

Actris: Session-Type Based Reasoning in Separation Logic

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The Actor Model and Message Passing

- Principled way of writing concurrent programs
 - Better separation of concurrent behaviour
 - Used in Erlang, Elixir, Go, Java, Scala, F# and C#

- Primitives

`new_chan ()`, `send c v`, `recv c`

- Example: `let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {send c' 42};
recv c`

- Many variants exists

- In our case: Asynchronous, Order-Preserving and Reliable

- Message-Passing is not a silver bullet for concurrency
 - “We studied 15 large, mature, and actively maintained actor programs written in Scala and found that 80% of them mix the actor model with another concurrency model.” [[Tasharofi et al., ECOOP'13](#)]
- No work where actor-based reasoning is readily available in combination with existing concurrency models for functional verification

Combine

- Session Types [[Honda et al., ESOP'98](#)]
 - Type system for channels
 - Example: $!N.?B.\mathbf{end}$
 - Ensures safety through static type checking
- Concurrent Separation Logic [[O'Hearn & Brooks, CONCUR'04](#)]
 - Logic for reasoning about concurrent programs with mutable state.
 - Example: $\{x \mapsto a * y \mapsto b\} \text{ swap } x \ y \ \{x \mapsto b * y \mapsto a\}$
 - Ensures functional correctness through manual proofs

Actris: A concurrent separation logic for proving *functional correctness* of programs that combine *message passing* with other programming and concurrency paradigms

- We introduce the notion of *Dependent Separation Protocols*
- Integration with Iris and its existing concurrency mechanisms, e.g. locks and ghost state
- Verification of feature-complete programs including a variant of Map-Reduce
- A full mechanization of all of the above in Coq with tactic support

Demonstration

Syntax

ML-like language with concurrency and mutable state

$$e \in \text{Expr} ::= \begin{array}{l} \text{new_chan } () \\ \text{send } e_1 \ e_2 \\ \text{recv } e \end{array} \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \dots \end{array} \right.$$

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {send c' 42};
recv c
```

Goal: Prove that the returned value is 42

Definitions

$$st \triangleq \begin{array}{l} !T.st \\ ?T.st \\ \mathbf{end} \end{array} \mid \dots$$

Example: $!N.?B.\mathbf{end}$

Duality: $\overline{!T.st} = ?T.\overline{st}$
 $\overline{?T.st} = !T.\overline{st}$
 $\overline{\mathbf{end}} = \mathbf{end}$

Typing: $c : st$

Rules

NEWCHAN

$\mathbf{newchan} () : st \otimes \overline{st}$

SEND

$\mathbf{send} : (!T.st \otimes T) \multimap st$

RECV

$\mathbf{recv} : ?T.st \multimap (T \otimes st)$

Demonstration - Type Checking

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in  
fork {send c' 42};  
recv c
```

Session Type

```
c : ? $\mathbb{N}$ .end and  
c' : ! $\mathbb{N}$ .end
```

Session types do not provide functional correctness

Cannot prove that result is 42

Dependent Separation Protocols - Definitions

Dependent Separation Protocols

$$\begin{aligned} \text{prot} &\triangleq \begin{array}{l} !\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\text{prot} \quad | \\ ?\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\text{prot} \quad | \\ \text{end} \end{array} \end{aligned}$$
$$\begin{aligned} \overline{!\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\text{prot}} &= ?\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\overline{\text{prot}} \\ \overline{?\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\text{prot}} &= !\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}.\overline{\text{prot}} \\ \overline{\text{end}} &= \text{end} \end{aligned}$$
$$!x\langle x\rangle\{\text{True}\}.\ ?b\langle b\rangle\{b = \text{is_even } x\}.\ \text{end}$$
$$c \rightsquigarrow \text{prot}$$

Session Types

$$\begin{aligned} \text{st} &\triangleq \begin{array}{l} !T.\text{st} \quad | \\ ?T.\text{st} \quad | \\ \text{end} \quad | \dots \end{array} \end{aligned}$$
$$\begin{aligned} \overline{!T.\text{st}} &= ?T.\overline{\text{st}} \\ \overline{?T.\text{st}} &= !T.\overline{\text{st}} \\ \overline{\text{end}} &= \text{end} \end{aligned}$$
$$!N. ?B.\text{end}$$
$$c : \text{st}$$

Dependent Separation Protocols - Rules

HT-NEWCHAN

{True}

`new_chan ()`

{(c, c'). c \rightsquigarrow prot * c' \rightsquigarrow $\overline{\text{prot}}$ }

NEWCHAN

`newchan ()` : st \otimes $\overline{\text{st}}$

HT-SEND

{c \rightsquigarrow ! \vec{x} : $\vec{\tau}$ <v>{P}. prot * P[\vec{t}/\vec{x}]}

`send c (v[\vec{t}/\vec{x}])`

{c \rightsquigarrow prot[\vec{t}/\vec{x}]}

SEND

`send` : (!T.st \otimes T) \multimap st

HT-RECV

{c \rightsquigarrow ? \vec{x} : $\vec{\tau}$ <v>{P}. prot}

`recv c`

{w. $\exists \vec{y}$. (w = v[\vec{y}/\vec{x}]) * c \rightsquigarrow prot[\vec{y}/\vec{x}] * P[\vec{y}/\vec{x}]}

RECV

`recv` : ?T.st \multimap (T \otimes st)

Demonstration - Verified

Logic

$$\begin{array}{l} P, Q, prot ::= !\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}. prot \\ \quad \quad \quad ?\vec{x}:\vec{\tau}\langle v\rangle\{P\}. prot \\ \quad \quad \quad \mathbf{end} \\ c \mapsto st \end{array} \quad \left| \begin{array}{l} \\ \\ \\ \dots \end{array} \right.$$

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {send c' 42};
recv c
```

Protocol

$$\begin{array}{l} c \mapsto ?\langle 42\rangle\{\mathbf{True}\}.\mathbf{end} \quad \text{and} \\ c' \mapsto !\langle 42\rangle\{\mathbf{True}\}.\mathbf{end} \end{array}$$

Demonstration - References

Syntax

$e \in \text{Expr} ::= \text{ref } e \mid !l \mid \dots$

Logic

$P, Q, \text{prot} ::= l \mapsto v \mid \dots$

$\{\text{True}\} \text{ref } v \{l.l \mapsto v\}$

$\{l \mapsto v\} !l \{w.w = v \wedge l \mapsto v\}$

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {send c' (ref 42)};
!(recv c)
```

Protocol

$c \mapsto ?l \langle l \rangle \{l \mapsto 42\}. \text{end}$ and
 $c' \mapsto !l \langle l \rangle \{l \mapsto 42\}. \text{end}$

Demonstration - Delegation

Delegation: Passing channels over channels

Program

```
let (c1, c'1) = new_chan () in
fork { let (c2, c'2) = new_chan () in
      send c'1 c2; send c'2 (ref 42) } ;
!(recv (recv c1))
```

Protocols

$c_1 \mapsto ?c \langle c \rangle \{ c \mapsto ?l \langle l \rangle \{ l \mapsto 42 \}. \mathbf{end} \}. \mathbf{end}$ and
 $c'_1 \mapsto !c \langle c \rangle \{ c \mapsto ?l \langle l \rangle \{ l \mapsto 42 \}. \mathbf{end} \}. \mathbf{end}$

$c_2 \mapsto ?l \langle l \rangle \{ l \mapsto 42 \}. \mathbf{end}$ and
 $c'_2 \mapsto !l \langle l \rangle \{ l \mapsto 42 \}. \mathbf{end}$

Demonstration - Dependency

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {let x = recv c' in send c' (x + 2)};
send c 40; recv c
```

Protocol

```
c  $\mapsto$  !x ⟨x⟩{True}. ? ⟨x + 2⟩{True}. end    and
c'  $\mapsto$  ?x ⟨x⟩{True}. ! ⟨x + 2⟩{True}. end
```

Demonstration - Higher-Order

Program

```
let (c, c') = new_chan () in
fork {let f = recv c' in send c' (λ(). f() + 2)};
let r = ref 40 in send c (λ(). !r); recv c ()
```

Protocol

$$c \mapsto !P Q f \langle f \rangle \{ \{P\} f () \{v. Q(v)\} \}.$$
$$?g \langle g \rangle \{ \{P\} g () \{v. \exists w. (v = w + 2) * Q(w)\} \}.$$

end

and

$$c \mapsto ?P Q f \langle f \rangle \{ \{P\} f () \{v. Q(v)\} \}.$$
$$!g \langle g \rangle \{ \{P\} g () \{v. \exists w. (v = w + 2) * Q(w)\} \}.$$

end

$$\{r \mapsto 40\} (\lambda(). !r) () \{v. v = 40\}$$

Distributed Merge Sort

```
sort_service cmp c  $\triangleq$   
  let l = recv c in  
  if |l|  $\leq$  1 then send c () else  
  let l' = split l in  
  let c1 = start (sort_service cmp) in  
  let c2 = start (sort_service cmp) in  
  send c1 l; send c2 l';  
  recv c1; recv c2;  
  merge cmp l l'; send c ()
```

```
start e  $\triangleq$   
  let f = e in  
  let (c, c') = new_chan () in  
  fork {f c'}; c
```

```
sort_prot (l : T  $\rightarrow$  Val  $\rightarrow$  iProp) (R : T  $\rightarrow$  T  $\rightarrow$   $\mathbb{B}$ )  $\triangleq$   
  ?  $\vec{x} \ell \langle \ell \rangle \{ \ell \mapsto_l \vec{x} \}.$   
  !  $\vec{y} \langle () \rangle \{ \ell \mapsto_l \vec{y} * \text{sorted\_of}_R \vec{y} \vec{x} \}. \text{end}$ 
```

```
{ cmp_spec l R cmp *  
  c  $\mapsto$  sort_prot l R  
  sort_service cmp c  
  { c  $\mapsto$  end } }
```

```
cmp_spec l R cmp  $\triangleq$   
   $\forall x_1 x_2 v_1 v_2. \{ l x_1 v_1 * l x_2 v_2 \}$   
  cmp v1 v2  
  { r. r = R x1 x2 * l x1 v1 * l x2 v2 }
```

Choice in Session Types

Definitions

$$e \in \text{Expr} ::= \begin{array}{l} \text{select } e_1 \ e_2 \quad | \\ \text{branch } e_1 \ e_2 \ e_3 \quad | \dots \end{array}$$
$$st \triangleq \begin{array}{l} st \oplus st \quad | \\ st \& st \quad | \dots \end{array}$$

Example: $\text{end} \oplus (!N.\text{end} \& \text{end})$

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Duality: } \overline{st \oplus st} = \overline{st} \& \overline{st} \\ \overline{st \& st} = \overline{st} \oplus \overline{st} \end{array}$$

NB: Conventional Session Type have
n-ary branching

Rules

SELECT
 $\text{select} : (st_1 \oplus st_2) \multimap st_i \text{ with } i \in \{1, 2\}$

BRANCH
 $\text{branch} : (st_1 \& st_2) \otimes (st_1 \multimap T) \times (st_2 \multimap T) \multimap T$

Dependent Separation Protocols

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \oplus \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2 \\ \text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \& \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2 \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} \overline{\text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \oplus \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2} = \overline{\text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \& \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2} \\ \overline{\text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \& \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2} = \overline{\text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \oplus \{Q_2\} \text{ prot}_2} \end{array}$$

end \oplus (! $v < v$){ $v > 5$ }.end & end)

Session Types

$$\begin{array}{l} st \oplus st \\ st \& st \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} \overline{st \oplus st} = \overline{st} \& \overline{st} \\ \overline{st \& st} = \overline{st} \oplus \overline{st} \end{array}$$

end \oplus (! \mathbb{N} .end & end)

Choice as derivations

Defined as encodings of send and receive

$$\begin{aligned} \text{select } e \ e' &\triangleq \text{send } e \ e' \\ \text{branch } e \ \text{with } \text{left} \Rightarrow e_1 \mid \text{right} \Rightarrow e_2 \ \text{end} &\triangleq \text{if recv } e \ \text{then } e_1 \ \text{else } e_2 \\ \text{left} &\triangleq \text{true} \\ \text{right} &\triangleq \text{false} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \oplus \{Q_2\} \ \text{prot}_2 &\triangleq ! (b : \mathbb{B}) \langle b \rangle \{ \text{if } b \ \text{then } Q_1 \ \text{else } Q_2 \}. \text{if } b \ \text{then } \text{prot}_1 \ \text{else } \text{prot}_2 \\ \text{prot}_1 \{Q_1\} \&\{Q_2\} \ \text{prot}_2 &\triangleq ? (b : \mathbb{B}) \langle b \rangle \{ \text{if } b \ \text{then } Q_1 \ \text{else } Q_2 \}. \text{if } b \ \text{then } \text{prot}_1 \ \text{else } \text{prot}_2 \end{aligned}$$

Possible due to dependent behaviour of protocols

Choice in Dependent Separation Protocols - Rules

SELECT

select : $(st_1 \oplus st_2) \multimap st_i$ with $i \in \{1, 2\}$

HT-SELECT

$\{c \multimap prot_1 \{Q_1\} \oplus \{Q_2\} prot_2 * \text{if } b \text{ then } Q_1 \text{ else } Q_2\} \text{select } c \ b \{c \multimap \text{if } b \text{ then } prot_1 \text{ else } prot_2\}$

BRANCH

branch : $(st_1 \& st_2) \otimes (st_1 \multimap T) \times (st_2 \multimap T) \multimap T$

HT-BRANCH

$$\frac{\{P * Q_1 * c \multimap prot_1\} e_1 \{v. R\} \quad \{P * Q_2 * c \multimap prot_2\} e_2 \{v. R\}}{\{P * c \multimap prot_1 \{Q_1\} \& \{Q_2\} prot_2\} \text{branch } c \ \text{with left} \Rightarrow e_1 \mid \text{right} \Rightarrow e_2 \ \text{end} \{v. R\}}$$

Dependent Separation Protocols

$\mu X. prot$

$\overline{\mu X. prot} = \mu X. \overline{prot}$

$\mu X. prot = prot[\mu X. prot/X]$

$\mu X. \lambda n, (! m \langle m \rangle \{ n < m \}. X m) \oplus \mathbf{end}$

Session Types

$\mu X. st$

$\overline{\mu X. st} = \mu X. \overline{st}$

$\mu X. st = st[\mu X. st/X]$

$\mu X. (! \mathbb{N}. X) \oplus \mathbf{end}$

Derived entirely from the logic, as channels and protocols are first-class citizens

Fine-Grained Merge Sort

```
sort_servicefg cmp c  $\triangleq$   
  branch c with  
    right  $\Rightarrow$  select c right  
  | left  $\Rightarrow$   
    let x1 = recv c in  
    branch c with  
      right  $\Rightarrow$  select c left;  
              send c x1;  
              select c right  
    | left  $\Rightarrow$   
      let x2 = recv c in  
      let c1 = start sort_servicefg cmp in  
      let c2 = start sort_servicefg cmp in  
      select c1 left; send c1 x1;  
      select c2 left; send c2 x2;  
      splitfg c c1 c2; mergefg cmp c c1 c2  
    end  
  end
```

$$\text{sort_prot}_{fg} (I : T \rightarrow \text{Val} \rightarrow \text{iProp}) (R : T \rightarrow T \rightarrow \mathbb{B}) \triangleq$$
$$\text{sort_prot}_{fg}^{\text{head}} I R \epsilon$$
$$\text{sort_prot}_{fg}^{\text{head}} I R \triangleq$$
$$\mu (\text{rec} : \text{List } T \rightarrow \text{iProto}).$$
$$\lambda \vec{x}. (?x \vee \langle v \rangle \{I \ x \ v\}. \text{rec } (\vec{x} \cdot [x]))$$
$$\& \text{sort_prot}_{fg}^{\text{tail}} I R \vec{x} \epsilon$$
$$\text{sort_prot}_{fg}^{\text{tail}} I R \triangleq$$
$$\mu (\text{rec} : \text{List } T \rightarrow \text{List } T \rightarrow \text{iProto}).$$
$$\lambda \vec{x} \vec{y}. (!y \vee \langle v \rangle \{(\forall i < |\vec{y}|. R \ \vec{y}_i \ y) * I \ y \ v\}. \text{rec } \vec{x} (\vec{y} \cdot [y]))$$
$$\{\text{True}\} \oplus \{\vec{x} \equiv_{\rho} \vec{y}\} \text{ end}$$

Integration with other Concurrency Mechanisms

- Protocols and their ownership are first-class citizens of the logic
- Integration with existing concurrency mechanisms of the logic is inherent

```
let c = start (λ c. let lk = new_lock () in
               fork {acquire lk; send c 21; release lk};
               acquire lk; send c 21; release lk) in
recv c + recv c
lock_prot (n : ℕ) ≜ if n = 0 then end else ?⟨21⟩.lock_prot (n - 1)
```

The Model of Actris

- Iris has all the necessary features [Jung et al., JFP'18]
 - Concurrency, Higher-Order, Step-Indexing, Recursion, Ghost State, ...
- Channels encoded as a mutable shared pair of buffers

$$\begin{array}{lll} \{\text{True}\} & \text{new_chan } () & \{(c_1, c_2). (c_1, c_2) \mapsto (\epsilon, \epsilon)\} \\ \{(c_1, c_2) \mapsto (\vec{v}_1, \vec{v}_2)\} & \text{send } c_1 \ w & \{(c_1, c_2) \mapsto (w \cdot [\vec{v}_1], \vec{v}_2)\} \\ \{(c_1, c_2) \mapsto (\vec{v}_1, \vec{v}_2)\} & \text{recv } c_1 & \{w. (\vec{v}_1 = [w] \cdot \vec{w}) * (c_1, c_2) \mapsto (\vec{w}, \vec{v}_2)\} \end{array}$$

- Dependent Separation Protocols encoded as continuations

$$\text{iProto} \triangleq 1 + (\mathbb{B} * (\text{Val} \rightarrow (\blacktriangleright \text{iProto} \rightarrow \text{iProp}) \rightarrow \text{iProp}))$$

$$\text{end} \triangleq \text{inj}_1 ()$$

$$! \vec{x} : \vec{\tau} \langle v \rangle \{P\}. \text{prot} \triangleq \text{inj}_2 (\text{true}, \lambda w (f : \blacktriangleright \text{iProto} \rightarrow \text{iProp}). \exists (\vec{x} : \vec{\tau}). (v = w) * \triangleright P * f(\text{next } \text{prot}))$$

$$? \vec{x} : \vec{\tau} \langle v \rangle \{P\}. \text{prot} \triangleq \text{inj}_2 (\text{false}, \lambda w (f : \blacktriangleright \text{iProto} \rightarrow \text{iProp}). \exists (\vec{x} : \vec{\tau}). (v = w) * \triangleright P * f(\text{next } \text{prot}))$$

- Protocol ownership $c \mapsto \text{prot}$ encoded via ghost state and invariants

- Semantic model of session types via logical relations

$$\begin{aligned} \llbracket - \rrbracket &: \tau \rightarrow \text{Val} \rightarrow \text{iProp} \\ \llbracket \mathbb{N} \rrbracket &\triangleq \lambda v. \exists n \in \mathbb{N}. v = n \\ \llbracket st \rrbracket &\triangleq ? \end{aligned}$$

- Multi-party Session Types [[Honda et al., POPL'08](#)]
- Communication between distributed systems with logical marshalling

Actris: A concurrent separation logic for proving *functional correctness* of programs that combine *message passing* with other programming and concurrency paradigms

- We introduce the notion of *Dependent Separation Protocols*
- Integration with Iris and its existing concurrency mechanisms, e.g. locks and ghost state
- Verification of feature-complete programs including a variant of Map-Reduce
- A full mechanization of all of the above in Coq with tactic support
- A paper on Actris has been submitted to POPL'20.