

# Genetic Algorithm For LoRa Transmission Parameter Selection

Aghiles Djoudi<sup>12</sup>, Rafik Zitouni<sup>2</sup>, Nawel Zangar<sup>1</sup> and Laurent George<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>LIGM/ESIEE Paris, 5 boulevard Descartes, Champs-sur-Marne, France

<sup>2</sup>SIC/ECE Paris, 37 Quai de Grenelle, 75015 Paris, France

Email: {aghiles.djoudi, nawel.zangar, laurent.george}@esiee.fr, rafik.zitouni@ece.fr

**Abstract**—The exponential grow of IoT application in both industry and academic research raises many questions in wireless sensor network. Heterogeneous networks of IoT devices strongly depend on the ability of IoT devices to adapt their data transmission parameters to the application requirement running at each time. One of the most important problem of the emerging IoT networks is that IoT devices are limited in terms of energy consumption and computation capability. Our work is motivated by the idea of matching each transmission configuration with a reward and cost values to satisfy applications requirements. Our goal is to make IoT devices able to select the optimal transmission configuration and send their data to the gateway with the QoS required by the application running on the device. Determining the best configuration among 6720 transmission configurations is difficult, this is mainly due to the lack of tools that could take both applications requirements and external environment in consideration to select the best transmission parameters. To address this problem, we use a genetic algorithm in an edge computing to select the transmission parameters needed by the application. Genetic algorithms are used in selection and ranking problems to model the natural selection of chromosomes in human generation. In our case, each configuration represents a chromosome that needs to be selected to match better the QoS criteria. Particularly, we analyze the impact of selecting one configuration in 3 kinds of applications: text, voice and image transmission by modeling a new adaptive configuration selection process. We validate our approach by using both simulation and a real environment testbed.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The need of Low power wide area networks (LPWAN) increased significantly these five last years. The main factor is that IoT devices require low power consumption to transmit data in a wide area. Lora, Sigfox and NB-IoT are the most known technologies that satisfy these requirements. Applications like smart building and smart environment are one of hundreds use cases that need to be deployed with such technologies. Unlike Sigfox and NB-IoT, Lora is more open for academic research because the specification that governs how the network is managed is relatively open. LoRa is a wireless modulation technique that uses Chirp Spread Spectrum (CSS) in combination with Pulse-Position Modulation (PPM). The transmission could be configured with 4 parameters: Spreading Factor (*SF*), Transmission Power (*Tx*), Coding Rate (*CR*) and Bandwidth (*BW*), to achieve better performance. The main LPWAN research directions are

about link optimization, adaptability and large scale networks to support massive number of devices. The selection of an appropriate transmission parameter for IoT networks typically depends on the nature of the application. Thus heterogeneous transmission configuration and *SF* allocation strategies need to be studied. In this paper, we investigate the performance of heterogeneous networks (i.e. when each IoT device selects its LoRa transmission parameters according to its link budget and the application requirements). For that purpose we have developed a LoRa transmission adaptation mechanism, based on both ns-3 simulator and the Low cost Lora Gateway [5]. The computation tasks of the selection process will run on the Gateway device (Raspberry-pi) and the required settings will be sent to nodes for the next transmission.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II elucidates summary of related works. In section III, we propose our approach to solve LoRa parameter selection problem. Our experimentation in a real environment is presented in section IV. Section V concludes this paper.

## II. RELATED WORK

Transmission parameter configuration mechanisms such as Adaptive Data Rate (*ADR*) scheme need to be developed to fit each application requirement in terms of power consumption, delay and packet delivery ratio. Solutions running on LoRa node should be as simple as possible as required in LoRaWAN specification. However, LoRa network server could run complex management mechanism, which can be developed to improve network performance. Therefore, the related works discussed in this paper focus on server-side mechanism. The basic *ADR* scheme [1] provided by LoRaWAN predicts channel conditions using the maximum received Signal Noise Rate (*SNR*) in the last 20 packets. The basic *ADR* scheme is sufficient when the variance of the channel is low, it reduces the interference compared with using the static data rate [2], [3]. However, their simplicity causes many potential drawbacks. First, the diversity of LoRa Gateway models that measures *SNR* make the measurement inaccurate as a result of hardware calibration and interfering transmissions. Second, selecting the maximum *SNR* each 20 packets received could be a very long period in many IoT applications that require

less uplink transmission. Third, transmission parameters adjustment considers only the link of a single node. If many LoRa nodes are connected to the near gateway, all nodes connected to this gateway will use the fastest data rate. In this case, the number of LoRa nodes using the same data rate will increase and the probability of collisions also increases dramatically. Most researchers in the literature use *SNR* or Received Signal Strength Indication (*RSSI*) information to control *Tx* and *SF*. For example, the authors in [3] slightly modify the basic *ADR* scheme by replacing the maximum *SNR* with the average function. In this paper, we focus on building a framework that help IoT devices to adapt their transmission parameters to the application requirements in a server side.

### III. METHODOLOGY

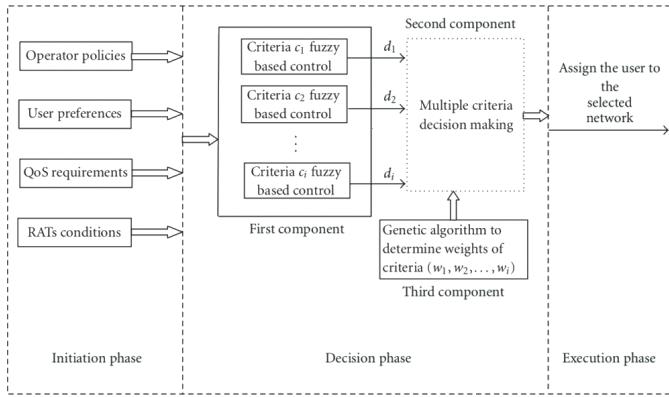
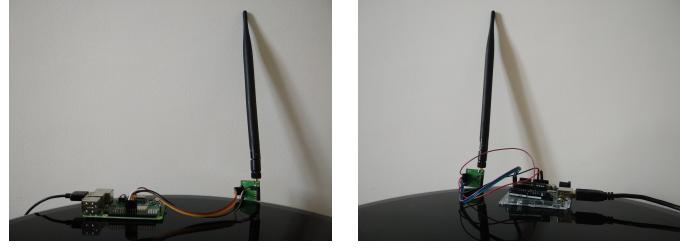


Fig. 1: The proposed scheme for LoRa transmission parameters selection based on *GA*, *FL* and *MCDM*.

The scheme selection process can be described following these five steps:

- 1) According to the Semtech SX1276 specification, there is 6720 possible settings ( $s_1, \dots, s_{6720}$ ) and the framework has to select the most optimal one or to rank them according to their relevance.
- 2) The selection process depends on multiple criteria up to  $i$  ( $c_1, \dots, c_i$ ). Different type of criteria can be measured from different sources to cover the maximum point of views, as example, the network server requirements, the applications requirements and the devices conditions.
- 3) The Fuzzy Logic (FL) based subsystem gives an initial score for each configuration that reflects its relevance. The different sets of scores ( $d_1, \dots, d_i$ ) are sent to the *MCDM* in the 5<sup>th</sup> step.
- 4) At the same time, the genetic algorithm (GA) assigns a suitable weight ( $w_1, \dots, w_i$ ) for each initial selection decision according to the objective function that is specified by the application.
- 5) Using the initial scores coming from the 3<sup>rd</sup> step and the weights that are assigned using the 4<sup>th</sup> step, the multi criteria decision making *MCDM* will select the most relevant settings and rank them according to their reward.



(a) Gateway (Raspberry-pi). (b) Sensor node (Arduino).

Fig. 2: Gateway & Sensor node.

### IV. EXPERIMENTATION

For our experimentation we use both real environment (Figure 2) and ns-3 simulator with SX1276 Lora module. However, to test the scalability of genetic algorithm with numerous IoT devices in a real environment, we use FIT IoT-LAB platform among other platforms presented in [4]. This choice is motivated by the number of devices supported by this platform (up to 2000 nodes). Figure 2a presents the LoRa gateway that we build using a low cost LoRa gateway [5] on a Raspberry-pi. Figure 2b presents one of the two Arduino boards equipped with an antenna that cover the 868 MHz band and with a SX1276 LoRa Transceiver.

### V. DISCUSSION

The main challenge of this work was to explore the application of genetic algorithm in LoRa transmission parameter selection. The efficiency of such algorithms is measured by the ability to satisfy each application requirement. Our main contribution was to build 3 applications that requires 3 different levels of QoS, such as text, sound and image transmission. We used a low cost LoRa gateway on a Raspberry-pi with 2 Arduino boards equipped with 2 LoRa Transceivers based on the Semtech SX1276 specification. To measure the accuracy of applying genetic algorithm in an edge computing we expect to compare our approach with the solutions provided in the literature.

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