

However, to our best knowledge, there are less reports on correspondences between fuzzy spatial relations and spatial relations more specifically from mathematical point of view although fuzzy spatial relations have been formalized in the fields of both RCC [5, 12] and 9-intersection model [14, 15, 16] and less reports on general algorithm for determining all fuzzy relations (there are totally 23 fuzzy relations and it will be presented in the later section in this paper) although specific methods of that [12, 16] has been proposed. In this paper, we propose a general characterization of representing and determining fuzzy spatial relations from mathematical point of view assuming that fuzzy spatial regions are all fuzzy. We firstly present the basics of representation of fuzzy spatial topological relations from three aspects: Fuzzy Point (FP), Fuzzy Line (FL) and Fuzzy Region (FR) and then give definitions of fuzzy relations. On this basis, correspondences between fuzzy spatial topological relations and spatial topological relations

are investigated. Finally, a general algorithm for determining fuzzy relations is proposed.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents basics of representation of fuzzy spatial data and gives definitions of fuzzy spatial topological relations. Section 3 investigates correspondences between fuzzy spatial relations and spatial relations. Section 4 proposes a general algorithm for determining fuzzy relations and Section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2. Representation of Fuzzy Spatial Topological Relations

In this section, we present the basics of representation of fuzzy spatial topological relations from three aspects, which are *FP*, *FL* and fuzzy region. Fuzzy relations, which will be mentioned below, indicate fuzzy spatial topological relations for simplicity.

### 2.1. Fuzzy Point

A *FP* is a point whose exact position is not determined but possible positions are known within a certain area. In that case, a *FP* can be viewed as a point in two-dimensional Euclidean space using a membership degree, which returns the value of its membership function, to indicate possible positions of *FP*.

• **Definition 1.** (*FP*): For a *FP* (denoted as *FP*), we have  $FP = (x, y, \delta)$ , including:

- $x$  is the projection value of the position to  $x$ -axis.
- $y$  is the projection value of the position to  $y$ -axis.
- $\delta$  is the membership degree of the point being the position  $(x, y)$  (denoted as  $\delta_{(x, y)}$ ), where  $0 \leq \delta \leq 1$ .

A *FP*  $(x_0, y_0, \delta_0)$  indicates that the possibility of the point locating at  $(x_0, y_0)$  is  $\delta_0$ . For example, a *FP*  $(2, 5, 0.8)$  indicates the possibility of the point locating at  $(2, 5)$  is 0.8. It is noted that if  $\delta_{(x, y)}=1$  and 0 otherwise, the point  $(x, y, \delta)$  is a crisp one.

The fuzzy relations of two *FP*s contain two cases, which are fuzzy equal (denoted as *FPPequal*) and fuzzy disjoint (denoted as *FPPdisjoint*). In the following definition, we will define each of them. Here, we introduce a mathematical symbol *supp*, where  $supp A = \{u \mid u \in U, A(u) > 0\}$ .

• **Definition 2.** Fuzzy Relations of *FP*s: For two *FP*s  $FP_1=(x_1, y_1, \delta_1)$  and  $FP_2=(x_2, y_2, \delta_2)$ , we have:

- *FPPequal* ( $FP_1, FP_2$ ):  $\exists supp(x_1, \delta_1) = supp(x_2, \delta_2) \wedge supp(y_1, \delta_1) = supp(y_2, \delta_2)$ .
- *FPPdisjoint* ( $FP_1, FP_2$ ):  $\forall (\neg (supp(x_1, \delta_1) = supp(x_2, \delta_2) \wedge supp(y_1, \delta_1) = supp(y_2, \delta_2)))$ .

### 2.2. Fuzzy Line

A *FL* is a line whose exact position or length is unknown but the area the line ranges is known. The

semantic of a line is a point set between two ending points. Accordingly, a *FL* can be viewed as a line in two-dimensional Euclidean space using two membership degrees, which return values of two ending points' membership functions, to indicate possible positions of the fuzzy line.

• **Definition 3.** Fuzzy Line: For a *FL* (denoted as *FL*), we have  $FL=(x_l, y_l, \delta, x_r, y_r, \delta')$ , including:

- $x_l$  and  $y_l$  are the minimum projection values of the *FL* to  $x$ -axis and  $y$ -axis (left ending point).
- $x_r$  and  $y_r$  are the maximum projection values of *FL* to  $x$ -axis and  $y$ -axis (right ending point).
- $\delta$  and  $\delta'$  are the membership degrees of the two ending points, where  $0 \leq \delta \leq 1$  and  $0 \leq \delta' \leq 1$ .

Since, *FL* is determined by two fuzzy ending points, the membership degree of *FL* is actually determined by the membership degrees of those two ending points.

The fuzzy relations of a *FP* and a *FL* contain three cases, which are fuzzy meet (denoted as *FLPmeet*), fuzzy contain (denoted as *FLPcontain*), and fuzzy disjoint (denoted as *FLPdisjoint*). Definitions of them are given in the following.

• **Definition 4.** Fuzzy Relations of *FP* and Fuzzy Line: For a *FP*,  $FP=(x_0, y_0, \delta_0)$  and a *FL*,  $FL=(x_l, y_l, \delta, x_r, y_r, \delta')$ , we have:

- *FLPmeet* ( $FL, FP$ ):  $\neg supp(x_0, y_0, \delta_0) \cap supp(x_l, y_l, \delta) = \emptyset \vee \neg supp(x_0, y_0, \delta_0) \cap supp(x_r, y_r, \delta') = \emptyset$ .

- *FLPcontain* ( $FL, FP$ ):  $\begin{vmatrix} x_l & y_l & 1 \\ x_r & y_r & 1 \\ x_0 & y_0 & 1 \end{vmatrix} = 0 \wedge (supp(\min(x_l, x_r), \delta) < supp(x_0, \delta_0) < supp(\max(x_l, x_r), \delta) \vee (supp(\min(y_l, y_r), \delta) < supp(x_0, \delta_0) < supp(\max(y_l, y_r), \delta)))$ .

- *FLPdisjoint* ( $FL, FP$ ):  $\neg (FLPmeet(FL, FP) \vee FLPcontain(FL, FP)) \Leftrightarrow FP$  stays in the left of  $FL \Leftrightarrow$

$$\begin{vmatrix} x_l & y_l & 1 \\ x_r & y_r & 1 \\ x_0 & y_0 & 1 \end{vmatrix} > 0 \text{ denoted } FLPlleft(FP, \delta_0, FL, \delta, \delta') \vee FP \text{ stays in}$$

$$\text{the right of } FL \Leftrightarrow \begin{vmatrix} x_l & y_l & 1 \\ x_r & y_r & 1 \\ x_0 & y_0 & 1 \end{vmatrix} < 0 \text{ denoted as } FLPright(FP, \delta_0,$$

$$FL, \delta, \delta').$$

The fuzzy relations of two fuzzy lines contain six cases, which are fuzzy intersect (denoted as *FLLintersect*), fuzzy equal (denoted as *FLLequal*), fuzzy contain (denoted as *FLLcontain*), fuzzy overlap (denoted as *FLLoverlap*), fuzzy meet (denoted as *FLLmeet*), and fuzzy disjoint (denoted as *FLLdisjoint*).

• **Definition 5.** Fuzzy Relations of Fuzzy Lines: For two fuzzy lines  $FL_1=(x_{1l}, y_{1l}, \delta_1, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1')$  and  $FL_2=(x_{2l}, y_{2l}, \delta_2, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2')$ , we have:

- *FLLintersect* ( $FL_1, FL_2$ ):  $((FLPlleft(x_{1l}, y_{1l}, \delta_1, FL_2) \wedge FLPright(x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1', FL_2)) \vee FLPlleft(x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1', FL_2) \wedge FLPright(x_{1l}, y_{1l}, \delta_1, FL_2)) \wedge ((FLPlleft(x_{2l}, y_{2l}, \delta_2, FL_1) \wedge FLPright(x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2', FL_1)) \vee (FLPlleft(x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2', FL_1) \wedge FLPright(x_{2l}, y_{2l}, \delta_2, FL_1))))$ .

- $FLLequal (FL_1, FL_2): FLPmeet (FL_2, x_{11}, y_{11}, \delta_1) \wedge FLPmeet (FL_2, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1')$ .
- $FLLcontain (FL_1, FL_2): (FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2) \wedge (\neg FLPdisjoint (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2'))) \vee (FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2') \wedge (\neg FLPdisjoint (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2)))$ .
- $FLLoverlap (FL_1, FL_2): (FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2) \vee FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2')) \wedge (FLPcontain (FL_2, x_{11}, y_{11}, \delta_1) \vee FLPcontain (FL_2, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1'))$ .
- $FLLmeet (FL_1, FL_2): ((FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2) \vee FLPcontain (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2')) \vee FLPcontain (FL_2, x_{11}, y_{11}, \delta_1) \vee FLPcontain (FL_2, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1')) \wedge (y_{1r} - y_{11}) / (x_{1r} - x_{11}) \neq (y_{2r} - y_{21}) / (x_{2r} - x_{21}) \vee ((FLPmeet (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2) \vee FLPmeet (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2')) \vee FLPmeet (FL_2, x_{11}, y_{11}, \delta_1) \vee FLPmeet (FL_2, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1')) \wedge \neg (FLLequal (FL_1, FL_2) \vee FLLcontain (FL_1, FL_2) \vee FLLcontain (FL_2, FL_1))$ .
- $FLLdisjoint (FL_1, FL_2): FLPdisjoint (FL_2, x_{11}, y_{11}, \delta_1) \wedge FLPdisjoint (FL_2, x_{1r}, y_{1r}, \delta_1') \wedge FLPdisjoint (FL_1, x_{21}, y_{21}, \delta_2) \wedge FLPdisjoint (FL_1, x_{2r}, y_{2r}, \delta_2') \wedge \neg (FLLintersect (FL_1, FL_2) \vee FLLcontain (FL_1, FL_2) \vee FLLcontain (FL_2, FL_1))$ .

### 2.3. Fuzzy Region

A general definition describes a crisp region as a set of disjoint, connected components, called faces, possibly with disjoint holes [4, 11] in the Euclidean space  $IR^2$ . By analogy with the generalization of crisp regions to fuzzy regions, we strive for fuzzy regions on the basis of the point set paradigm and fuzzy concepts. For simplicity, we only talk about two-dimensional regions without holes.

A  $FR$  is a region with indeterminate boundaries. Fuzzy regions can be represented by  $MBR$  (minimum bounding rectangle) so that we can use two  $FP$ s to represent fuzzy regions.

- **Definition 6.** Fuzzy Region: For a  $FR$  (denoted as  $FR$ ), we have  $FR=(x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta, x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta')$ , including:
  - $x_{min}$  and  $y_{min}$  are the minimum projection values of the  $FR$  to  $x$ -axis and  $y$ -axis (lower left ending point).
  - $x_{max}$  and  $y_{max}$  are the maximum projection values of  $FR$  to  $x$ -axis and  $y$ -axis (upper right ending point).
  - $\delta$  and  $\delta'$  are the membership degrees of the above two representing points, where  $0 < \delta \leq 1$  and  $0 < \delta' \leq 1$ .

Similar as the fuzzy line, the membership degree of  $FR$  is determined by the membership degrees of the two representing ending points.

The fuzzy relations of a  $FP$  and a  $FR$  contain three cases, which are fuzzy disjoint (denoted as  $FRPdisjoint$ ), fuzzy meet (denoted as  $FRPmeet$ ) and fuzzy contain (denoted as  $FRPcontain$ ). Definitions of them are given in the following.

- **Definition 7.** Fuzzy Relations of  $FP$  and Fuzzy Region: For a  $FP$ ,  $FP=(x_0, y_0, \delta_0)$  and a  $FR$ ,  $FR=(x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta, x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta')$ , we denote four  $FL$  of the fuzzy region:  $FL_1=(x_{min}, y_{max}, \delta_1, x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_1')$ ,  $FL_2=(x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_2,$

$x_{max}, y_{min}, \delta_2')$ ,  $FL_3=(x_{max}, y_{min}, \delta_3, x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta_3')$ ,  $FL_4=(x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta_4, x_{min}, y_{max}, \delta_4')$ . Then, we have:

- $FRPdisjoint (FP, FR): \neg (FLPleft (FL_1, FP) \wedge FLPleft (FL_2, FP)) \wedge FLPleft (FL_3, FP) \wedge FLPleft (FL_4, FP)$ .
- $FRPmeet (FP, FR): FLPmeet (FL_1, FP) \vee FLPmeet (FL_2, FP) \vee FLPmeet (FL_3, FP) \vee FLPmeet (FL_4, FP) \vee FLPcontain (FL_1, FP) \vee FLPcontain (FL_2, FP) \vee FLPcontain (FL_3, FP) \vee FLPcontain (FL_4, FP)$ .
- $FRPcontain (FP, FR): FLPleft (FL_1, FP) \wedge FLPleft (FL_2, FP) \wedge FLPleft (FL_3, FP) \wedge FLPleft (FL_4, FP)$ .

The fuzzy relations of a  $FL$  and a  $FR$  contain four cases, which are fuzzy contain (denoted as  $FRLcontain$ ), fuzzy intersect (denoted as  $FRLintersect$ ), fuzzy meet (denoted as  $FRLmeet$ ) and fuzzy disjoint (denoted as  $FRLdisjoint$ ). Definitions of them are given in the following.

#### Definition 8. Fuzzy Relations of $FL$ and Fuzzy Region:

For a  $FL$ ,  $FL=(x_l, y_l, \delta, x_r, y_r, \delta')$  and a  $FR$ ,  $FR=(x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta, x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta')$ , we denote four  $FL$  of the fuzzy region:  $FL_1=(x_{min}, y_{max}, \delta_1, x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_1')$ ,  $FL_2=(x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_2, x_{max}, y_{min}, \delta_2')$ ,  $FL_3=(x_{max}, y_{min}, \delta_3, x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta_3')$ ,  $FL_4=(x_{max}, y_{max}, \delta_4, x_{min}, y_{max}, \delta_4')$ . Then, we have:

- $FRLcontain (FR, FL): (FRPcontain (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta) \wedge \neg FRPdisjoint (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta')) \vee (FRPcontain (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta') \wedge \neg FRPdisjoint (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta))$ .
- $FRLintersect (FR, FL): FLLintersect (FL, FL_1) \vee FLLintersect (FL, FL_2) \vee FLLintersect (FL, FL_3) \vee FLLintersect (FL, FL_4) \vee ((FRPcontain (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta) \wedge FRPdisjoint (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta')) \vee (FRPcontain (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta') \wedge FRPdisjoint (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta)))$ .
- $FRLmeet (FR, FL): ((\neg FRPcontain (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta) \wedge \neg FRPcontain (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta')) \wedge (FLLmeet (FL, FL_1) \vee FLLmeet (FL, FL_2) \vee FLLmeet (FL, FL_3) \vee FLLmeet (FL, FL_4) \vee FLLoverlap (FL, FL_1) \vee FLLoverlap (FL, FL_2) \vee FLLoverlap (FL, FL_3) \vee FLLoverlap (FL, FL_4) \vee FLLcontain (FL, FL_1) \vee FLLcontain (FL_1, FL) \vee FLLcontain (FL, FL_2) \vee FLLcontain (FL_2, FL) \vee FLLcontain (FL, FL_3) \vee FLLcontain (FL_3, FL) \vee FLLcontain (FL, FL_4) \vee FLLcontain (FL_4, FL)))$ .
- $FRLdisjoint (FR, FL): (FRPdisjoint (FR, x_l, y_l, \delta) \vee FRPdisjoint (FR, x_r, y_r, \delta')) \wedge \neg FRLintersect (FR, FL) \wedge \neg FRLmeet (FR, FL)$ .

The fuzzy relations of two fuzzy regions contain five cases, which are fuzzy equal (denoted as  $FRRequal$ ), fuzzy contain (denoted as  $FRRcontain$ ), fuzzy overlap (denoted as  $FRRoverlap$ ), fuzzy meet (denoted as  $FRRmeet$ ) and fuzzy disjoint (denoted as  $FRRdisjoint$ ). Definitions of them are given in the following:

#### Definition 9. Fuzzy Relations of Fuzzy Regions:

For two fuzzy regions  $FR_1=(x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_1, x_{1max}, y_{1max}, \delta_1')$  and  $FR_2=(x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_2, x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_2')$ , we denote four  $FL$  of the fuzzy region:  $FL_{11}=(x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{11}, x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{11}')$ ,  $FL_{12}=(x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{12}, x_{1max}, y_{1min}, \delta_{12}')$ ,  $FL_{13}=(x_{1max}, y_{1min}, \delta_{13}, x_{1max}, y_{1max}, \delta_{13}')$ ,  $FL_{14}=(x_{1max}, y_{1max}, \delta_{14}, x_{1min}, y_{1max}, \delta_{14}')$ ;  $FL_{21}=(x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_{21}, x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_{21}')$ ,  $FL_{22}=(x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_{22}, x_{2max}, y_{2min}, \delta_{22}')$ ,  $FL_{23}=(x_{2max}, y_{2min}, \delta_{23}, x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_{23}')$ ,  $FL_{24}=(x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_{24}, x_{2min}, y_{2max}, \delta_{24}')$ . Then, we have:

- $FRRequal (FR_1, FR_2): FPPEqual (x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{12}, x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_{22}) \wedge FPPEqual (x_{1max}, y_{1min}, \delta_{13}, x_{2max}, y_{2min}, \delta_{23}) \wedge$

$FPPequal (x_{1max}, y_{1max}, \delta_{14}, x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_{24}) \wedge FPPequal (x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{11}, x_{2min}, y_{2min}, \delta_{21})$ .

- $FRRcontain (FR_1, FR_2): \neg FRRequal (FR_1, FR_2) \wedge (FRPcontain (FR_1, x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_{22}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{min}, y_{min}, \delta_{22})) \wedge (FRPcontain (FR_1, x_{2max}, y_{2min}, \delta_{23}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{2max}, y_{2min}, \delta_{23})) \wedge (FRPcontain (FR_1, x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_{24}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{2max}, y_{2max}, \delta_{24})) \wedge (FRPcontain (FR_1, x_{2min}, y_{2max}, \delta_{21}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{2min}, y_{2max}, \delta_{21}))$ .
- $FRRoverlap (FR_1, FR_2): FRLintersect (FR_1, FL_{21}) \vee FRLintersect (FR_1, FL_{22}) \vee FRLintersect (FR_1, FL_{23}) \vee FRLintersect (FR_1, FL_{24})$ .
- $FRRmeet (FR_1, FR_2): (FRPmeet (FR_2, x_{1min}, y_{1min}, \delta_{12}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_2, x_{1max}, y_{1min}, \delta_{13}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_2, x_{1max}, y_{1max}, \delta_{14}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_2, x_{1min}, y_{1max}, \delta_{11}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{2min}, y_{2max}, \delta_{21}) \vee FRPmeet (FR_1, x_{2min}, y_{2max}, \delta_{21})) \wedge \neg (FRRequal (FR_1, FR_2) \vee FRRoverlap (FR_1, FR_2) \vee FRRcontain (FR_1, FR_2) \vee FRRcontain (FR_2, FR_1))$ .
- $FRRdisjoint (FR_1, FR_2): (FRLdisjoint (FR_1, FL_{21}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_1, FL_{22}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_1, FL_{23}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_1, FL_{24}) \wedge \neg FRRcontain (FR_1, FR_2)) \vee (FRLdisjoint (FR_2, FL_{11}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_2, FL_{12}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_2, FL_{13}) \wedge FRLdisjoint (FR_2, FL_{14}) \wedge \neg FRRcontain (FR_2, FR_1))$ .

### 3. Correspondences between Fuzzy Spatial Topological Relations and Spatial Topological Relations

In this section, we present correspondences between fuzzy spatial topological relations and spatial topological relations on the basis of studies in the above section. The correspondences come from six cases: Point and point, line and point, line and line, region and point, region and line, region and region.

For fuzzy relations of *FPs*, *FPPequal* is the fuzzy relation if there are possible equal points and *FPPdisjoint* is the fuzzy relation if there are no possible equal points.

For fuzzy relations of a *FP* and a fuzzy line, *FLPmeet* is the fuzzy relation if there is a possible point meeting a possible line; *FLPcontain* is the relation if there is a possible line containing possible points and there is no possible point meeting a possible line; *FLPdisjoint* is the relation if all possible points and all possible lines are disjoint.

For fuzzy relations of two fuzzy lines, *FLLintersect* is the fuzzy relation if there is a possible line of one *FL* intersecting a possible line of the other fuzzy line; *FLLequal* is the fuzzy relation if there are two possible equal lines of two fuzzy lines; *FLLcontain* is the fuzzy relation if the minimum and maximum ending points of a possible line of one *FL* are contained by a possible line of the other fuzzy line; *FLLoverlap* is the fuzzy relation if the maximum ending point of a possible line of one *FL* is contained by a possible line of the other *FL* and the minimum ending point of a possible line of the other *FL* is contained by a possible line of this fuzzy line; *FLLmeet* is the fuzzy relation if there is an ending point of a possible line of one *FL* meeting an ending point of a possible line of the other fuzzy line;

*FLDisjoint* is the fuzzy relation if all the two possible lines of two fuzzy lines are disjoint.

For fuzzy relations of a *FP* and a fuzzy region, it is *FRPdisjoint* if all possible points of the *FP* and all possible regions of *FR* are disjoint; it is *FRPmeet* if there is a possible point of the *FP* meeting a possible region of *FR* and not all possible points of *FP* staying outside or inside all possible regions of the fuzzy region; it is *FRPcontain* if all possible points of *FP* are contained by all possible regions of the fuzzy region.

For fuzzy relations of a *FL* and a fuzzy region, it is *FRLcontain* if all possible lines of *FL* are contained by all possible regions of the fuzzy region; it is *FRLdisjoint* if all possible lines of *FL* and all possible regions of *FR* are disjoint; it is *FRLmeet* if there is a possible line of *FL* meeting a possible region of *FR* and their fuzzy relation is not *FRLcontain* or *FRLdisjoint*; it is *FRLintersect* if there is a possible line of *FL* intersecting a possible region of *FR* and their fuzzy relation is not *FRLcontain* or *FRLdisjoint* or *FRLmeet*.

For fuzzy relations of two fuzzy regions, it is *FRRdisjoint* if all possible regions of one *FR* and all possible regions of the other *FR* are disjoint; it is *FRRcontain* if all possible regions of one *FR* are contained by all possible regions of the other fuzzy region; it is *FRRoverlap* if there is a possible region of one *FR* overlaps a possible region of the other *FR* and their fuzzy relation is not *FRRdisjoint* or *FRRcontain*; it is *FRRmeet* if there is a possible region of one *FR* meeting a possible region of the other *FR* and their fuzzy relation is not *FRRdisjoint*, *FRRcontain* or *FRRoverlap*; it is *FRRequal* if a possible region of one *FR* and a possible region of the other *FR* are equal and their fuzzy relation is not *FRRdisjoint*, *FRRcontain*, *FRRoverlap* or *FRRmeet*.

In order to, present correspondences between fuzzy spatial topological relations and spatial topological relations, Figure 1 shows their correspondences. In Figure 1, it is denoted as cross if there are no correspondences; it is denoted as tick if there are correspondences and the fuzzy relation has the corresponding crisp relation; it is blank if there are correspondences but the fuzzy relation has no corresponding crisp relation.

			FPPequal	FPPdisjoint	FLPmeet	FLPcontain	FLPdisjoint	FLLequal
1	2	3	√	√	×			
4	5	6	×	×	×	×	√	√
equal (1)			FLLdisjoint	FLLmeet	FLLcontain	FLLoverlap	FLLintersect	FRRdisjoint
disjoint (2)			√	√	√	√	√	×
overlap (3)			FRPmeet	FRPcontain	FRLcontain	FRLintersect	FRLmeet	FRLdisjoint
intersect (4)			×	√	×	×	×	×
meet (5)			FRRequal	FRRcontain	FRRoverlap	FRRmeet	FRRdisjoint	
contain (6)			√	√	√	√	√	

Figure 1. Correspondences between fuzzy and crisp spatial relations.

## 4. Determination of Fuzzy Spatial Topological Relations

In this section, we present how to determine fuzzy spatial topological relations. We firstly propose a general algorithm for determining fuzzy relations, and then an example is given to explain it.

There are 23 fuzzy relations. Each of them needs an algorithm to determine fuzzy relations. Since, there are some common points in each of them, we propose a general algorithm. Then, if a certain fuzzy relation is required, the general algorithm can be extended.

The Algorithm 1 is a general algorithm for determining fuzzy relations. It contains two loops in order to compare all possible fuzzy relations. The possibility of the relation employs cumulative way to compute. The finally returned value is divided by all membership degrees because each desired membership degree is obtained by two membership degrees, which are composed of two *FPS*s. For that reason, membership degrees should be transformed into relative values.

*Algorithm 1:* Frelation  $Y, Z$ .

1. for ( $k = 1; k \leq X; k++$ )
2. let  $\delta_k = 0$
3. end for
4. for ( $m = 1; m \leq i; i++$ )
5. for ( $n = 1; n \leq m; n++$ )
6. for ( $r = 1; r \leq X; r++$ )
7. if  $F_r$ relation ( $Y, Z$ )
8.  $\delta_r = \delta_r + \delta_X$
9. end for
10. end for
11. end for
12. if true ( $F_r$ relation)
13. return  $\delta_T / \sum_{i=1}^X \delta_i$

For the algorithm, some tips need to be explained:  $Y$  and  $Z$  indicate two fuzzy spatial objects (it can be further explained by their representing points);  $X$  indicates number of fuzzy relations between  $Y$  and  $Z$ .  $F_r$ relation ( $Y, Z$ ) compares fuzzy relations  $X$  times according to definition 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, or 9;  $T$  indicates the number satisfying fuzzy relation ranging from 1 to  $X$ , and the returned value is divided by all the possible membership degrees.

In succession, we give an example to describe process of determining fuzzy relations using the proposed algorithm. For convenience, we use the example of two fuzzy regions.

Consider two fuzzy regions  $FR_1 = \{(1, 2, 0.6, 6, 7, 0.7), (2, 4, 0.4, 7, 8, 0.3)\}$  and  $FR_2 = \{(6, 3, 0.8, 9, 10, 0.6), (6, 1, 0.2, 9, 3, 0.4)\}$ . According to line 10 in algorithm  $FRR$ relation, we can get the fuzzy relation of  $FR_1$  and  $FR_2$  is  $FRR$ overlap. The *meet* pair are  $\{(1, 2, 0.6, 6, 7, 0.7), (6, 3, 0.8, 9, 10, 0.6)\}$ ,  $\{(1, 2, 0.6, 6, 7, 0.7), (6, 1, 0.2, 9, 3, 0.4)\}$ ; the *overlap* pair is  $\{(2, 4, 0.4, 7, 8, 0.3), (6, 3, 0.8, 9, 10, 0.6)\}$ ; the *disjoint* pair is  $\{(2, 4, 0.4, 7, 8, 0.3), (6, 1, 0.2, 9, 3, 0.4)\}$ . Possibility of each relation is:  $\delta_r = 0 + 0.6 \times 0.7 \times 0.8 \times 0.6 + 0.6 \times$

$0.7 \times 0.2 \times 0.4 = 0.2352$ ;  $\delta_3 = 0 + 0.4 \times 0.3 \times 0.8 \times 0.6 = 0.0576$ ;  $\delta_5 = 0 + 0.4 \times 0.3 \times 0.2 \times 0.4 = 0.0096$ . Finally, we get the possibility of each relation:  $\delta_4 / (\delta_1 + \delta_2 + \delta_3 + \delta_4 + \delta_5) \approx 0.778$ ;  $\delta_3 / (\delta_1 + \delta_2 + \delta_3 + \delta_4 + \delta_5) \approx 0.190$ ;  $\delta_5 / (\delta_1 + \delta_2 + \delta_3 + \delta_4 + \delta_5) = 0.032$ . Consequently, the possibility that the relation of the two fuzzy regions is *meet* approximately amounts to 0.778; is *overlap* approximately amounts to 0.190; is *disjoint* approximately amounts to 0.032.

## 5. Conclusions

In order to present a general characterization of representing and determining fuzzy spatial relations, definitions of fuzzy spatial objects and their relations are given. Then, correspondences between fuzzy and crisp spatial relations are investigated. Finally, a general algorithm for determining all fuzzy relations is proposed and a followed example explains it. Compared with other methods, our approaches focus on correspondences between fuzzy spatial relations and spatial relations more specifically from mathematical point of view, which has less been studied. What's more, a general formal algorithm for determining fuzzy relations is proposed, while majority of others are methods for specific domains. Consequently, our approaches can be applied to more applications than others.

In the future, we intend to apply the proposed approaches to spatiotemporal applications. A possible solution is to integrate our approaches with MBR strategies. Another future research topic is extending two-dimensional spatial data to three-dimensional one, and discussing their continuous cases.

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