

# A 2D Kinetic Triangulation with Near-Quadratic Topological Changes <sup>\*</sup>

Pankaj K. Agarwal <sup>†</sup>      Yusu Wang <sup>‡</sup>      Hai Yu <sup>§</sup>

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## Abstract

A triangulation of a set  $S$  of points in the plane is a subdivision of the convex hull of  $S$  into triangles whose vertices are points of  $S$ . Given a set  $S$  of  $n$  points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , each moving independently, we wish to maintain a triangulation of  $S$ . The triangulation needs to be updated periodically as the points in  $S$  move, so the goal is to maintain a triangulation with a small number of topological events, each being the insertion or deletion of an edge. We propose a kinetic data structure (KDS) that processes  $n^2 2^{O(\sqrt{\log n \cdot \log \log n})}$  topological events with high probability if the trajectories of input points are algebraic curves of fixed degree. Each topological event can be processed in  $O(\log n)$  time. This is the first known KDS for maintaining a triangulation that processes a near-quadratic number of topological events, and almost matches the  $\Omega(n^2)$  lower bound [1]. The number of topological events can be reduced to  $nk \cdot 2^{O(\sqrt{\log k \cdot \log \log n})}$  if only  $k$  of the points are moving.

## 1 Introduction

A *triangulation* of a set  $S$  of points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  is a subdivision of the convex hull of  $S$  into triangles whose vertices are points of  $S$ . Motivated by applications in several areas, including computer graphics, physical simulation, collision detection, and geographic information systems, triangulations have been widely studied [9, 12]. With the advancement in technology, many applications, for instance, video games, virtual reality, dynamic simulations, and robotics call for maintaining a triangulation as the points move. For example, the arbitrary Eulerian-Lagrangian method [11] provides a way to integrate the motion of fluids and solids within a moving finite-element mesh. The time axis is discretized and the mesh vertices are moved between each time step so as to respect the interfaces between the different media. However, numerical problems arise when the mesh becomes too distorted, and the mesh generated depends on the discretization of time. Another approach to build more adaptive triangulations for such problems is to work in the space-time domain [13].

Given a set  $S$  of points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , each moving independently, we wish to maintain a triangulation of  $S$ . As the points in  $S$  move, any fixed triangulation of  $S$  also deforms continuously. However, a triangulation computed for the initial configuration cannot be guaranteed to remain valid all the time. Therefore, it becomes necessary to *update* a triangulation over time by deleting some of the existing

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<sup>†</sup>Department of Computer Science, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708, USA. [pankaj@cs.duke.edu](mailto:pankaj@cs.duke.edu)

<sup>‡</sup>Department of Computer Science and Engineering, Ohio State University, 2015 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43210, USA. [yusu@cse.ohio-state.edu](mailto:yusu@cse.ohio-state.edu)

<sup>§</sup>Department of Computer Science, Duke University, Durham, NC 27708, USA. [fishhai@cs.duke.edu](mailto:fishhai@cs.duke.edu)

edges and inserting some other edges. We refer to each such insertion or deletion in the triangulation as a *topological event*. The topological events occur only at discrete time instances. In this paper we study how to maintain a triangulation so that the number of topological events is near-quadratic.

**Related work.** Since Atallah’s seminal paper [7] on kinetic geometry, much work has been devoted to this area due to its importance in both theory and applications of computational geometry; see [3, 5, 14] for reviews on kinetic geometric algorithms and data structures. The early work on kinetic geometry mostly focused on bounding the number of combinatorial or topological changes in various geometric structures as the input objects move. Basch *et al.* [8] introduced a general framework, the so-called *kinetic data structure* (KDS), for maintaining a discrete attribute of objects in predictable motion. Their approach to maintain a given attribute  $A(t)$  for a continuously changing scene  $S(t)$  is as follows: at a given time  $t$ , we create a proof of correctness of the attribute based on elementary tests called *certificates*. For each certificate, we compute the time at which it fails and put it in a global event queue. As the attribute cannot change while all tests remain valid, it is unnecessary to perform any computation until the first certificate fails. When a certificate fails, the discrete attribute is updated if it needs to be, and a new proof of correctness is constructed by making certain modifications to the previous proof of correctness. Their approach led to efficient algorithms for several kinetic problems [14].

In the context of triangulation, a longstanding open problem is to bound the number of topological events in the Delaunay triangulation of a set of moving points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . The best known upper bound is near-cubic if trajectories of input points are algebraic curves of fixed degree; the bound is cubic if each point moves with unit speed in a fixed direction [6]. Although it is conjectured that the number of topological changes is  $O(n^2)$ , no such bound is known even for maintaining an arbitrary triangulation of a set of moving points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . Agarwal *et al.* [2] described a scheme for maintaining a triangulation of a set of points that incurs roughly  $n^{7/3}$  topological changes if the points are moving linearly. Chew [10] proved that the Delaunay triangulation of  $S$  under  $L_1$ -metric changes  $O(n^2\alpha(n))$  times, where  $\alpha(n)$  is the inverse Ackermann function; however, the Delaunay triangulation under  $L_1$ -metric is not necessarily a triangulation of the convex hull of the point set.

Agarwal *et al.* [1] showed that the convex hull of a moving point set may change  $\Theta(n^2)$  times if the points are moving linearly; this result immediately implies a lower bound  $\Omega(n^2)$  on the number of topological changes to any triangulation. This lower bound on the number of topological events holds even if a linear number of Steiner points are allowed [4].

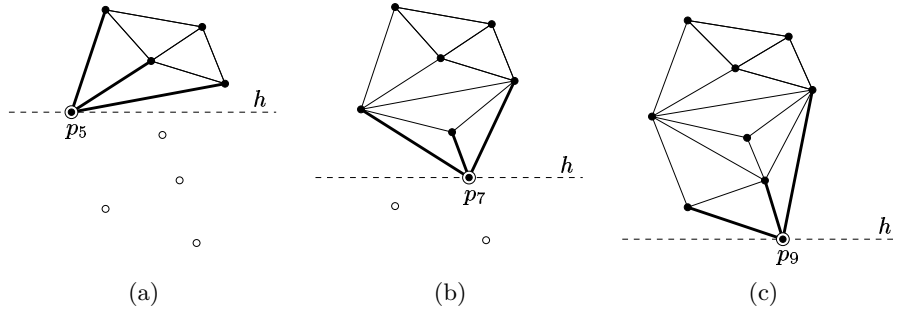
**Our results.** Let  $S = \{p_1, \dots, p_n\}$  be a set of points moving in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . Let  $p_i(t) = (x_i(t), y_i(t))$  denote the position of  $p_i$  at time  $t$ , and let  $S(t)$  denote the configuration of  $S$  at time  $t$ . We assume that  $x_i(\cdot), y_i(\cdot)$  are polynomials of fixed degree. We describe a kinetic data structure for maintaining a triangulation of  $S(t)$  that processes  $n^2 2^{O(\sqrt{\log n \cdot \log \log n})}$  topological events with high probability, each of which is insertion or deletion of an edge. Each topological event can be processed in  $O(\log n)$  time. This is the first kinetic data structure for maintaining a triangulation that processes near-quadratic topological events. The number of events can be reduced to  $nk \cdot 2^{O(\sqrt{\log k \cdot \log \log n})}$  if only  $k$  of the points are moving.

Our algorithm relies on a randomized hierarchical scheme. We first describe the so-called fan triangulation (Section 2), and then introduce the notion of constrained fan triangulation with respect to a planar subdivision (Section 3). We choose a random sample  $R \subseteq S$ , compute a triangulation of  $R$  recursively, and then compute the constrained fan triangulation of  $S$  with respect to the triangulation computed for  $R$  (Section 4). We analyze the events in constrained fan triangulation and show that if  $R$  is a random subset of appropriate size, the total number of events is near-quadratic (Section 5).

## 2 Fan Triangulation

Let  $S = \{p_1, \dots, p_n\}$  be a set of  $n$  (stationary) points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , sorted in non-increasing order of their  $y$ -coordinates, i.e.,  $y(p_1) \geq y(p_2) \dots \geq y(p_n)$ . For a point  $q \in \mathbb{R}^2$ , let  $S_q = \{p_i \in S \mid y(p_i) > y(q)\}$ . Denote by  $\mathcal{V}(q) \subseteq S$  the set of points on  $\partial \text{conv}(S_q)$  that are visible from  $q$ , i.e.,  $p_i \in \mathcal{V}(q)$  if the relative interior of the segment  $qp_i$  does not intersect  $\text{conv}(S_q)$ . Furthermore, let  $\rho(q)$  denote the point from  $\mathcal{V}(q)$  such that the oriented line  $\overrightarrow{q\rho(q)}$  is the left tangent of  $\text{conv}(S_q)$ , and let  $\gamma(q)$  denote the point from  $\mathcal{V}(q)$  such that the oriented line  $\overrightarrow{q\gamma(q)}$  is the right tangent of  $\text{conv}(S_q)$ . Obviously,  $\mathcal{V}(q)$  is the subset of vertices on  $\partial \text{conv}(S_q)$  lying between  $\rho(q)$  and  $\gamma(q)$ , assuming that the vertices are ordered in counterclockwise direction.

The *fan triangulation* of  $S$  is constructed by sweeping a horizontal line  $h$  from  $y = +\infty$  to  $y = -\infty$ . At any time the algorithm maintains the fan triangulation of points from  $S$  that lie above  $h$ . It updates the triangulation when the sweep line crosses a point  $p_i \in S$  by adding the edges  $p_i p_j$  for all  $p_j \in \mathcal{V}(p_i)$ ; see Figure 1. The triangulation at the end of the sweep is the fan triangulation of  $S$ , which we denote as  $\mathbb{F}(S)$ .



**Figure 1.** Construction of fan triangulation at various stages — the point denoted by double circle is being inserted, and the thick edges are added. The points are ordered from top to bottom by their indices.

We classify the edges of  $\mathbb{F}(S)$  incident upon a point  $p_i \in S$  into two classes:

- (i) *up edges*: edges  $p_i p_j$  so that  $j < i$ ;  $p_j$  is also referred to as an *up neighbor* of  $p_i$ .
- (ii) *down edges*: edges  $p_i p_j$  so that  $j > i$ ;  $p_j$  is also called a *down neighbor* of  $p_i$ . Furthermore, if  $p_i = \rho(p_j)$  or  $p_i = \gamma(p_j)$ , then edge  $p_i p_j$  is referred to as a *convex edge*; otherwise, it is a *reflex edge*.

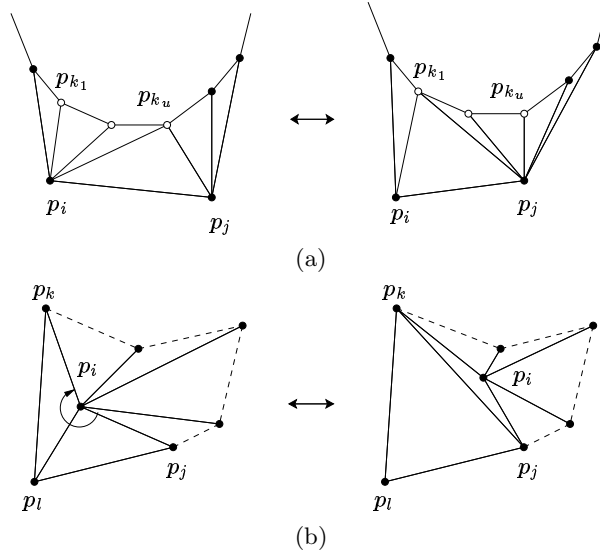
The following properties of  $\mathbb{F}(S)$  are straightforward to prove.

- (F1) For  $1 \leq i < n$ ,  $p_i p_{i+1}$  is an edge of  $\mathbb{F}(S)$ .
- (F2) For each  $p_i$ , at most one of its down edges is a reflex edge. Indeed if  $p_i p_j$  is a reflex edge of  $p_i$ , then  $p_i$  lies in the interior of  $\text{conv}(S_{p_{j+1}})$ , and therefore there is no down edge  $p_i p_k$ , for  $k > j$ . Let the edges  $p_i p_{j_1}, p_i p_{j_2}, \dots, p_i p_{j_k}$  be the sequence of the down edges incident upon  $p_i$  sorted in clockwise direction. Then either  $j_1 < \dots < j_k$  and  $p_i = \rho(p_{j_l})$  for  $l < k$  ( $l \leq k$  if  $p_i p_{j_k}$  is not a reflex edge, e.g.,  $p_5$  in Figure 1 (c)), or  $j_1 > \dots > j_k$  and  $p_i = \gamma(p_{j_l})$  for  $l < k$  ( $l \leq k$  if  $p_i p_{j_k}$  is not a reflex edge, e.g.,  $p_4$  in Figure 1 (c)).

Now suppose we are given a set of moving points  $S(t) = \{p_1(t), p_2(t), \dots, p_n(t)\}$  in the plane, and we wish to maintain  $\mathbb{F}(S(t))$  for any  $t \in \mathbb{R}$ . As the points from  $S$  move,  $\mathbb{F}(S(t))$  deforms continuously. But the topology of  $\mathbb{F}(S(t))$  changes only at discrete times, which we refer to as *events*. Note the

difference between events and topological events: an event may cause multiple topological events to the triangulation. As observed in [2], there are two types of events.

**Ordering event.** The  $y$ -coordinates of two points  $p_i$  and  $p_j$  become equal at time  $t_0$ . Assume that  $y(p_i(t_0^-)) > y(p_j(t_0^-))$  and  $y(p_i(t_0^+)) < y(p_j(t_0^+))$ , where  $t_0^-$  is the time immediately before  $t_0$  and  $t_0^+$  is the time immediately after  $t_0$ . By property (F1),  $p_i(t_0^-)p_j(t_0^-)$  and  $p_j(t_0^+)p_i(t_0^+)$  are present in  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^-))$  and  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^+))$ , respectively. In fact, both of them are necessarily convex edges; assume  $p_i(t_0^-) = \rho(p_j(t_0^-))$  and  $p_j(t_0^+) = \gamma(p_i(t_0^+))$ . Let  $p_{k_1}, p_{k_2}, \dots, p_{k_u}$  be the sequence of vertices in  $\mathcal{V}_{p_i p_j}(t_0) = \mathcal{V}(p_i(t_0^-)) \cap \mathcal{V}(p_j(t_0^+))$  ordered in counterclockwise direction along  $\partial \text{conv}(S_{p_i p_j}(t_0))$ . Obviously, at time  $t_0^-$ ,  $p_{k_l} p_i$ , for all  $1 \leq l \leq u$ , and  $p_{k_u} p_j$  are edges in  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^-))$ , while at time  $t_0^+$ ,  $p_{k_l} p_j$ , for all  $1 \leq l \leq u$ , and  $p_{k_1} p_i$  are edges in  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^+))$ . So to update the triangulation, we delete the edges  $p_{k_2} p_i, \dots, p_{k_u} p_i$  and insert the edges  $p_{k_1} p_j, \dots, p_{k_{u-1}} p_j$  to obtain  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^+))$ . See Figure 2 (a). Hence, an ordering event induces  $O(|\mathcal{V}_{p_i p_j}(t_0)|)$  topological events.



**Figure 2.** (a) Ordering event. Points denoted by hollow circles are from  $\mathcal{V}_{p_i p_j}(t_0)$ . (b) Visibility event.

**Visibility event.** For a point  $p_j \in S$ , either  $\rho(p_j)$  or  $\gamma(p_j)$  changes at time  $t_0$ . Suppose that  $p_i(t_0^-) = \rho(p_j(t_0^-))$  and  $p_k(t_0^+) = \rho(p_j(t_0^+))$  with  $y(p_k(t_0)) > y(p_i(t_0))$ ; the other cases are symmetric. Then  $p_i(t_0), p_j(t_0)$ , and  $p_k(t_0)$  are collinear. Furthermore, among all the convex edges incident upon  $p_i$  at  $t_0^-$ ,  $p_i p_j$  is the leftmost edge. It then follows from property (F2) of the fan triangulation that there is at most one edge (the reflex edge), say  $p_i p_{l_i}$ , between  $p_i p_j$  and  $p_i p_k$  in clockwise order around  $p_i$ . If  $p_i p_{l_i}$  does not exist, then  $p_i, p_j$ , and  $p_k$  are collinear on  $\partial \text{conv}(S(t_0))$ . To update the fan triangulation, we delete the edge  $p_i p_{l_i}$  (if it exists) and insert the edge  $p_j p_k$  (Figure 2 (b)). Each visibility event induces  $O(1)$  topological events.

In order to detect the above events, we maintain three families of certificates in a global priority queue:

- (i) For each edge  $p_i p_j \in \mathbb{F}(S(t))$ , the next time  $t_0$  at which  $y(p_i(t_0)) = y(p_j(t_0))$ .
- (ii) For each triangle  $p_i p_j p_k \in \mathbb{F}(S(t))$ , with  $y(p_j) < y(p_i) < y(p_k)$ , the next time  $t_0$  at which  $p_i(t_0) \in p_j(t_0) p_k(t_0)$ .

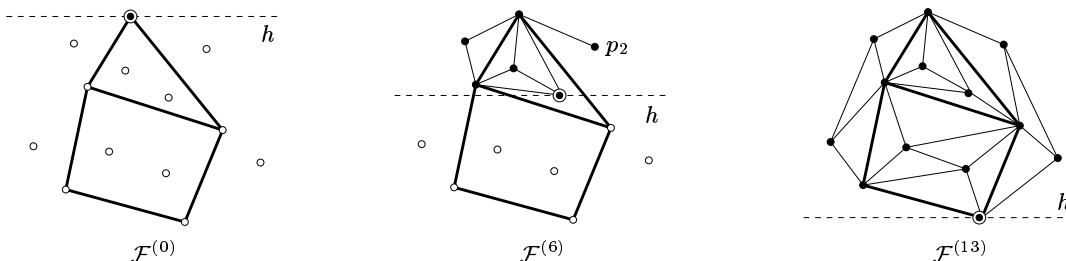
- (iii) For each point  $p_i$ , let  $p_j$  be the point with the minimum  $y$ -coordinate so that  $p_i = \rho(p_j)$  (resp.  $p_i = \gamma(p_j)$ ) if it exists. We add the time  $t_0$  at which  $p_j(t_0), p_i(t_0)$ , and  $\rho(p_i(t_0))$  (resp.  $\gamma(p_i(t_0))$ ) become collinear.

By our above discussion, it is easy to verify that these certificates detect all events. Moreover, each topological event can be processed in  $O(\log n)$  time, including the time spent in updating the global event queue.

### 3 Constrained Fan Triangulation

In this section we introduce the notion of *constrained fan triangulation* and show how to maintain it under motion. As earlier, let  $S = \{p_1, \dots, p_n\}$  be a set of  $n$  (stationary) points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  sorted in non-increasing order of their  $y$ -coordinates, and let  $\Pi$  be a set of segments with pairwise-disjoint interiors whose endpoints lie in  $S$ . We will be mostly interested in the case in which  $\Pi$  is a triangulation of a subset  $R \subseteq S$ , but we give the definition for the general setting.

We construct the constrained fan triangulation of  $S$  by sweeping a horizontal line  $h$  from  $y = +\infty$  to  $y = -\infty$ . Let  $\mathbb{F}^{(0)} = \Pi$ , and let  $\mathbb{F}^{(i-1)}$  be the *partial* triangulation computed after the sweep line has processed  $p_{i-1}$ . If the interior of segment  $p_i p_j$ , for  $j < i$ , does not intersect  $\mathbb{F}^{(i-1)}$ , then  $p_i p_j$  is called *visible* with respect to  $\mathbb{F}^{(i-1)}$ . Define  $\mathcal{V}(p_i)$ ,  $\rho(p_i)$ , and  $\gamma(p_i)$  similarly as before, under the modified concept of visibility (with respect to  $\mathbb{F}^{(i-1)}$ ); note that  $\rho(p_i)$  and  $\gamma(p_i)$  depend on  $\Pi$ . When the sweep line crosses  $p_i$ , we compute  $\mathbb{F}^{(i)}$  by adding the edges  $p_i p_j$  for all vertices  $p_j$  in  $\mathcal{V}(p_i)$ . See Figure 3. Note that unlike the sweeping process to construct the fan triangulation,  $\mathbb{F}^{(i)}$  is not necessarily a constrained fan triangulation of the already swept points. In fact,  $\mathbb{F}^{(i)}$  might not even be a triangulation; it is possible that only one point from  $p_1, \dots, p_{i-1}$  is visible from  $p_i$  due to the constraint  $\Pi$ , in which case we add only one edge to  $\mathbb{F}^{(i)}$ , and this “dangling” edge of  $\mathbb{F}^{(i)}$  will become part of a triangle at a later stage; see the edge incident upon  $p_2$  in  $\mathbb{F}^{(6)}$  of Figure 3. The final triangulation  $\mathbb{F}^{(n)}$  is the constrained fan triangulation of  $S$  (with respect to  $\Pi$ ), denoted by  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$ .



**Figure 3.** Constructing constrained fan triangulation with respect to  $\Pi$  (thick edges) at various stages.

Observe that if  $\Pi = \partial \text{conv}(S)$ , then  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi) = \mathbb{F}(S)$ . If  $\Pi$  is a triangulation of a subset  $R \subseteq S$ , then  $\Pi$  partitions  $S$  into various subsets:  $S_\Delta = S \cap \Delta$  (including vertices of  $\Delta$ ), where  $\Delta \in \Pi$  is a triangle or  $\Delta = \Sigma$  is the exterior of the convex hull of  $R$ . By the above observation, the constrained fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$  restricted to  $S_\Delta$  is the same as  $\mathbb{F}(S_\Delta)$  for  $\Delta \in \Pi$ . Hence,  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$  can be computed by constructing independently  $\mathbb{F}(S_\Delta)$  for each triangle  $\Delta \in \Pi$  and constructing  $\mathbb{F}(S_\Sigma, \partial \text{conv}(R))$  within the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R)$ , i.e., the constrained fan triangulation of  $S_\Sigma$  with respect to the boundary of  $\text{conv}(R)$ .

The following properties of constrained fan triangulation are generalizations of (F1) and (F2).

- (C1) For  $j < i$ , if  $p_j$  is the lowest vertex visible from  $p_i$ , then  $p_j p_i$  is an edge in  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$ .

(C2) If  $p_i p_{j_1}, \dots, p_i p_{j_k}$  are the down edges incident upon  $p_i$  sorted in clockwise direction so that no edges of  $\Pi$  lie between them, then either  $j_1 < \dots < j_k$  and  $p_i = \rho(p_{j_l})$  for  $l < k$  ( $l \leq k$  if  $p_i p_{j_k}$  is not a reflex edge), or  $j_1 > \dots > j_k$  and  $p_i = \gamma(p_{j_l})$  for  $l < k$  ( $l \leq k$  if  $p_i p_{j_k}$  is not a reflex edge).

Next, we describe how to maintain  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$  as the points in  $S$  move. For the time being, we assume that  $\Pi$  is a triangulation of a subset  $R \subseteq S$  and that motion is such that the topology of  $\Pi$  does not change and remains a valid triangulation of  $R$  throughout the motion. In addition to ordering and visibility events, a new type of event, called *crossing event*, arises when a point of  $S \setminus R$  crosses an edge of  $\Pi$ . In the following, we discuss each of them.

**Ordering event.** There are two points  $p_i, p_j \in S$  so that (i)  $p_i(t_0)$  is visible from  $p_j(t_0)$  with respect to  $\Pi$ , and (ii)  $y(p_i(t_0)) = y(p_j(t_0))$ . An ordering event is processed in the same way as in Section 2. If  $p_i(t_0)$  is not visible from  $p_j(t_0)$ , then  $\mathbb{F}(S, \Pi)$  does not change at  $t_0$ . Note that the visibility relation between two points can change only by a crossing or a visibility event described below.

**Visibility event.** For a point  $p_i \in S$ , either  $\rho(p_i)$  or  $\gamma(p_i)$  changes at time  $t_0$ , and  $p_i$  does not cross any edge of  $\Pi$  during  $[t_0^-, t_0^+]$ . We process this event in the same way as in Section 2. Note that  $\rho(p_i)$  or  $\gamma(p_i)$  could also change as  $p_i$  crosses some edge from  $\Pi$ , which will be covered by the crossing event below.

**Crossing event.** A point  $p_i$  crosses an edge  $p_j p_k$  of  $\Pi$  at time  $t_0$ ; assume  $y(p_k(t_0)) > y(p_j(t_0))$ . Recall that  $\Pi$  is a triangulation of a subset of  $S$ .  $\Pi$  partitions  $\mathbb{R}^2$  into several connected components, each region being either a triangle of  $\Pi$  or the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R)$ . Suppose  $p_i$  moves from the region  $\Delta^-$  to  $\Delta^+$ . Let  $S_{\Delta^-}$  (resp.  $S_{\Delta^+}$ ) be the subset of points of  $S$  in  $\Delta^-$  (resp.  $\Delta^+$ ) at  $t_0^-$ . Then the crossing event corresponds to deleting  $p_i$  from  $S_{\Delta^-}$ , inserting it into  $S_{\Delta^+}$ , and updating the triangulations in  $\Delta^-$  and  $\Delta^+$ . First, let us consider  $\Delta^-$ .

Given an arbitrary point  $q \in S$ , the *star* of  $q$ , denoted by  $\text{St}(q)$ , is the union of triangles adjacent to  $q$ .  $\text{St}(q)$  is a star-shaped polygon with  $q$  in its kernel — every point in  $\text{St}(q)$  is visible from  $q$ . The *link* of  $q$ , denoted by  $\text{Lk}(q)$ , is defined as  $\partial \text{St}(q)$ .  $\text{Lk}(q)$  is a closed polygonal curve. If  $q \in \partial \text{conv}(S)$ , then  $q \in \text{Lk}(q)$ ; otherwise  $q$  lies in the interior of  $\text{St}(q)$ . Given the fan triangulation of  $S$ ,  $\text{Lk}(q)$  consists of a convex chain, corresponding to the up neighbors of  $q$ , a  $y$ -monotone polygonal chain, corresponding to the down neighbors of  $q$ , and one more edge that connects the lowest neighbor of  $q$  to an up neighbor of  $q$  (or to  $q$  if  $q \in \partial \text{conv}(S)$ ); see Figure 4 (a).

If  $p_i \in \partial \text{conv}(S)$  at time  $t_0^-$  (in which case  $\Delta^-$  represents the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R)$ ), we can simply remove edges  $p_i p_k$  and  $p_i p_j$  from  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^-), \Pi)$ . We now assume that  $p_i(t_0^-) \notin \partial \text{conv}(S(t_0^-))$ , implying that  $p_i(t_0^-) \notin \text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^-))$ .

**Lemma 1** *Within  $\Delta^-$ , any edge from  $\mathbb{F}(S(t_0^-), \Pi)$  not incident upon  $p_i$  at time  $t_0^-$  is present in  $\mathbb{F}(S(t), \Pi)$  for all  $t \in [t_0^-, t_0^+]$ .*

The above lemma is straightforward, as any two points that are previously visible to each other within  $\Delta^-$  will remain visible after  $p_i$  moves out of  $\Delta^-$ . In view of Lemma 1, we delete the edges incident upon  $p_i$  at time  $t_0^-$  and re-triangulate within  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^-))$ . The portion of the triangulation on and outside  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^-))$  remains unchanged. We re-triangulate within  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^-))$  as follows (Figure 4). Let  $Q = \langle p_k = q_0, q_1, \dots, q_w, q_{w+1}, \dots, q_u = p_j \rangle$  be the sequence of vertices on  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$ , where  $q_0, q_1, \dots, q_w$  is the convex chain formed by the up neighbors of  $p_i$ , and  $y(p_i) > y(q_{w+1}) > y(q_{w+2}) > \dots > y(q_u)$ . Since  $q_0, \dots, q_w$  are already in convex position, we only visit  $q_{w+1}, \dots, q_u$  in order. Without loss of generality, assume that  $p_i$  lies to the right of the edge  $p_k p_j$  at time  $t_0^-$ , i.e.,  $p_i$  crosses  $p_k p_j$  from

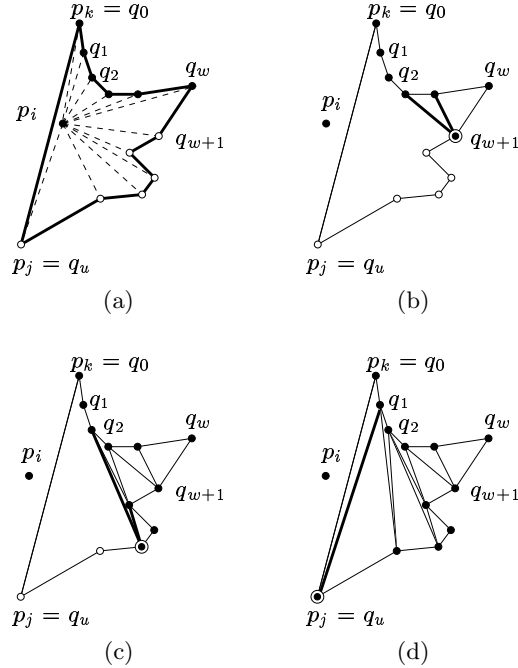
right to left; the other case can be handled symmetrically. Suppose we have processed  $q_{w+1}, \dots, q_{z-1}$ , i.e., added the new edges incident upon them. Letting  $\rho^{(i)}(\cdot) = \rho(\rho^{(i-1)}(\cdot))$ , we maintain a subsequence of  $Q$

$$\Phi^{(z-1)} = \langle q_{z-1} = \rho^{(0)}(q_{z-1}), \rho(q_{z-1}), \rho^{(2)}(q_{z-1}), \rho^{(3)}(q_{z-1}), \dots \rangle,$$

i.e., the vertices that appear on the left boundary of the convex hull of  $q_0, \dots, q_{z-1}$ . If the vertices  $q_{z-1}, \rho(q_{z-1}), \dots, \rho^{(l)}(q_{z-1})$  are visible from  $q_z$ , we then add the edges  $q_z q_{z-1}, q_z \rho(q_{z-1}), \dots, q_z \rho^{(l)}(q_{z-1})$ , delete  $q_{z-1}, \dots, \rho^{(l-1)}(q_{z-1})$  from the sequence, set

$$\Phi^{(z)} = \langle q_z, \rho(q_z) = \rho^{(l)}(q_{z-1}), \rho^{(l+1)}(q_{z-1}), \dots \rangle,$$

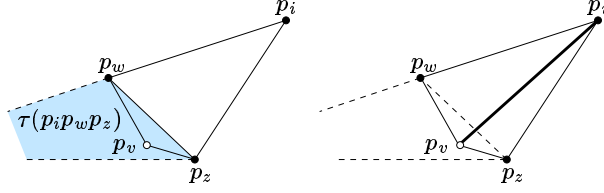
and repeat this process for  $q_{z+1}$  unless  $z = u$ .



**Figure 4.** Re-triangulation of  $\text{St}(p_i(t_0^-))$  after deleting  $p_i$ . The thick polygonal chain in (a) is  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^-))$ .

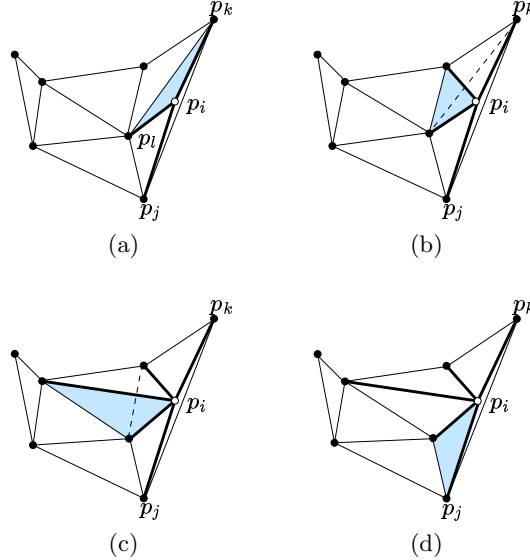
Next, we describe how to insert  $p_i$  into  $\Delta^+$  and construct  $\mathbb{F}(S_{\Delta^+} \cup \{p_i\})$  at time  $t_0^+$  from  $\mathbb{F}(S_{\Delta^+})$ . Roughly speaking, we need to do opposite of what we did in  $\Delta^-$ . That is, we identify  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^+))$  in  $\mathbb{F}(S_{\Delta^+} \cup \{p_i\})$ , delete the edges of  $\mathbb{F}(S_{\Delta^+})$  that lie within the polygon formed by  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^+))$ , and connect  $p_i$  to all the vertices on  $\text{Lk}(p_i(t_0^+))$  to form  $\text{St}(p_i(t_0^+))$ . We assume that  $\Delta^+$  lies to the left of  $p_k p_j$ . The following procedure performs these steps simultaneously.

Let  $p_l$  be the vertex in  $\Delta^+$  adjacent to the edge  $p_j p_k$  at time  $t_0^-$ . If  $p_l$  does not exist, then  $p_j p_k$  is an edge of  $\text{conv}(S)$ , and  $p_i$  becomes a vertex of  $\text{conv}(S)$ , in which case we simply add the triangle  $p_i p_j p_k$ . We thus assume that  $p_l$  exists. We add the edges  $p_i p_j$ ,  $p_i p_k$ , and  $p_i p_l$ . We maintain a stack  $\mathcal{S}$  of triangles. Initially, we push  $p_i p_l p_j$  and  $p_i p_k p_l$  to  $\mathcal{S}$  (with the latter being on the top of  $\mathcal{S}$ ). We perform the following procedure until  $\mathcal{S}$  becomes empty. An example is illustrated in Figure 6. For a triangle  $p_i p_w p_z$  with  $y(p_w) > y(p_z)$ , we define the region  $\tau(p_i p_w p_z)$  to be the intersection of the following three halfplanes: (i)  $y > y(p_z)$ ; (ii) the halfplane lying below the line  $p_i p_w$ ; and (iii) the halfplane bounded by the line  $p_w p_z$  that does not contain  $p_i$ ; see Figure 5. Intuitively, this region  $\tau(p_i p_w p_z)$  contains points that potentially should be visible to  $p_i$  if edge  $p_w p_z$  were not present.



**Figure 5.** If  $p_v$  lies inside the shaded region  $\tau(p_i p_w p_z)$ , then an edge flip is performed.

- (1) Remove the top triangle  $p_i p_w p_z$  from  $\mathcal{S}$ . Assume that  $y(p_w) > y(p_z)$ .
- (2) If  $p_w p_z$  is an edge of the convex hull or  $y(p_z) > y(p_i)$ , go to Step 1.
- (3) Let  $p_v$  be the other vertex adjacent to edge  $p_w p_z$ . If  $p_v \notin \tau(p_i p_w p_z)$ , go to Step 1.
- (4) Delete the edge  $p_w p_z$ , and insert the edge  $p_i p_v$  (an edge flip).
- (5) Push the triangle  $p_i p_w p_v$  to  $\mathcal{S}$ .
- (6) Push the triangle  $p_i p_w p_v$  to  $\mathcal{S}$ .

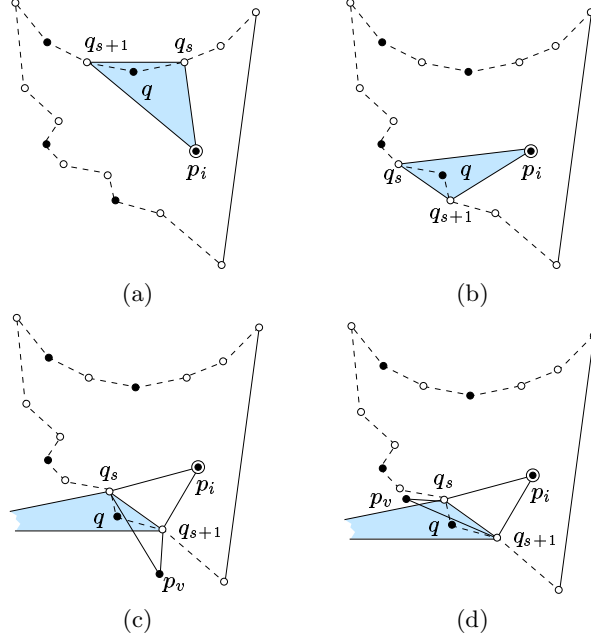


**Figure 6.** Updating  $\mathbb{F}(S_{\Delta^+})$  after inserting  $p_i$  — the shaded triangle is being processed, and the dashed edge was flipped.

By induction, one easily observes that the above algorithm constructs a valid triangulation  $F$  within  $\Delta^+$ . Let  $F^-$  and  $F^+$  denote the fan triangulation within  $\Delta^+$  at time  $t_0^-$  and  $t_0^+$  respectively.

**Lemma 2**  $F$  as constructed by the above procedure is the same as  $F^+$ .

**Proof:** Observe that if an edge from  $F$  or  $F^+$  does not have  $p_i$  as an endpoint, then the edge is present in  $F^-$  as well, because the newly added edges in  $F$  or  $F^+$  are all adjacent to  $p_i$ . Therefore, we only have to prove that the above procedure correctly identifies  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$  in  $F^+$ . Let  $Q = \langle p_k = q_0, q_1, \dots, q_u = p_j \rangle$  be the sequence of neighbors of  $p_i$  in the resulting triangulation  $F$ . To prove the lemma, we need to show that (i) any  $p_i q_z$  for  $0 \leq z \leq u$  exists in  $F^+$ , and (ii) for any  $p_i p_z \in F^+$ ,  $p_z \in Q$ . The first claim is easily shown by induction on the order in which the edges were added by the above procedure. At

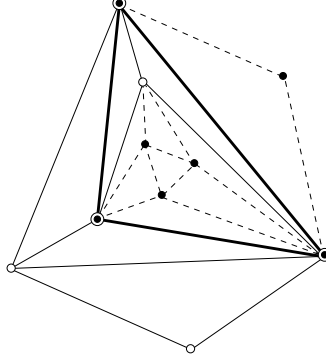


**Figure 7.** Dashed polygon is  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$ , with points denoted by hollow circles being vertices of  $Q$ . (a) (b)  $q$  lies inside triangle  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$ ; and (c) (d)  $q$  lies in the region  $\tau(p_i q_s q_{s+1})$  (shaded), but triangle  $p_v q_s q_{s+1}$  prevents vertex  $q$  from being connected to  $p_i$ . All cases lead to a contradiction.

any time, the newly added edge is guaranteed to be present in  $F^+$ . We sketch the proof for the second claim below.

We prove the second claim by contradiction. By the first claim,  $Q$  is a subset of  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$  at time  $t_0^+$  in  $F^+$ . Therefore, similar to  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$ ,  $Q$  consists of a convex chain  $q_0, q_1, \dots, q_w$ , corresponding to the up neighbors of  $p_i$  in  $Q$ , a  $y$ -monotone polygonal chain  $q_{w+1}, \dots, q_u$ , corresponding to the down neighbors of  $p_i$  in  $Q$ , and edge  $q_0 q_u$  (i.e.,  $p_k p_j$ ). See Figure 7. Moreover, edges  $p_i q_0, \dots, p_i q_u$  are ordered in clockwise or counterclockwise order around  $p_i$ . Assume that  $q_s$  and  $q_{s+1}$  are two consecutive vertices of  $Q$  such that there exists a point  $q \in \text{Lk}(p_i)$  lying between points  $q_s$  and  $q_{s+1}$  along  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$ . Obviously,  $q$  lies inside the wedge formed by  $\overrightarrow{p_i q_s}$  and  $\overrightarrow{p_i q_{s+1}}$ , as  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$  is star-shaped. We now distinguish two cases, each of which leads to a contradiction.

1.  $s + 1 \leq w$ . As  $q_0, \dots, q_w$  form a subset of a convex chain, triangle  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$  contains point  $q$  (Figure 7 (a)). By construction,  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$  is a triangle in  $F$ . But  $F$  is a valid triangulation, so triangle  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$  cannot contain any of the input point, a contradiction.
2.  $s + 1 > w$ . Recall that  $q$  lies in the wedge formed by the rays  $\overrightarrow{p_i q_s}$  and  $\overrightarrow{p_i q_{s+1}}$ . If  $q \in \Delta p_i q_s q_{s+1}$ , then we arrive at the same contradiction as in case 1 (Figure 7 (b)). So  $q$  lies in the halfplane bounded by  $q_s q_{s+1}$  that does not contain  $p_i$ . Moreover, since  $q_{s+1}$  lies on the  $y$ -monotone part of  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$  and  $q$  lies between  $q_s$  and  $q_{s+1}$  along  $\text{Lk}(p_i)$ , we have  $y(q) > y(q_{s+1})$ , implying that  $q \in \tau(p_i q_s q_{s+1})$ . As  $q_s$  and  $q_{s+1}$  are two consecutive neighbors of  $p_i$  in  $F$ ,  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$  must have been processed at some moment. The fact that  $p_i q$  was not added at that time implies that there was another triangle, say,  $p_v q_s q_{s+1} \in F^-$ , incident upon edge  $q_s q_{s+1}$ , and  $p_v \notin \tau(p_i q_s q_{s+1})$ . Notice that  $q$  is not contained in either triangle  $p_v q_s q_{s+1}$  or  $p_i q_s q_{s+1}$ . Now assume  $p_v$  lies below  $q_{s+1}$  (Figure 7 (c)). However, in this case, edge  $p_v q_s$  could not have been present in  $F^-$  as it crosses edge  $q q_{s+1}$  of  $F^-$ , but both points  $q$  and  $q_{s+1}$  are above  $p_v$ , a contradiction. The other case in which  $p_v$  lies above line  $p_i q_s$  can be handled similarly (Figure 7 (d)).



**Figure 8.** A hierarchical fan triangulation with three levels — points in  $R_1$  are denoted by double circles, in  $R_2 \setminus R_1$  by hollow circles, and in  $R_3 \setminus R_2$  by black circles.

This proves the second claim, and the lemma follows.  $\square$

The following lemma follows immediately from the above algorithm.

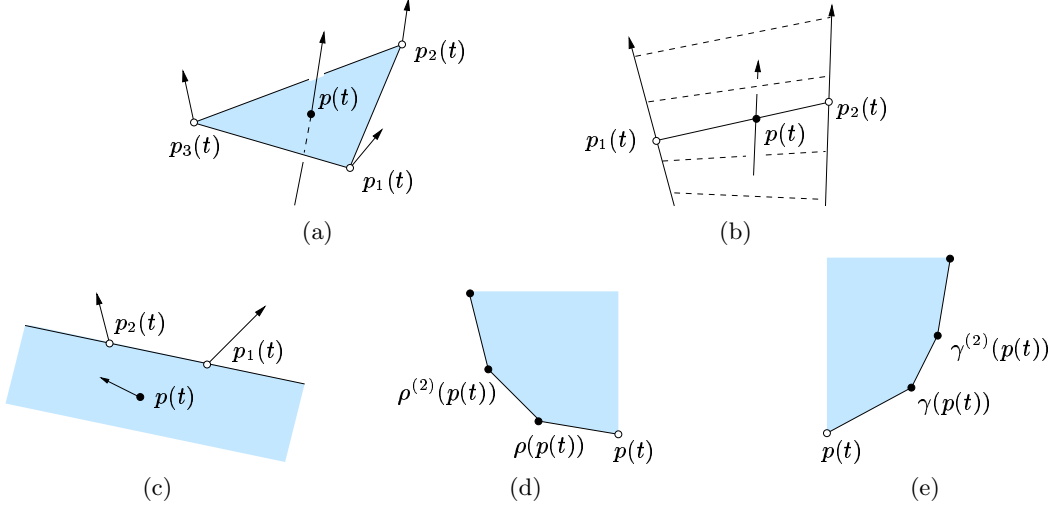
**Lemma 3** *The number of topological events induced by a crossing event of  $p_i$  is proportional to the old degree plus the new degree of  $p_i$ .*

Each topological event can be handled in  $O(\log n)$  time, including the time spent in updating the global event queue. To detect all the three types of events, we can maintain the same three families of certificates as for a fan triangulation.

## 4 Hierarchical Fan Triangulation

We now use the constrained fan triangulation to define a hierarchical fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}$ . Let  $\emptyset = R_0 \subseteq R_1 \subseteq \dots \subseteq R_w = S$ . Set  $\mathbb{F}_0 = \emptyset$ , and for  $i \geq 1$ , define  $\mathbb{F}_i = \mathbb{F}(R_i, \mathbb{F}_{i-1})$ , i.e.,  $\mathbb{F}_i$  is the constrained fan triangulation of  $R_i$  with respect to  $\mathbb{F}_{i-1}$ . By construction,  $\mathbb{F}_1$  is the fan triangulation of  $R_1$  and  $\mathbb{F}_{i-1} \subseteq \mathbb{F}_i$ . Set  $\mathbb{F} = \mathbb{F}_w$ . See Figure 8 for an example.

**Hereditary event.** As the points move, each  $\mathbb{F}_i$  deforms continuously. The topology of  $\mathbb{F}$  changes when there is an ordering, a visibility, or a crossing event in one of  $\mathbb{F}_i$ 's, and it can be processed as described in Sections 2 and 3. However, a topological change in  $\mathbb{F}_i$  also propagates changes in  $\mathbb{F}_j$  for  $j > i$ , as the insertion or deletion of an edge in  $\mathbb{F}_i$  affects the visibility of points in  $R_j$ . We refer to an event in  $\mathbb{F}_{i+1}$  caused by another event in  $\mathbb{F}_i$ , as a *hereditary event* of  $\mathbb{F}_{i+1}$ . We process hereditary events as follows. If  $\text{conv}(R_i)$  changes, i.e., a point  $q \in R_i$  appears or disappears on  $\text{conv}(R_i)$ , we update  $\mathbb{F}_{i+1}$  within the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R_i)$  by inserting or deleting  $q$  as described in the crossing event of Section 3. The number of topological events in this case is proportional to the new degree (if  $q$  is inserted) or old degree (if  $q$  is deleted) of  $q$  within the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R_i)$ . Moreover, if a triangle  $\Delta$  in  $\mathbb{F}_i$  is destroyed due to an edge insertion or deletion, we simply delete all the edges of  $\mathbb{F}_{i+1}$  lying inside  $\Delta$ . As destroying a triangle unavoidably leads to creation of other triangle(s), we only describe how we perform reconstruction after creating a new triangle. Suppose a triangle  $\Delta$  is created in  $\mathbb{F}_i$ , we reconstruct the affected portion of  $\mathbb{F}_{i+1}$ . More specifically, let  $R_{i+1}^\Delta = R_{i+1} \cap \Delta$ . We construct the fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}(R_{i+1}^\Delta)$  inside  $\Delta$ . The number of topological events in each newly created triangle  $\Delta$  can be bounded by  $O(|R_{i+1}^\Delta|)$ . Each topological event induced by hereditary events can be handled in  $O(\log n)$  time, including the time spent in updating the global event queue.



**Figure 9.** Examples of different ranges: (a)  $\langle p_1, p_2, p_3; t \rangle$ , (b)  $\langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_s$ , (c)  $\langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_h$ , (d)  $\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho$ , (e)  $\langle p; m; t \rangle_\gamma$ .

In the next section, we analyze the performance of the hierarchical fan triangulation, assuming that  $R_i$  is a random subset of  $R_{i+1}$  of an appropriate size.

## 5 Analysis

In the hierarchical fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}$  defined in Section 4, we choose  $R_{i-1}$  to be a random subset of  $R_i$  of size

$$\min \left\{ |R_i|, 5|R_i|^{1-1/i} \log |R_i| \right\}, \quad (1)$$

for  $1 < i \leq w$ . Let  $w = \lceil \sqrt{\log n / \log \log n} \rceil$ . In this section, we show that  $\mathbb{F}$  has near-quadratic number of topological changes as promised. To do this, let us first focus on a specific level of the construction of  $\mathbb{F}$ . For notational convenience, let  $P = R_i$ ,  $R = R_{i-1}$ ,  $\mathcal{T}(P) = \mathbb{F}_i$ ,  $\mathcal{T}(R) = \mathbb{F}_{i-1}$ ,  $n = |P|$  and  $r = n^{1-1/i}$ , for some  $1 < i \leq w$ . It follows that  $\mathcal{T}(P) = \mathbb{F}(P, \mathcal{T}(R))$ , and  $|R| = \min\{n, 5r \log n\}$ .

Let  $p, p_1, p_2, p_3 \in P$ ,  $t, t_1, t_2 \in \mathbb{R}$ , and  $m \in \mathbb{N}$ . Let  $h(p_1, p_2)$  be the open halfplane to the left of the oriented line  $\overrightarrow{p_1 p_2}$ . We define (see Figure 9)

$$\begin{aligned} \langle p_1, p_2, p_3; t \rangle &= \{ p \in P \mid p(t) \in \Delta p_1(t) p_2(t) p_3(t) \}, \\ \langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_s &= \{ p \in P \mid \exists t \in [t_1, t_2] \text{ s.t.}, p(t) \in p_1(t) p_2(t) \}, \\ \langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_h &= \{ p \in P \mid \exists t \in [t_1, t_2] \text{ s.t.}, p(t) \in h(p_1(t), p_2(t)) \}, \\ \langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho &= \{ \rho^{(k)}(p(t)) \mid 1 \leq k \leq m \}, \\ \langle p; m; t \rangle_\gamma &= \{ \gamma^{(k)}(p(t)) \mid 1 \leq k \leq m \}. \end{aligned}$$

We then let

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{R}_1 &= \{ \langle p_1, p_2, p_3; t \rangle \mid p_1, p_2, p_3 \in P, t \in \mathbb{R} \}, \\ \mathcal{R}_2 &= \{ \langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_s \mid p_1, p_2 \in P, t_1, t_2 \in \mathbb{R} \}, \\ \mathcal{R}_3 &= \{ \langle p_1, p_2; t_1, t_2 \rangle_h \mid p_1, p_2 \in P, t_1, t_2 \in \mathbb{R} \}, \\ \mathcal{R}_4 &= \{ \langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho \mid p \in P, m \in \mathbb{N}, t \in \mathbb{R} \}, \\ \mathcal{R}_5 &= \{ \langle p; m; t \rangle_\gamma \mid p \in P, m \in \mathbb{N}, t \in \mathbb{R} \}. \end{aligned}$$

Finally, let  $\mathbb{X} = (P, \mathcal{R})$  be the range space with  $\mathcal{R} = \bigcup_{1 \leq j \leq 5} \mathcal{R}_j$ . We have the following lemma.

**Lemma 4**  $|\mathcal{R}| = O(n^5)$ .

**Proof:** Consider three points  $p_1, p_2$  and  $p_3$  of  $P$ . As  $t$  increases,  $\langle p_1, p_2, p_3; t \rangle$  changes only when some point  $q \in P$  moves in or out of the triangle  $p_1 p_2 p_3$ . For any point  $q$ , this can only happen constant number of times. Thus  $\langle p_1, p_2, p_3; t \rangle$  can change  $O(n)$  times as  $t$  goes from  $-\infty$  to  $+\infty$  for fixed  $p_1, p_2$ , and  $p_3$ . There are  $O(n^3)$  different choices of  $p_1, p_2, p_3$ , implying that  $|\mathcal{R}_1| = O(n^4)$ . Similarly we can prove  $|\mathcal{R}_2| = O(n^4)$  and  $|\mathcal{R}_3| = O(n^4)$ .

For any  $p, q \in P$ , if  $y(p(t)) < y(q(t))$ , let  $\theta(p(t), q(t))$  denote the angle formed by  $\vec{pq}$  and  $+x$ -direction at time  $t$ ;  $\theta(p(t), q(t))$  is undefined at  $t$  otherwise. The number of changes to  $\rho(p)$  is the same as the complexity of the upper envelope of  $\{\theta(p(t), q(t)) \mid q \neq p, q \in P\}$ , which can be bounded by  $\lambda_s(n)$  [16], where  $\lambda_s(\cdot)$  is the maximum length of a Davenport-Schinzel sequence of order  $s$ . The value of  $s$  depends on the maximum degree of polynomial of the trajectories of points in  $P$ ; for example,  $s = 4$  if points move linearly. For fixed  $p$  and  $m$ , as  $t$  increases,  $\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho$  changes only when  $\rho(q)$  changes for some  $q \in P$ . There are at most  $n$  different choices for  $p$  and  $m$  each, thus we have  $|\mathcal{R}_4| = O(n^3 \lambda_s(n))$ , which is slightly larger than  $O(n^4)$ . Similarly  $|\mathcal{R}_5| = O(n^3 \lambda_s(n))$ . Putting everything together,  $|\mathcal{R}| = O(n^3 \lambda_s(n)) = O(n^5)$ .  $\square$

As time  $t$  varies, the topological structure of  $\mathcal{T}(P)$  may change: features such as edges or triangles may appear or disappear. The *lifetime* of a feature is the period between two of its consecutive appearance and disappearance. If an edge or a triangle occurs more than once, we count each occurrence as a different feature.

By (1), Lemma 4, and standard results from random sampling theory [15],  $R$  is a  $(1/r)$ -net of the range space  $\mathbb{X}$  with high probability. Thus we obtain the following lemmas.

**Lemma 5** *With high probability,*

- (a) *At any time, there are less than  $n/r$  points of  $P$  inside any triangle of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$ .*
- (b) *Less than  $n/r$  points of  $P$  can cross any edge ever appearing in  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  during its lifetime.*
- (c) *Less than  $n/r$  points of  $P$  can ever appear in  $h(p, q)$  during the period when  $p, q \in R$  are two neighboring points on the convex hull of  $R$  in clockwise order.*

**Lemma 6** *With high probability,*

- (a) *For any  $p \in P, m \in \mathbb{N}, t \in \mathbb{R}$ ,*

$$|\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho| \leq (|\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho \cap R| + 1) \cdot n/r.$$

- (b) *For any  $p \in P, m \in \mathbb{N}, t \in \mathbb{R}$ ,*

$$|\langle p; m; t \rangle_\gamma| \leq (|\langle p; m; t \rangle_\gamma \cap R| + 1) \cdot n/r.$$

**Proof:** Suppose that

$$\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho \cap R = \{\rho^{(i_1)}(p(t)), \rho^{(i_2)}(p(t)), \dots, \rho^{(i_v)}(p(t))\},$$

where  $1 \leq i_1 < i_2 < \dots < i_v \leq m$ . Let  $i_0 = 0$  and  $i_{v+1} = m + 1$ . We have

$$\begin{aligned} \langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho &= \left( \bigcup_{j=1}^{v+1} \langle \rho^{(i_{j-1})}(p(t)); i_j - i_{j-1} - 1; t \rangle_\rho \right) \\ &\quad \cup \{\rho^{(i_1)}(p(t)), \rho^{(i_2)}(p(t)), \dots, \rho^{(i_v)}(p(t))\}. \end{aligned}$$

Moreover, by properties of a  $(1/r)$ -net of  $\mathbb{X}$ , we know that with high probability,

$$|\langle \rho^{(i_j-1)}(p(t)); i_j - i_{j-1} - 1; t \rangle_\rho| \leq n/r - 1,$$

for  $1 \leq j \leq v + 1$ . We thus obtain

$$|\langle p; m; t \rangle_\rho| \leq (v + 1) \cdot (n/r - 1) + v \leq (v + 1) \cdot n/r.$$

We can prove (b) in a similar manner. □

Let  $\deg(p(t))$  denote the degree of point  $p \in P$  in  $\mathcal{T}(P)$  at time  $t$ .

**Lemma 7** *If a point  $p \in P$  lies on an edge of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  at time  $t_0$ , then both  $\deg(p(t_0^-))$  and  $\deg(p(t_0^+))$  are bounded by  $n/r$  with high probability.*

**Proof:** If  $p(t_0^-)$  or  $p(t_0^+)$  lies in the interior of  $\text{conv}(R)$ , then we have  $\deg(p(t_0^-)) \leq n/r$  or  $\deg(p(t_0^+)) \leq n/r$  with high probability by Lemma 5 (a). If  $p$  crosses an edge  $p_1p_2$  of  $\partial \text{conv}(R)$  at  $t_0$ , say, from inside to outside, then at  $t_0^+$ , all points adjacent to  $p$  lie in the open halfplane bounded by  $p_1p_2$  that is disjoint from  $\text{conv}(R)$ . It then follows from Lemma 5 (c) that  $\deg(p(t_0^+)) \leq n/r$ . A symmetric argument shows  $\deg(p(t_0^-)) \leq n/r$  if  $p$  moves from the exterior to the interior of  $\text{conv}(R)$  at  $t_0$ . □

For a set  $A \subseteq P$  of points, let  $\psi(A)$  denote the total number of topological changes to  $\mathcal{T}(A)$  over time. We will bound  $\psi(P)$  in terms of  $\psi(R)$ , where  $R$  is a  $(1/r)$ -net with respect to the range space  $\mathbb{X}$ . For simplicity, we will omit the phrase “with high probability”. We now bound the number of topological changes induced by each type of events as discussed in Section 3 and 4.

**Hereditary events.** Each hereditary event either causes to re-triangulate  $\mathcal{T}(P)$  inside  $O(1)$  triangles of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$ , or insert or delete a point of  $R$  that appears or disappears on  $\partial \text{conv}(R)$ . By Lemma 5 (a) and 7, each such event induces  $O(n/r)$  topological changes. Since each hereditary event is caused by a topological event of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$ , the total number of topological changes induced by hereditary events is

$$O(n/r) \cdot \psi(R). \tag{2}$$

**Crossing events.** By Lemma 5 (b), at most  $n/r$  points cross an edge of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  during its lifetime. By Lemmas 3 and 7, each such event induces  $O(n/r)$  topological changes. Since there are  $O(\psi(R) + |R|)$  distinct edges in  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  over the entire history, the total number of topological changes induced by crossing events is

$$O((n/r) \cdot (n/r) \cdot (\psi(R) + |R|)) = O(n^2/r^2) \cdot \psi(R). \tag{3}$$

**Visibility events.** Recall that a visibility event occurs when there is a change in  $\rho(p)$  or  $\gamma(p)$  with respect to  $\Delta \in \mathcal{T}(R)$  for some point  $p \in P_\Delta$  (recall  $P_\Delta$  is the set of points of  $P$  inside  $\Delta$ ). As discussed earlier, each such event induces a constant number of topological changes. Therefore, we only need to bound the number of visibility events.

A visibility event occurs due to the collinearity of  $p$  and two other points  $q$  and  $z$ , where  $p, q$  and  $z$  lie within the same face, say  $\Delta$ , of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$ . If  $\Delta$  is a triangle in  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  (i.e.,  $p \in \text{conv}(R)$ ), then by Lemma 5,  $O(n/r)$  points can ever appear in  $\Delta$  during its lifetime. Using a lower-envelope argument as in the proof of Lemma 4, it can be shown that the number of visibility events happening to  $p$  while  $p \in \Delta$  is  $O(\lambda_s(n/r))$ . Since there are  $O(\psi(R) + |R|)$  triangles in  $\mathcal{T}(R)$  over the entire history, the total number of visibility events inside  $\text{conv}(R)$  is

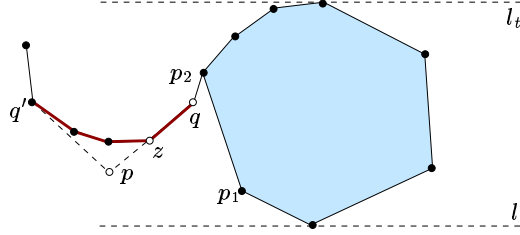
$$O((n/r) \cdot \lambda_s(n/r) \cdot (\psi(R) + |R|)) = O(n^2 \log(n)/r^2) \cdot \psi(R).$$

Next, suppose a point  $p \notin \text{conv}(R)$  causes a visibility event. Let  $l_t$  (resp.  $l_b$ ) be the horizontal line passing through the highest (resp. lowest) point of  $R$ . We distinguish three cases: (a)  $p$  lies between  $l_t$  and  $l_b$  and to the left (resp. right) of  $\text{conv}(R)$ , and  $\gamma(p)$  (resp.  $\rho(p)$ ) changes; (b)  $p$  lies between  $l_t$  and  $l_b$  and to the left (resp. right) of  $\text{conv}(R)$ , and  $\rho(p)$  (resp.  $\gamma(p)$ ) changes; and (c)  $p$  lies above  $l_t$  or below  $l_b$ .

It is easy to observe that cases (b) and (c) at  $t = t_0$  correspond to a change in

$$\arg \max_{q \in P} \theta(p(t), q(t)) \quad \text{or} \quad \arg \min_{q \in P} \theta(p(t), q(t))$$

at time  $t_0$ . Therefore, there are  $O(n\lambda_s(n)) = O(n^2 \log n)$  number of such events, by a lower-envelope argument similar to the one in the proof of Lemma 4.



**Figure 10.** Shaded region is  $\text{conv}(R)$ , and the thick chain is  $\mathcal{V}(p)$ .

Now consider case (a) (depicted in Figure 10). Assume without loss of generality that  $p$  lies to the left of  $\text{conv}(R)$ . Let  $p_1 p_2$  be the edge on  $\text{conv}(R)$  that is hit by the ray emanating from  $p$  towards its right (assuming  $p_1, p_2$  are in clockwise order). Observe that  $q, z$ , the two points that are involved in the visibility event with  $p$ , must lie in the triangle  $pp_1 p_2$ , and therefore  $p, q, z \in h(p_1, p_2)$ . Thus, during the period when  $p_1, p_2$  are two neighboring points on  $\text{conv}(R)$  in clockwise order, the number of events that three points of  $P$  in  $h(p_1, p_2)$  become collinear is  $O(n^3/r^3)$ , by Lemma 5 (c). If points move along algebraic trajectories, the combinatorial structure of  $\text{conv}(R)$  changes  $O(|R|\lambda_s(|R|)) = O(|R|^2 \log n)$  times [16]. Therefore there are  $O(n^3|R|^2 \log(n)/r^3)$  such events.

In total, the number of topological changes to the triangulation of  $P$  caused by visibility events is bounded by

$$O(n^3|R|^2 \log(n)/r^3 + n^2 \log n) + O(n^2 \log(n)/r^2) \cdot \psi(R). \quad (4)$$

**Ordering events.** The number of topological changes induced by an ordering event at time  $t_0$  when the  $y$ -coordinates of two mutually visible points  $p$  and  $q$  become equal is proportional to  $|\mathcal{V}_{pq}(t_0)|$ , i.e., the number of points that are visible from both  $p$  and  $q$  at time  $t_0$ . If  $p$  and  $q$  lie inside a triangle face of  $\mathcal{T}(R)$ , then  $|\mathcal{V}_{pq}(t_0)| = O(n/r)$ . Since there are  $O(n^2)$  ordering events, the total number of topological changes induced by such events is  $O(n^3/r)$ . Now assume that  $p$  and  $q$  lie in the exterior of  $\text{conv}(R)$ , and let  $I$  be the set of such events. Obviously,  $|I| \leq n^2$ . Denote by  $m_i$  the number of points of  $R$  on  $\mathcal{V}_{pq}(t_0)$  for the  $i$ -th such event from  $I$ . By Lemma 6, the total number of topological changes caused by this type of events is at most

$$\sum_i (m_i + 2)n/r = O(n^3/r) + (n/r) \cdot \sum_i m_i.$$

**Lemma 8**  $\sum_{i \leq |I|} m_i = O(n^2|R|^2 \log(n)/r^2)$ .

**Proof:** Suppose two points  $p$  and  $q$  lying outside  $\text{conv}(R)$  induce an ordering event at time  $t_0$ , i.e.,  $y(p(t_0)) = y(q(t_0))$  and  $p$  is visible from  $q$  at  $t_0$ . Let  $z_1, z, z_2 \in R$  be three consecutive points on  $\partial \text{conv}(R)$  in clockwise order at  $t_0$  and  $z \in \mathcal{V}_{pq}(t_0)$ . Recall that  $h(z_1, z)$  is the open halfplane to the left of  $\overline{z_1 z}$ . We have that  $p, q \in h(z_1, z) \cup h(z, z_2)$  as  $z$  is visible to both  $p$  and  $q$ . For fixed edges  $z_1 z$  and  $z z_2$  of  $\partial \text{conv}(R)$ ,  $z$  can only be involved in  $O(n^2/r^2)$  such events because, by Lemma 5 (c), only  $O(n/r)$  points ever appear in  $h(z_1, z)$  (resp.  $h(z, z_2)$ ) during the lifetime of edge  $z_1 z$  (resp.  $z z_2$ ). Let  $u_z$  be the total number of times that  $z$  is involved in such an event. As points in  $R$  move,  $\text{conv}(R)$  may change  $O(|R|\lambda_s(|R|)) = O(|R|^2 \log n)$  times [16], therefore the number of distinct triples of consecutive vertices on  $\partial \text{conv}(R)$  is  $O(|R|^2 \log n)$ . We then have

$$\sum_{z \in R} u_z = O(n^2 |R|^2 \log(n)/r^2).$$

Using a simple double counting argument, we obtain that  $\sum_{i \leq |I|} m_i = \sum_{z \in R} u_z$ . This proves the lemma.  $\square$

It follows from the above lemma that the total number of topological changes induced by ordering events is bounded by

$$O(n^3/r + n^3 |R|^2 \log(n)/r^3) = O(n^3 |R|^2 \log(n)/r^3). \quad (5)$$

Summing (2)–(5) and substituting the values of  $|R|$  and  $r$ , we obtain the following recurrence for  $\psi(P)$ .

$$\psi(P) \leq O(n^{2+1/i} \log^3 n) + O(n^{2/i} \log n) \cdot \psi(R).$$

Returning to the hierarchical fan triangulation, let  $n_i$  be the size of  $R_i$ , then

$$\psi(n_i) \leq c_1 n_i^{2/i} \log(n_i) \psi(n_{i-1}) + c_2 n_i^{2+1/i} \log^3 n_i,$$

where  $c_1, c_2 > 0$  are constants, and

$$n_{i-1} = |R_{i-1}| = \min\{n_i, 5n_i^{1-1/i} \log n_i\}.$$

It can be verified by induction that the solution to the above recurrence is

$$\psi(n_i) \leq n_i^{2+1/i} \log^{3i}(n_i) 2^{ci},$$

where  $c$  is a sufficiently large constant. In particular, for  $i = w = \lceil \sqrt{\log n / \log \log n} \rceil$ , i.e. the hierarchical fan triangulation, we have

$$\psi(n) = n^2 2^{O(\sqrt{\log n \cdot \log \log n})}.$$

We conclude with the following main result.

**Theorem 1** *Let  $S$  be a set of  $n$  points moving in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . If the motion of  $S$  is algebraic, a triangulation of  $S$  can be maintained by a randomized algorithm so that the number of topological events processed by the algorithm is  $n^2 2^{O(\sqrt{\log n \cdot \log \log n})}$  with high probability, and each topological event requires  $O(\log n)$  time.*

As a special case of our problem, let us consider a scenario in which only  $k$  out of  $n$  points are moving. By extending our previous technique, we can show that there exists a triangulation whose number of topological changes is roughly  $O(nk)$ . We describe this triangulation briefly.

The overall framework follows that for the case with  $n$  moving points. The major difference is that, at each level of the hierarchical fan triangulation, instead of sampling the points all at once, we sample the static and moving points separately. For any point set  $P$ , let  $P^s \subseteq P$  be the set of static points in  $P$ , and  $P^t \subseteq P$  be the set of moving points in  $P$ .

Set  $w = \lceil \sqrt{\log k / \log \log n} \rceil$ . Let  $\emptyset = R_0 \subseteq R_1 \subseteq \dots \subseteq R_w = S$ , such that for  $1 < i \leq w$ ,  $R_{i-1}^s$  is a random subset of  $R_i^s$  of size

$$\min \left\{ |R_i^s|, O(|R_i| \cdot |R_i^t|^{-1/i} \log |R_i^s|) \right\},$$

and  $R_{i-1}^t$  is a random subset of  $R_i^t$  of size

$$\min \left\{ |R_i^t|, O(|R_i^t|^{1-1/i} \log |R_i^t|) \right\}.$$

We construct the hierarchical fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}$  of  $S$  as described in Section 4.

Let  $n_i = |R_i|$  and  $k_i = |R_i^t|$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq w$ . By the same method as in [2], one can show that the fan triangulation  $\mathbb{F}_1$  changes  $O(k_1^{4/3} \lambda_d(n_1)) = O(n_1 k_1^{4/3} \log n_1)$  times. Using this fact, and by similar analysis as above, it can be shown that the number of topological changes to  $\mathbb{F}_i$  is bounded by  $n_i k_i^{1+1/i} \log^{3i}(n_i) 2^{ci}$  for some constant  $c$ , for  $1 \leq i \leq w$ . In particular, the number of topological changes to the hierarchical fan triangulation is  $nk \cdot 2^{O(\sqrt{\log k \cdot \log \log n})}$ . Without going into the detail, we conclude with the following theorem.

**Theorem 2** *Let  $S$  be a set of  $n$  points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ , with  $k$  of them moving with algebraic trajectories of bounded degree. A triangulation of  $S$  can be maintained by a randomized algorithm so that the number of topological events processed by the algorithm is  $nk \cdot 2^{O(\sqrt{\log k \cdot \log \log n})}$  with high probability, and each topological event requires  $O(\log n)$  time.*

## 6 Conclusions

In this paper, we have described a randomized algorithm for maintaining a triangulation of a set of moving points in  $\mathbb{R}^2$ . If the motion is algebraic, then the expected number of topological events is  $n^2 2^{O(\sqrt{\log n \cdot \log \log n})}$ . Our result almost matches the  $\Omega(n^2)$  lower bound, and improves over the previously best known result [2] by nearly a factor of  $n^{1/3}$ . If only  $k$  points of the point set are moving, the expected number of topological changes reduces to  $nk \cdot 2^{O(\sqrt{\log k \cdot \log \log n})}$ .

Although the triangulation that we maintain is conceptually simple, it is not clear how to derandomize the algorithm efficiently. It will be interesting to find a simple deterministic triangulation, easy to implement, and with near-quadratic number of topological changes. A major open problem in this area is, of course, bounding the number of topological events in the Delaunay triangulation of a set of moving points. The best known upper bound is near cubic while the best known lower bound is quadratic [6].

Another interesting problem is whether Steiner points can help to reduce the complexity of kinetic triangulations. Agarwal *et al.* [1] showed that the  $\Omega(n^2)$  lower bound on the total number of topological changes to a triangulation still holds even if  $O(n)$  Steiner points are allowed and can move along any continuous trajectories. However, we expect that with the introduction of Steiner points, a much simpler triangulation with near-quadratic number of topological changes may be found.

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