U-Filter: A Lightweight XML View Update Checker

by

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Abstract
We study in this paper the problem of whether a correct relational update translation can be found for a given update over an XML view. For this, we propose a lightweight update checking framework named U-Filter. It first performs two steps of schema-level (and thus very inexpensive) checks based on a view definition analysis. Only when necessary, a third checking step, requiring base data access and thus more expensive, is employed. For the latter, we design an internal strategy as well as an external strategy (with respect to the DBMS). This three-step checking process is guaranteed to filter out all XML updates that cannot be translated. Finally, the remaining updates are fed to the update translation engine, which generates the corresponding SQL update statements. Our experiments illustrate the usefulness of U-Filter and the performance impact achievable by the proposed algorithm.

1 Introduction

Both XML-relational systems such as [13, 25] and native XML systems such as [20] support creating XML wrapper views and querying against them. However, update operations against such virtual XML views in most cases are not supported yet.

Two problems concerning updating XML views need to be tackled. First, update translatability concerns whether some updates on the base data storage, which typically may be a relational database or a native XML document, can be made to effect the given update to the view without causing any view-side-effect [3, 16, 18]. Second, we need to devise an appropriate translation strategy. That is, assuming the view update is indeed translatable, how to map the updates on the XML view into the equivalent tuple-based SQL updates or XML document updates on the base data.

The second issue, the translation strategy, has been studied in recent works [4, 7, 8, 15, 28, 29]. Under the assumption that the given update is translatable, [7, 8] propose an approach to convert the XML view update problem into relational view update problem. [29] studies the execution performance of translated updates. Commercial database systems such as SQL-Server2000 [28], Oracle [4] and DB2 [15] also provide system-specific solutions for restricted update types, again under the assumption of the given updates always being translatable.

Based on the idea of data provenance (lineage) – the description of the origins of each piece of data in a view, recent works [10, 11, 17] indicate a loose connection between the concept of provenance and the view update problem. The distinction between “why provenance” (the source data that had some influence on the existence of the data) and “where provenance” (the location(s) in the source databases from which the data was extracted) is used to indicate the potential correct translation. However, these works do not answer the questions important to update translatability such as (i) whether the why or where provenance is the correct translation and (ii) if they are not, whether there exists at least another correct translation?

This update translatability issue is important in terms of both correctness and performance. Without translatability checking, blindly translating a given view update into relational updates can be dangerous. Such blind translation may result in view side effects. To identify this, the view before the update and after the update would have to be compared as done in [28]. To adjust for such an error, the view update would have to be rejected and the database would have to be recovered for example by rolling back. This would be rather time consuming, depending on the size of the database. However, by performing an update translatability analysis, such ill-behaved updates could instead be identified early on and rejected, and it would be less costly.

In this paper, we propose a general methodology to assess the translatability of an update over an arbitrary XML view of a relational database, when various schema level conflicts and data level conflicts potentially exist.

XML view update translatability problem is more complex than that of pure relational view update translatability [3, 16, 18]. Not only do all the problems in the relational context still exist in XML semantics, but we also have to address the new update issues introduced by the XML hierarchical data model and its flexible update language. Especially, when duplications and inconsistent constraints between the view and the database schema exist, the problem is further complicated as shown by examples below.
we thus say that u default XML view [13], SilkRoute [19] use a basic XML view, called a virtual view (Fig. 2). On top of this default XML view, a virtual view (Fig. 3b) can be specified by an XML query expression called a view update.

1.1 Motivation Example

Fig. 1 shows a running example of a relational schema and sample data of a book database. Recent XML systems (XPERANTO [13], SilkRoute [19]) use a basic XML view, called a virtual view (Fig. 2). On top of this default XML view, a virtual view (Fig. 3b) can be specified by an XML query expression called a view update (Fig. 3a).

Example 1 In Fig. 4, u1 inserts a new book element into BookView. We notice that the title of the new book is empty and the price is "0.00". However, the underlying relational schema has the constraints that the title of book tuples is NOT NULL, while the price of the book tuple should be a positive number. Thus, u1 is not translatable since it directly conflicts with the check constraints from the relational schema.

Example 2 u2 in Fig. 4 deletes the publisher of the first book. In the underlying relational database, there is a foreign key from book relation to publisher relation. So, when the publisher is deleted, the corresponding book tuple has to be either also deleted, or the pubid of the book needs to be replaced with NULL, depending on the deletion policy defined by the foreign key constraints. However, neither of these two are correct because they both would cause the side-effect of the corresponding book to no longer appear in the view. We thus say that u2 is not translatable since it causes a view side effect.
Example 3 The update $u_3$ in Fig. 4 inserts a review for the book “DB2 Universal Database”, while this book is not in the view. And $u_4$ inserts a new book which conflicts with an existing book (book1), since they both have “bookid=98001”. Both $u_3$ and $u_4$ are said to be not translatable.

1.2 U-Filter: Our Approach for View Update Checking

We note from above examples that the potential conflicts in both schema or data level can affect the translatability of a given view update. To address these factors we propose a lightweight view update checking framework called U-Filter. It first performs two steps of schema-level (and thus very inexpensive) checking. Only when necessary, more expensive checking requiring the base data to be accessed is employed.

The first step, called update validation, identifies whether the given view update is valid according to the view schema. This can be pre-defined [6] or be inferred from the view definition query and the base relational schema knowledge. Given that lots of work has already been done in the literature on schema validation [6, 26], here we focus only on questions closely related with the view update scenario, such as which constraints should the validation procedure consider. The problem in Example 1 is identified by this step.

In the second step, called schema-driven translatability reasoning, any update determined to be valid by Step 1 is further examined. Here the potential view side effects are checked, which can be caused by different reasons such as (i) foreign key constraints conflicting with the view structure or (ii) base data duplication in the view. This compile-time check only utilizes the view query and the relational schema. Example 2 is identified to be not translatable in this step.

Updates passed the previous two steps could potentially still conflict with the base data (Example 3). In our third step, the run-time data-driven translatability checking, such conflicts will be identified. This check can only be resolved by examining actual base data. This is typically rather expensive. Hence it is practical to employ this only at the end, when the prior check steps have already been considered and the update has successfully passed these filters.

Fig. 5 shows the framework of U-Filter. We present algorithms and optimizations for each step in U-Filter. This represents a practical approach that could be applied by any existing view update system for analyzing the translatability of a given view update before translation of it is attempted.

Contributions. Our contributions in this paper include: (1) We propose a lightweight three-step framework called U-Filter as a practical solution for XML view update translatability problem. (2) We identify the constraints existing in either the view or relational base that need to be considered for the update validation and model them using Annotated Schema Graph. (3) We propose a Schema-driven TrAnslatability Reasoning algorithm (STAR) to classify an XML view update into different translatability categories. (4) We design several Data-driven Translatability Checking approaches to identify the untranslatable updates caused by data level conflicts. (5) We conduct a variety of experiments to assess the performance and usefulness of our U-Filter approach.

Outline. Section 2 formally defines the problem we are tackling in this paper. Section 3 describe the internal query representation in U-Filter named Annotated Schema Graph. Sections 4, 5 and 6 describe each of the three checking steps respectively. Section 7 provides an evaluation of our solution. Section 8 reviews the related work while Section 9 concludes our work.
2 Problem Definition

The relational data model can be described as below. For a relation $R$, let $\mathcal{A} = \{a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_m\}$ be its attribute set. A relational database is represented as $D$, and its schema as $\{(R_1, R_2, \ldots, R_n), \mathcal{F}\}$, where $R_1, R_2, \ldots, R_n$ are the relations in $D$, and $\mathcal{F}$ is the set of constraints. The XML view $V$ is defined by a view definition $\text{DEF}_V$ over a given relational database $D$. In our case, $\text{DEF}_V$ is an XQuery expression [30] called a view query.

Let $\mathcal{U}$ be the domain of the update operation over the view. Let $u \in \mathcal{U}$ be an update on the view $V$. An insertion adds while a deletion removes an element from the XML view. A replacement replaces an existing view element with a new one. Fig. 4 shows several examples of view updates expressed in the “XQuery” like language [29].

A taxonomy of the view update domain $\mathcal{U}$ is shown in Fig. 6. First of all, a valid view update is an insert, delete or replace operation that satisfies all constraints in the view schema. Updates $u_2, u_3$ and $u_4$ in Fig. 4 are valid updates since they agree with all constraints of the view schema. Update $u_1$, however, is an invalid update as shown by Example 1.

**Definition 1** A relational update sequence $U$ on a relational database $D$ is a correct translation of a valid update $u$ on the view $V$ iff (i) $u(\text{DEF}_V(D)) = \text{DEF}_V(U(D))$ and (ii) if $u(\text{DEF}_V(D)) = \text{DEF}_V(D) \Rightarrow U(D) = D$.

A correct translation means the “rectangle” rule shown in Fig. 7 holds. Intuitively, this implies that the translated relational updates exactly perform the view update, namely, without view side effects. In addition, if an update operation does not affect the view, then it should not affect the relational base either. This guarantees that any modification of the relational base is indeed done for the sake of the view. For instance, the update $u_3$ is not translatable since it tries to insert a review into a book that is not in the view.

The second criterion is guaranteed if the translation is done by query composition, and hence generally can be achieved. For a valid update, if a correct translation does not exist, $u$ is untranslatable. If additional conditions are required to be satisfied for a correct translation to exist, then $u$ is said to be conditionally translatable. As we will show in later sections, this additional condition includes for example translated update minimization and duplication consistency checking. Otherwise, $u$ is called unconditionally translatable (Fig. 6)

Note that some commercial databases (DB2) provides the view creator an option to update the data not visible through the view. Our solution can be easily adjusted to this scenario by relaxing this restriction.
We now can define the problem of XML view update translatability as the problem of first classifying an update as either valid or invalid, then classifying a valid update as either unconditionally, conditionally translatable or untranslatable.

3 Annotated Schema Graph

U-Filter uses Annotated Schema Graph (ASG) to model the constraints from both the view query and the relational schema. ASG is then extensively used by schema level checking steps.

3.1 Classification of Constraints

The constraints, extracted from the relational schema or inferred from the view query \(^2\) will help us to decide whether a given update is valid, and possibly even translatable. They are compiled once and reused thereafter for any future update checking specified over this same view.

Let us first examine a predicate \(p\) of the form \(a \theta b\), where \(\theta \in \{=, \neq, <, \leq, >, \geq\}\). We say that \(p\) is a non-correlation predicate if \(b\) is a literal (e.g., $book/year = 1990$). Otherwise, \(p\) is a correlation predicate (e.g., $book/pid = publisher/pid$).

We divide the constraints as local or global. Intuitively, constraints that affect only one tuple of a base relation or one view element are called local constraints. Otherwise, they are called global constraints. The non-correlation predicates in the view query form local constraints, while the other constraints in the view query, such as correlation predicates, cardinality constraints and hierarchical structure form global constraints.

In the relational schema, the local constraints include all the constraints specified over one relation, such as domain constraints, NOT NULL constraints and Check constraints for the domain. The global constraints include constraints specified over multiple relations in the relational schema, such as foreign key constraints.

3.2 Annotated Schema Graphs

For each view, two ASGs are generated to represent the constraints described in Section 3.1. The base ASG includes only the global constraints from the relational schema, while all the rest constraints are captured in the view ASG.

Fig. 8 depicts the view ASG for BookView in Fig. 3. The view ASG, denoted by \(G_V\), represents the hierarchical structure of the XML view \(^3\). Let \(N_{G_V}\) and \(E_{G_V}\) respectively denote the nodes and edges of \(G_V\).

\(N_{G_V}\) includes four kinds of nodes: root, internal, tag and leaf nodes. Node \(v_R\) in Fig. 8 is the root node. Without loss of generality, we assume there is always a root tag to enclose the FLWR expression in the view query. Otherwise, we would simply add a “dummy” root node. A leaf node \(v_L\) represents an atomic type. The parent of a leaf node, named tag node \(v_T\), identifies a simple view element or an attribute. All the remaining nodes are internal nodes \((v_C)\), each of which identifying a complex view element. In the rest of the paper, we also use \(v\) to indicate a node in \(G_V\) without specifying its type.

Each node is associated with its annotation set as shown in the Node Annotation Table in Fig. 8. The annotation of a leaf node includes \{"name, type, property, check\}. A leaf node \(v_L\) has its corresponding relational attribute name \(R.a\) as its name annotation. The type of \(v_L\) represents its domain constraints. The property of \(v_L\) captures \{"Not Null\} constraints, depending on the constraints on its relational attribute \(R.a\). For instance, the property of node \(v_L, 8\) in Fig. 8 is marked as Not Null, since \(published/pid\) is the key of the \(publisher\) relation. The check annotation of \(v_L\) represents the relational check constraints.

The annotation of \(v_R, v_C\) or \(v_S\) node includes the \(name\) field which corresponds to the tag name of the element it is modeling. Moreover, the \(v_R\) and \(v_C\) nodes include their Update Context Binding and Update Point Binding in their annotation. The UCBinding\((v_C)\) extracts all the relations that have some influence on the existence of \(v_C\) in \(DEF_V\). The UPBinding\((v_C)\) includes all the relations referred in constructing \(v_C\). For example, \(UCBinding(v_C) = \{book, publisher\}\) since both relations book and publisher are used to decide the existence of book element \(v_C\). \(UPBinding(v_C) = \{book, publisher, review\}\) since both book and publisher relations are used to construct the book element and (ii) review relation is used to construct review elements inside. Readers familiar with SilkRoute [25] can consider the UCBinding as all relations in the FROM clauses of the SQL statements generated for a node \(v\), while the UPBinding as all relations in the FROM clauses of all its descendent nodes.

Given two nodes \(v_1, v_2 \in N_{G_V}\), the edge \(e(v_1, v_2) \in E_{G_V}\) represents that \(v_1\) is a parent of \(v_2\) in the view hierarchy. Each edge is labeled by its end node pair \((v_1, v_2)\). Its annotation includes its cardinality type (inferred from the view query) and its condition (if any), extracted from the correlation predicate in the view query. The cardinality types are from the enumeration domain \(\{1, ?, +, \ast, \}\), representing \(1 : 1, 1 : \{0, 1\}\) (at most one), \(1 : n +\) (at least one) and \(1 : n\) (any) respectively. Note that the incoming edge of \(v_L\) is either \(1\) or \(?\), depending on whether it can be Null. We also define a function \(rel\) to extract the relations in \(D\) referenced by the view query \(DEF_V\). For example, in Fig. 3(a), \(rel(DEF_V) = \{publisher/book, review\}\). Note that \(rel(DEF_V) = UPBinding(v_R)\).

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\(^2\) We do not propagate relational constraints (such as Key) to the XML as done by [9], we merely use them to filter out ill-behaved updates. However, work in [9] can be easily included to favor the checking procedure in general.

\(^3\) Computing \(G_V\) is done similarly as in SilkRoute [25], for details please refer to [33].
The Base ASG $G_D$ is a DAG that captures the hierarchical and cardinality constraints inferred from the key and foreign key constraints of the relational database. Let $V_{G_D}$ denote the nodes and $E_{G_D}$ denote the edges. $G_D$ is computed as follows. For each leaf node in the view ASG, there exists a corresponding relational attribute. The union of all these relational attributes forms the constraints of the relational database. Let $S$ foreign key from the view ASG. Since the view schema has been extracted and represented as the view ASG in Section 3, we now only focus on the step identifies whether the given view update is valid according to the local constraints captured in the view ASG. Since the view schema has been extracted and represented as the view ASG in Section 3, we now only focus on the

### 4 Update Validation

The update validation step identifies whether the given view update is valid according to the local constraints captured in the view ASG.
question: what kind of validation must be considered for different update types (delete, insert) respectively?

**Delete.** Two checks must be considered in the delete case. (i) Does the element to be deleted appear in the view? If an update operation does not affect the view, then it should not affect the relational base either (Definition 1). This means that the non-correlation predicate specified in the user update must "overlap" with the check constraints captured in the view ASG leaf node. For this, we examine the check annotation of the leaf node. For example, \( u_5 \) in Fig. 10 tries to delete all the reviews from the book that costs more than $50. However, the BookView in Fig. 3 only includes those books that cost less than $50. Thus \( u_5 \) is said to be invalid.

(ii) For deletes over a node in the view ASG, is that node deletable? Since a relational delete always removes one or more tuples, while an XML delete is more flexible, and could delete either just a single value or even a complete subtree. In general, deletion of a node with the incoming edge as "1" is invalid. For example, \( u_6 \) in Fig. 10 is invalid since leaf node \( v_{L1} \) is required to be Not Null in Fig. 8.

**Insert.** Assume that the insert happens on the schema node \( v \) in the view ASG. We first examine whether the node to be inserted conforms to the hierarchy specified in the view ASG, by examining the name annotation of the node and the type annotation of the edges. For example, \( u_7 \) in Fig. 10 is invalid since the type annotation of the edge \( (v_{C1}, v_{C2}) \) in Fig. 8 is "1", that is, each book must have exactly one publisher.

Second, we consider whether the values inside the element to be inserted conform to the constraints captured in the view ASG. (i) The leaf node value must be in the domain defined by its type annotation. (ii) The leaf node value must satisfy the check annotation. (iii) The leaf node value cannot be empty if the property annotation includes Not Null. For instance, \( u_1 \) in Fig. 4 is invalid since the node annotation table in Fig. 8 indicates that (i) the title cannot be NULL according to the property of the node \( v_{L2} \) and (ii) the price should be a positive number based on the check annotation of the node \( v_{L3} \).

After Step 1, the view updates which directly conflict with any of the local constraints are rejected instantly. The rest are passed to the next step for view side effect checking.

## 5 Schema-driven Translatability Reasoning

Using the global constraints captured in both view ASG and base ASG, this step classifies a valid view update as untranslatable, conditionally translatable or unconditionally translatable.

For example, \( u_8 \) in Fig. 10 is unconditionally translatable, and a correct translation is to delete \( \text{review}.t_1 \) and \( \text{review}.t_2 \) from \( \text{review} \) table. The update \( u_9 \) in Fig. 10 is said to be conditionally translatable. The direct translation \( U = \{ (\text{delete from book where rowid} = t_3), \text{(delete from publisher where rowid} = t_1) \} \) is not a correct translation, since \( \text{publisher}.t_1 \) is still referenced by the first book element in the view. Deleting it will cause a view side effect. Thus, in order for this update to be translatable, an additional condition is associated with this update, namely “Apply update minimization in translation”. Such kind of minimization is studied in [2, 21, 22]. The update \( u_{10} \) in Fig. 10 is untranslatable. The direct translation is \( U = \{ \text{delete from publisher where rowid} = t_1 \} \). Note that there is a foreign key from the book relation to the publisher relation. Therefore this deletion will cause the book to disappear also.

Our earlier work [32, 34] proposes a clean extended source theory as criteria for determining whether a given translation mapping is correct. A clean extended source represents a correct translation for the given view update, which achieves the desired delete operation without causing any view side effect. An update translation is correct if and only if it deletes or inserts a clean extended source of the view element. Based on this theoretical foundation, we now propose a concrete schema-driven update

\footnote{Currently we consider replace as a deletion followed by an insertion.}
translatability reasoning (STAR) algorithm. It utilizes a static STAR marking procedure and a dynamic STAR checking procedure to decide the translatability of a valid update from the update validation step. The correctness proof of our STAR algorithm can be found in [33].

In this paper, we consider only the internal nodes \( v_C \) in our schema level update translatability checking. These nodes are marked by a dashed line in Fig. 8. The treatment of other nodes is either trivial or similar to that of \( v_C \) nodes. For instance, deleting the root node \( v_R \) is always translatable. Similarly any valid update of a \( v_E \) node will be translatable. Updates of \( v_S \) nodes are handled similar to an update over a \( v_C \) node.

5.1 STAR Marking Procedure

We use a STAR marking procedure to encode each node in \( G_V \) at compile time by its update point type and update context type, labeled as \((UPoint,UContext)\). This mark is then used to determine the translatability of updates specified on the nodes.

5.1.1 Update Context Type

The update context type \((UContext)\) of a node in \( G_V \) determines whether a view side effect might arise when deleting or inserting an instance of this node. A node is said to be safe-delete if for the operation of deleting any of its instance, there exists a translation which is guaranteed to not cause any view side effect. Otherwise it is said to be unsafe-delete. Similarly, a node is said to be 

safe-insert if for the operation of inserting a new instance, there exists a translation which will not cause any view side effect. Otherwise, it is said to be unsafe-insert.

The intuition for update context type is that duplication in the view is the major cause of view side effects. Duplication appears in different forms: (i) two instances of the same view ASG node might be duplicated, and thus map to the same relational data and (ii) two instances of different view ASG nodes could also include duplicate sub-elements.

The following rules are used to determine the UContext of a node using the view ASG \( G_V \). Rule 1 identifies the unsafe internal nodes caused by duplication (i). Rules 2 and 3 identify the unsafe \( UContext \) nodes caused by duplication (ii).

Recall the UCBinding defined in Section 3. Given an internal node \( v_C \in N_{G_V} \) and its parent node \( v \in N_{G_V}. \) We define the current Relations of \( v_C \) as \( CR(v_C) = UCBinding(v_C) - UCBinding(v) \).

We say a Join condition \( R_i.a = R_j.b \) on an edge \( e = (v_C1,v_C2) \) is a proper Join if (i) \( R_j \in CR(v_C2) \) and (ii) \( R_i.a \) is a unique identifier of \( R_i \in CR(v_C1) \). A proper Join ensures no duplicates are introduced for \( v_C2 \) by this Join.

**Rule 1:** Let \( e = (v_C1,v_C2) \) be an edge in \( G_V \) with type "*". UContext of any node in the subtree rooted at \( v_C2 \) is unsafe-delete and unsafe-insert if \( e \) is not associated with a proper Join condition (as described above).

Rule 1 can be used to identify “missing” Join conditions. For example, assume that we removed the second WHERE clause in BookView in Fig. 3. That is, the edge \( (v_C1,v_C3) \) in Fig. 8 were not annotated with any condition. All the nodes in the subtree of \( v_C3 \) are unsafe now since the whole review table is now nested inside of each individual book, even if unrelated.

On the other hand, this rule can also identify “improper” Join conditions (a Join condition causing duplicates). As an example, assume the second WHERE clause in BookView in Fig. 3 is replaced by a correlated predicate “book/title = \$review/comment”. Then the edge \( (v_C1,v_C3) \) in Fig. 8 is annotated with a Join condition book.title = \$review.comment. Since neither book.title nor review/comment is UNIQUE, we will then mark all the nodes in the subtree of \( v_C3 \) as unsafe-delete and unsafe-insert.

Now assume all * edges between the internal nodes of \( G_V \) are annotated with a proper Join condition. Is it possible for duplication to exist? The answer is yes.

Rule 2 below is used to identify unsafe internal nodes for the delete operation, which could cause other nodes, which are not its descendants, to disappear. As an example, again consider \( v_C2 \) in Fig. 8. Rule 2 below will mark \( v_C2 \) node as unsafe-delete, because it affects the appearance of the whole book node. Given a relation \( R \), we define \( extend(R) \subseteq rel(DEF_V) \) as a set of relations that refer to \( R \) through foreign key constraint(s).

**Rule 2:** \( UContext(v_C) = unsafe-delete \) if \( \neg\exists R \in CR(v_C) \) such that \( \forall v'_C \in N_{G_V} \) being a non-descendant node of \( v_C \), extend(R) \( \cap UCBinding(v'_C) = \emptyset \).

The UCBinding difference between the node to be deleted and its parent, denoted by \( CR(v_C) \) in Rule 2, indicates the smallest search space for a clean extended source [32]. If none of the relations in \( CR(v_C) \) is a clean extended source, then deleting an instance of node \( v_C \) will cause a view side effect.

As an example, consider \( v_C4 \) in Fig. 8. We have \( UCBinding(v_C4) = \{publisher\} \) and \( UCBinding(v_R) = \emptyset \). Thus \( CR(v_C4) = \{publisher\} \). For \( R = publisher \), \( extend(R) = \{publisher,book,review\} \). Note that \( UCBinding(v_C1) = \{book,publisher\} \) and \( extend(R) \cap \{publisher\} = \emptyset \).
Closure. We refer to the closure of a node in $G_V$ and $G_D$ to indicate the effect of an update on the view and on the relational database respectively. The closure of a node $v$ in $G_V$, denoted by $v^+$, is defined as follows. (1) $v^+_L = \{v\}$. (2) Otherwise, $v^+$ is the union of its children’s closures grouped by their hierarchical relationship and marked by their cardinality. For simplicity, in the closure the cardinality of $+$ and $\ast$ are both represented as $\ast$, and the cardinality of 1 and ? are omitted. For example, in Fig. 8, $v^{+L}_1 = \{v_{L1}\}$ while $v^{+C}_2 = \{v_{L2}, v_{L5}\}$ and $v^{+C}_1 = \{v_{L1}, v_{L2}, v_{L3}, v_{L4}, v_{L5}, (v_{L6}, v_{L7})^{\ast\ast\ast\ast}\}$. The closure of a leaf node is the same as the closure of its parent node. For instance, in Fig. 9, $(n_9)^+ = (n_8)^+ = \{n_9, n_{10}\}$. Note that this closure definition in $G_D$ is based on the pre-selected update policy: same type and delete cascade. When a different update policy is used, the definition has to be adjusted accordingly. However, the policy used affects only the closure definitions of the base ASG, while the remaining steps for translatability checking remain the same [33].

Given two closures $C_1$ and $C_2$, we define $C_1 \subseteq C_2$, if $C_1$ appears in $C_2$. In Fig. 9, $n_8^{+L} = \{n_9, n_{10}\}$ and $n_8^{+C} = \{n_5, n_6, n_{17}, (n_9, n_{10})^{\ast\ast\ast\ast}\}$, thus $n_8^{+L} \subseteq n_8^{+C}$. Two closures $C_1$ and $C_2$ are equal, denoted by $C_1 \equiv C_2$, if $C_1 \subseteq C_2$ and $C_1 \supseteq C_2$. In Fig. 9, we have $n_3^{+C} \equiv n_3^{+L}$.

Moreover, we define the closure of a set of nodes $N \subseteq N_G$, denoted by $N^+$, as $N^+ = \bigcup_{n_i \in N} n_i^+$, where $\bigcup$ is a “Union-like” operation that combines the nodes but eliminates duplicates. That is, $\forall n_k, n_j \in N$, if $n_k^+ \subseteq n_j^+$, $N^+ = \bigcup_{n_i \in N, i \neq k} n_i^+$. For instance, in Fig. 9, $(n_4, n_8)^+ = (n_4)^+ \bigcup (n_8)^+ = (n_4)^+ = \{n_5, n_6, n_{17}, (n_9, n_{10})^{\ast\ast\ast\ast}\}$.   

Mapping Closure. Intuitively, the relationship between the closure of an internal node $v_C$ in $G_V$, denoted by $C_V$, and its mapping closure $C_D$ defined below, answers the following question. If an instance of $v_C$ is deleted or inserted, what will be affected in the relational database?
The mapping closure of \( v_C \) is defined as follows. First we compute \( C_V = v_C^+ \) in \( G_V \). Let \( T = \text{Distinct}(\text{getNodes}(C_V)) \), where getNodes() is a function to extract all the nodes from a given closure, while Distinct() removes duplicates by node identification. For each node \( v_L \in T \), we define its mapping leaf node \( n_L \in G_D \) to be the one with the same name in its annotation. Let \( N \) denote the set of mapping nodes from \( T \). Let \( C_D = N^+ \) in \( G_D \). We call \( C_D \) the mapping closure of \( v_C \). For example, \( v_C^+ = \{v_{L4}, v_{L5}\} \) and \( T = \{v_{L4}, v_{L5}\} \). Then the mapping nodes in \( G_V \) is \( N = \{n_2, n_3\} \) and \( N^+ = \{n_2, n_3, n_5, n_6, n_7, (n_9, n_{10})^\text{clean2}\} \). This is the mapping closure \( C_D \) we are looking for.

**Definition 2**

\( UPoint(v_C) = \text{clean} \) if \( C_V \equiv C_D \). Otherwise, \( UPoint(v_C) = \text{dirty} \).

It is only necessary to consider the update point type when the update context type is safe. For example, in Fig. 8, \( v_{C1} \) is marked as (dirty|safe-delete,unsafe-insert). In this case, inserting a book might cause a view side effect as we explained before. Deleting a book is safe, but since the UPoint mark is dirty, we have to examine whether its publisher is referenced by other books.

**Algorithm 1 Mark \( G_V \) with (UPoint|UContext) pair**

\[
\text{Mark}(UPoint(UContext)) \text{ for } G_V^U
\]

\[
\text{PROCEDURE markViewASG(} G_V, G_D \text{)}
\]

computeClosure(\( G_V \), \( G_D \))

markUContext(\( G_V \), \( G_D \))

markUPoint(\( G_V \), \( G_D \))

\[
\text{Mark}(UPoint(UContext)) \text{ as safe or unsafe for deletion and insertion*}
\]

\[
\text{PROCEDURE markUContext(} G_V, G_D \text{)}
\]

\[
\text{Mark UContext(} G_V, G_D \text{)}
\]

\[
\text{First mark unsafe nodes*}
\]

\[
\text{Initiate rules set } S \text{ for update context checking}
\]

\[
\text{Add rules 1 to 3 into } S \text{ in order}
\]

\[
\text{while } S \text{ has more rules to be evaluated do}
\]

\[
\text{Get the next rule } r \text{ from } S
\]

\[
\text{evaluateRule(} \langle G_V, G_D \rangle, G_D \rangle
\]

\[
\text{end while}
\]

\[
\text{Mark the rest of them as safe*}
\]

\[
\text{while } N_{G_V} \text{ has more unmarked } v_C \text{ nodes do}
\]

\[
\text{Get the next node } n \in N_{G_V}
\]

\[
\text{UContext}(v_C) = \text{safe-delete} \land \text{safe-insert}
\]

\[
\text{end while}
\]

\[
\text{Mark UPoint(} v_C \text{) as clean or dirty*}
\]

\[
\text{PROCEDURE markUPoint(} G_V, G_D \text{)}
\]

\[
\text{Mark UPoint(} G_V, G_D \text{)}
\]

\[
\text{while } N_{G_V} \text{ has more unmarked } v_C \text{ nodes do}
\]

\[
\text{Get the next node } v_C \in N_{G_V}
\]

\[
C_V = \text{getClosure}(v_C, G_V)
\]

\[
C_D = \text{getClosure(} \text{Distinct(getNodes}(C_V)), G_D \text{)}
\]

\[
\text{if } C_V \equiv C_D \text{ then}
\]

\[
\text{UPoint(} v_C \text{) = clean}
\]

\[
\text{else}
\]

\[
\text{UPoint(} v_C \text{) = dirty}
\]

\[
\text{end if}
\]

\[
\text{end while}
\]

5.2 STAR Checking Procedure

Once the ASGs are analyzed and marked by (UPoint|UContext) labels using Algorithm 1, the STAR checking procedure is used to decide the update translatable and additional conditions required (if any). Observations 1 and 2 serve this purpose.

**Observation 1** A deletion on an unsafe-delete node is un-translatable. A deletion on a (clean | safe-delete) node is conditionally translatable. The condition required is translation minimization. This refers back to the source-side-effect-minimization defined in [12], and studied in [2, 21, 22]. This condition guarantees that the translated update sequence avoids the view side effect from duplication.

**Observation 2** A insertion on an unsafe-insert node is un-translatable. A insertion on a (clean | safe-insert) node is conditionally translatable. The required condition is duplication consistency. That is, the duplicate parts inside the element to be inserted should have consistent values.

For example, \( u_8 \) in Fig. 10 is unconditionally translatable since \( v_{C3} \) in Fig. 8 is a (clean | safe-delete) node. \( u_{10} \) is untranslatable since \( UContext(v_{C2}) = \text{unsafe-delete} \) in Fig. 8. The update \( u_8 \) is conditionally translatable by Observation 1. While deleting the book, we will not delete its corresponding publisher, if another book references this publisher.

6 Data-driven Translatability Checking

As motivated by Example 3 in Section 1, any update operation which passes through all schema level checks (Steps 1 and 2) might still be untranslatable. This can only be detected by examining the actual data, as described below.
6.1 Data-driven Update Context Check

The update context check focuses on the context of the update operation. It aims to answer the question whether the view element that the user update is inserting into or deleting from exists in the view content. For instance, in Example 3 (u3 in Fig. 4), the book already exists in the view. Thus U3 is not translatable. Similarly, u11 in Fig. 10 will be rejected since it is trying to delete the reviews of the book “Programming in Unix”, which does not appear in the view.

We can address this by composing the view query with the user update query into a probe query as done by most XML data management systems which support queries over views [13, 25]. This probe query is then evaluated over the relational engine.

For u4, the probe query 11 will be:

\[ PQ;: SELECT bookid FROM publisher,book,review \\
WHERE book.title = "Programming in Unix" AND book.price < 50.00 \\
AND book.year > 1990 AND book.pubid = publisher.pubid \]

The result of this query can be used for two different purposes. First, if the result set is empty, this means the qualified book does not exist in the view. Thus the given insert operation is not translatable, and hence rejected. For example, the probe query used by u11, which is the same as PQ; 11 returns empty result. u11 will also be rejected.

Second, in some cases the results of the probe query are required by the translated SQL update statements. For example, u13 in Fig. 10 is similar to u3 in Fig. 4, except that the review is now inserted into the book named “Data on the Web”. The result of the probe query PQ; 2 now includes one qualified book. Further, the bookid from PQ; 2 will be used in the translated SQL statement U1.

\[ PQ; 2: SELECT bookid FROM publisher,book,review \\
WHERE book.title = "Data on the Web" AND book.price < 50.00 U1 = \{INSERT INTO review VALUES "98003", "001", "easy read and useful"\} \\
AND book.year > 1990 AND book.pubid = publisher.pubid \]

As we will see later, the results of the probe queries can also be materialized and re-used to generate the full insert tuple or to eliminate redundant joins.

6.2 Data-driven Update Point Check

The update u4 in Fig. 4 is determined to be not translatable. The reason is that a book with the key (bookid, pubid) = (98001, A01) already exists in the book relation. A data conflict thus exists. However, this data conflict is different from that described in Section 6.1. That is, the data conflict exists in the updated data itself (update point) instead of its context. Several approaches can be used to solve this problem.

6.2.1 Internal Approach

As proposed by [7, 8], the XML view can be mapped into a set of relational views. The update over the XML view can then be mapped into an update over this set of relational views. We thus would convert the XML view update problem into a relational view update problem. For example, Fig. 11 shows the mapping relational view of the BookView in Fig. 3. The update u12 on BookView will now be translated into U1 on RelationalBookView.

However, this approach has several shortcomings. First of all, this approach is rather limited since many current commercial relational database systems such as [24] support update operations over SelectProject-views, but are limited on supporting updates over Join-views.

Second, for performance reasons, this approach would cause unnecessarily expensive data queries. The update u13 only specified (title, reviewid, comment). Thus we need to find the bookid. However, in this inside approach, the translated relational view update U1 above also has to find (pubid, pubname, price). The latter is not really needed. Our experimental studies in Section 7 also illustrate this inefficiency.

6.2.2 External Approach

To avoid the shortcomings of the inside approach, we now introduce other more practical approaches to handle the update decomposition outside the relational engine. Here each resulting SQL update statement from the update translation engine will be specified over only a single table. Two alternative strategies can be useful, namely hybrid strategy or outside strategy.
In the hybrid strategy, checking data conflicts is done by the relational engine, namely, the view update is decomposed and translated into a sequence of SQL updates without any data conflict checking. This update sequence is then fed into the relational engine, and we wait for its error or success response.

As an example, let us consider both insert and delete cases. In the insert case, the update $u_4$ in Fig. 4 maps into $U_2$ below. The relational engine executes $U_2$ and generates an error message since this insert conflicts with the Key constraint. In the delete case, $u_12$ in Fig. 10 is translated to $U_3$ below. Note that $U_3$ accesses the table $TAB_{book}$, which is the materialized view from $PQ_2$ in Section 6.1. The relational engine executes $U_3$ and generates a warning message that zero tuples are deleted.

Alternatively, the outside strategy issues a probe query to check whether a data conflict exists for each of the relations we will insert into or delete from. For example, $u_4$ in Fig. 4 can be checked using the probe query $PQ_3$. Since its result is not empty, we conclude that there is a data conflict. $u_4$ is not translatable. Update $u_12$ in Fig. 10 can be checked using the probe query $PQ_4$. Since the result set is empty, we conclude that the tuple to be deleted does not exist.

We notice that the probe query used in the outside approach is very similar with the update query used in the hybrid approach. A natural question is if it is worthwhile to probe before update translation? The answer to this question depends on several factors, such as the shape of the view and the indices of the relational databases, as we illustrate in our experimental studies.

7 Evaluation of U-Filter

7.1 Views Handled by U-Filter

The view ASG used in our solution has the same limitations as the view forest from SilkRoute [19]. ASG also does not express if/then/else expressions; order functions, user-defined and aggregate functions, such as max(), count(), etc. We conduct an evaluation on the expressiveness of our view ASG model for W3C use cases. The evaluation result is shown in Figure 12.

We notice the probe query approach is very similar with the update approach. A natural question is if it is worthwhile to probe before update translation? The answer to this question depends on several factors, such as the shape of the view and the indices of the relational databases, as we illustrate in our experimental studies.
To examine the practicality of our approach, we studied the Protein Sequence Database (PSD) from [27]. From typical user studies over this domain [27] gained by discussion with biologist (Ryder, Elizabeth F) at WPI, we observed the following: (i) To examine the practicality of our approach, we studied the Protein Sequence Database (PSD) from [27]. From typical user studies over this domain [27] gained by discussion with biologist (Ryder, Elizabeth F) at WPI, we observed the following: (i) The delete SET NULL policy is typically used in this domain as opposed to the delete cascade policy. U-Filter well-nested view

The performance comparison between two strategies of the external approach is shown in Figures 16 and 17. Fig. 16 shows the hybrid strategy performs better in the \( V_{\text{linear}} \) case. The reason is that both strategies include similar amount of join operations, but the hybrid strategy generates simplified updates, which does not materialize the intermediate result. Further, the relatively “big” gap between the hybrid and outside strategies is due to the indices defined. Oracle builds indices over the primary keys and foreign keys, which is used by the Join condition in the hybrid strategy. The outside strategy, however, performs joins over the materialized view, where indices do not exist.

Fig. 17 shows that the outside strategy performs better in different failed cases of \( V_{\text{linear}} \). \( \text{Fail}_2 \) means no qualified tuples in LINEITEM exist, but tuples in CUSTOMER and ORDER are deleted. While in \( \text{Fail}_1 \) there are no deletes over all three tables. As we can see, for \( \text{Fail}_2 \), in the hybrid strategy, the delete queries over LINEITEM will still be executed and they return a warning message “zero tuples deleted”. In the outside strategy, the probe query will identify it and the delete statement is not issued on LINEITEM. This is another advantage of the outside strategy since the failed case is detected early.

7.3 Practical Application of U-Filter Approach

To examine the practicality of our approach, we studied the Protein Sequence Database (PSD) from [27]. From typical user studies over this domain [27] gained by discussion with biologist (Ryder, Elizabeth F) at WPI, we observed the following: (i) The well-nested view assumed by [7, 8], where the nesting “follows” the key and foreign key constraints, is not often the case in this domain. (ii) The delete SET NULL policy is typically used in this domain as opposed to the delete cascade policy. U-Filter approach hence provides a practical solution to this domain, because it supports even non-well-nested views as well as flexible update policies.

8 Related Work

[2, 21, 22] study the view update translation mechanism for SPJ queries on relations that are in BCNF. These works have been further extended for object-based views in [5]. Commercial database systems, such as Oracle [4], DB2 [15] and SQL-Server [28],
also provide XML support. [29] presents an XQuery update grammar. Assuming that the update is indeed translatable and has in fact already been translated into updates over a relational database. [29] also studies the performance of executing the translated updates by using relational techniques, such as triggers or indices. Our work addresses a different aspect of the view update problem, namely, view update translatableability instead of update translation strategy.

An abstract formulation of the update translatableability problem is given by the view complementary theory in [3, 16]. It uses the invariance of the complement of a view, namely database side-effect free, to decide the translatableability of a given update. However, by requiring the database side-effect free property, the complementary theory is too restrictive to be practical. In [18], the authors relax the criteria for a correct translation as only requiring view side-effect free. Based on the notion of a clean source, it presents an approach in the relational context for determining the existence of update translations by performing a syntax analysis of the view definition.

Our earlier work [31] studies the update translatableability of XML views over the relational database in the “round-trip” case, which is characterized by a pair of reversible lossless mappings for (i) loading the XML documents into the relational database, and (ii) extracting an XML view identical to the original XML document back out of it. We prove that the view updates in this case are always translatable according to the view complementary theory [3, 16]. Recent works [7, 8] study the update over well-nested XML views. They assume joins are through keys and foreign keys, and nesting is controlled to agree with the integrity constraints and to avoid duplication. As our work on updates shows, an update over such a view is thus always translatable. [23] develops a theory within the framework of the ER approach to characterize the conditions under which mappings exist. It is further extended in [14] to guide the design of valid XML views. Valid views based on this design approach are a proper subset of general XML views studied in this paper. [14] avoids the duplication from both joins as well as multiple references to the relations. Our work in this paper is orthogonal to these works by addressing new challenges related to the decision of translation existence when no particular restrictions have been placed on the defined view for the update translatableability. That is, in general, conflicts are possible and a view cannot always be guaranteed to be revert-able [31], well-nested [7, 8] or valid [14] (as assumed by these prior works).

In [32] we first extend [18] into a clean-extended source theory for XML views to serve as a criteria of determining whether a given translation is correct. [34] focuses on identifying the factors deciding the translatableability of deletions over XML views (part of Step 2). Our work in this paper now provides a general framework consisting of three steps based on the factors identified previously. Further, as part of our data-level check we are able to analyze the performance of existing work [8]; we are able to suggest alternative approaches that can work with existing DBMS without imposing additional requirements, and that yield better performance.

Recent works [10, 11, 17] indicate a loose connection between data provenance [10, 11] or lineage [17] and the view update problem. The distinction between “why provenance” and “where provenance” is used to guide the view update process to find an appropriate update translation. Their work has several similarities with ours, e.g., try to find the data trace (provenance) at the query syntax level. However, we utilize this data trace or provenance for a different purpose. The question that [10, 11] tries to answer is: given two equivalent queries that are rewritings of each other, when are the provenances guaranteed to be identical? Instead, we use the provenance to find a correct translation, if one exists, for a given update query.

9 Conclusions

In this paper, we have proposed a lightweight framework U-Filter to address the XML view update translatability problem. A three-step translatableability checking process is used to guarantee that only translatable updates are fed into the actual translation system to obtain the corresponding SQL statements.

Our solution is practical since it does not require any additional update capability from the relational database. It can be applied by any existing view update system for analyzing the translatableability of a given update before its translation is attempted. Our solution is also efficient since we perform schema-level (thus very inexpensive) checks first, while utilizing the data-level checking only at the last step. Even when data has to be accessed, we issue probe queries whose results can be reused for later update translation.

In the future, we would like to study how our solution can be adapted to XML views published over native XML documents, in particular XML-specific issues, such as order handling.

References


