Software Architecture
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Lecture 14: Designing for concurrency

(Material prepared by Sebastian Nanz)
Concurrent Processes
Why is concurrency so important?

Traditionally, specialized area of interest to a few experts:

- Operating systems
- Networking
- Databases

Multicore and the Internet make it relevant to every programmer!
What they say about concurrency

- **Intel Corporation**: Multi-core processing is taking the industry on a fast-moving and exciting ride into profoundly new territory. The defining paradigm in computing performance has shifted inexorably from raw clock speed to parallel operations and energy efficiency.

- **Rick Rashid, head of Microsoft Research**: Multicore processors represent one of the largest technology transitions in the computing industry today, with deep implications for how we develop software.

- **Bill Gates**: “Multicore: This is the one which will have the biggest impact on us. We have never had a problem to solve like this. A breakthrough is needed in how applications are done on multicore devices.”
Evolution of hardware (source: Intel)
Multiprocessing

• Until a few years ago: systems with one processing unit were standard

• Today: most end-user systems have multiple processing units in the form of multi-core processors

[Diagram showing two processes running on two CPUs]

• *Multiprocessing*: the use of more than one processing unit in a system

• Execution of processes is said to be *parallel*, as they are running at the same time
Multitasking & multithreading

Even on systems with a single processing unit programs may appear to run in parallel:

- **Multitasking**
- **Multithreading (within a process, see in a few slides)**

Multi-tasked execution of processes is said to be *interleaved*, as all are in progress, but only one is running at a time. (Closely related concept: *coroutines*.)

*This is common terminology, but “multiprocessing” was also used previously as a synonym for “multitasking”*
Processes

• A (sequential) *program* is a set of instructions
• A *process* is an instance of a program that is being executed
Concurrency

• Both multiprocessing and multithreading are examples of concurrent computation
• The execution of processes or threads is said to be concurrent if it is either parallel or interleaved
To perform a computation is

- To apply certain actions
- To certain objects
- Using certain processors
Operating system processes

• How are processes implemented in an operating system?
• Structure of a typical process:
  • Process identifier: unique ID of a process.
  • Process state: current activity of a process.
  • Process context: program counter, register values
  • Memory: program text, global data, stack, and heap.
The scheduler

A system program called the **scheduler** controls which processes are running; it sets the process states:

- **Running**: instructions are being executed.
- **Blocked**: currently waiting for an event.
- **Ready**: ready to be executed, but has not been assigned a processor yet.
The context switch

• The swapping of processes on a processing unit by the scheduler is called a context switch

• Scheduler actions when switching processes P1 and P2:
  - P1.state := ready
  - Save register values as P1's context in memory
  - Use context of P2 to set register values
  - P2.state := running
Concurrent execution:

Sequential execution:

```
compute
  do
    t1.do_task1
    t2.do_task2
  end
```

- We also want to use concurrency within programs
Threads ("lightweight processes")

Make programs concurrent by associating them with threads

A thread is a part of an operating system process

Private to each thread:
- Thread identifier
- Thread state
- Thread context
- Memory: only stack

Shared with other threads:
- Program text
- Global data
- Heap
Processes vs threads

Process:
- Has its own (virtual) memory space (in O-O programming, its own objects)
- Sharing of data (objects) with another process:
  - Is explicit (good for reliability, security, readability)
  - Is heavy (bad for ease of programming)
- Switching to another process: expensive (needs to back up one full context and restore another)

Thread:
- Shares memory with other threads
- Sharing of data is straightforward
  - Simple go program (good)
  - Risks of confusion and errors: data races (bad)
- Switching to another thread: cheap
Concurrent Programming:
The Java Threads approach
Concurrent programs in Java

Associating a computation with a threads:

```java
class Thread1 extends Thread {
    public void run() {
        // implement task1 here
    }
}

class Thread2 extends Thread {
    public void run() {
        // implement task2 here
    }
}

void compute() {
    Thread1 t1 = new Thread1();
    Thread2 t2 = new Thread2();
    t1.start();
    t2.start();
}
```

- Write a class that inherits from `class Thread` (or implements `interface Runnable`)
- Implement the method `run()`
Joining threads

Often the final results of thread executions need to be combined:

\[
\text{return } t1\text{.getResult()} + t2\text{.getResult();}
\]

To wait for both threads to be finished, we join them:

\[
t1\text{.start();}
t2\text{.start();}
t1\text{.join();}
t2\text{.join();}
\text{return } t1\text{.getResult()} + t2\text{.getResult();}
\]

The join() method, invoked on a thread \( t \), causes the caller to wait until \( t \) is finished.
Java Threads

Mutual exclusion
Consider a counter class:

```java
class Counter {
    private int value = 0;

    public int getValue() {
        return value;
    }

    public void setValue(int someValue) {
        value = someValue;
    }

    public void increment() {
        value++;
    }
}
```

Assume two threads:

Thread 1:

```java
x.setValue(0);
x.increment();
int i = x.getValue();
```

Thread 2:

```java
x.setValue(2);
```
Race conditions (2)

- Because of the interleaving of threads, various results can be obtained:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>x.setValue(2)</th>
<th>x.setValue(0)</th>
<th>x.setValue(0)</th>
<th>x.setValue(0)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>x.setValue(0)</td>
<td>x.setValue(2)</td>
<td>x.increment()</td>
<td>x.increment()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x.increment()</td>
<td>x.setValue(2)</td>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
<td>int i = x.getValue()</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>x.setValue(2)</td>
<td>x.setValue(0)</td>
<td>x.increment()</td>
<td>x.setValue(2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

i == 1  
x.value == ?  

| i == 3  
x.value == ?  |
| i == 2  
x.value == ?  |
| i == 1  
x.value == ?  |

Such dependence of the result on nondeterministic interleaving is a **race condition** (or **data race**)

Such errors can stay hidden for a long time and are difficult to find by testing
Race conditions (2)

- Because of the interleaving of threads, various results can be obtained:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>x.setValue(2)</th>
<th>x.setValue(0)</th>
<th>x.increment()</th>
<th>int i = x.getValue()</th>
<th>x.setValue(0)</th>
<th>x.increment()</th>
<th>x.setValue(2)</th>
<th>x.increment()</th>
<th>int i = x.getValue()</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i == 1</td>
<td>i == 3</td>
<td>i == 2</td>
<td>i == 1</td>
<td>x.value == 1</td>
<td>x.value == 3</td>
<td>x.value == 2</td>
<td>x.value == 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Such dependence of the result on nondeterministic interleaving is a race condition (or data race)
Such errors can stay hidden for a long time and are difficult to find by testing
Synchronization

To avoid data races, threads (or processes) must synchronize with each other, i.e. communicate to agree on the appropriate sequence of actions.

How to communicate:

- By reading and writing to shared sections of memory (*shared memory synchronization*)
  In the example, threads should agree that at any one time at most one of them can access the resource.

- By explicit exchange of information (*message passing synchronization*)
Mutual exclusion (or “mutex”) is a form of synchronization that avoids the simultaneous use of a shared resource.

To identify the program parts that need attention, we introduce the notion of a critical section: a part of a program that accesses a shared resource, and should normally be executed by at most one thread at a time.
Mutual exclusion in Java

• Each object in Java has a mutex lock (can be held only by one thread at a time!) that can be acquired and released within `synchronized` blocks:
  • `Object lock = new Object();`

```java
synchronized (lock) {
    // critical section
}
```

• The following are equivalent:

```java
synchronized type m(args) {
    // body
}
```
```java
type m(args) {
    synchronized (this) {
        // body
    }
}
```
Example: mutual exclusion

To avoid data races in the example, we enclose instructions to be executed atomically in synchronized blocks protected with the same lock objects.

```java
synchronized (lock) {
    x.setValue(0);
    x.increment();
    int i = x.getValue();
}
```

```java
synchronized (lock) {
    x.setValue(2);
}
```
Java Threads

Condition synchronization
Consider two types of looping processes:

- **Producer:** At each loop iteration, produces a data item for consumption by a consumer
- **Consumer:** At each loop iteration, consumes a data item produced by a producer

Producers and consumers communicate via a shared **buffer** (a generalized notion of bounded queue)

Producers append data items to the back of the queue and consumers remove data items from the front
Condition synchronization

The producer-consumer problem requires that processes access the buffer properly:

- Consumers must wait if the buffer is empty
- Producers must wait if the buffer is full

*Condition synchronization* is a form of synchronization where processes are delayed until a condition holds.

In producer-consumer we use two forms of synchronization:

- Mutual exclusion: to prevent races on the buffer
- *Condition synchronization*: to prevent improper access of the buffer
The following methods can be called on a synchronized object (i.e. only within a synchronized block, on the lock object):

- **wait()**: block the current thread and release the lock until some thread does a `notify()` or `notifyAll()`
- **notify()**: resume one blocked thread (chosen nondeterministically), set its state to "ready"
- **notifyAll()**: resume all blocked threads

No guarantee the notification mechanism is fair
Producer-Consumer problem: Consumer code

```java
public void consume() throws InterruptedException {
    int value;
    synchronized (buffer) {
        while (buffer.size() == 0) {
            buffer.wait();
        }
        value = buffer.get();
    }
}
```

Consumer blocks if `buffer.size() == 0` is true (waiting for a `notify()` from the producer)
Producer-Consumer problem: Producer code

```java
public void produce() {
    int value = random.produceValue();
    synchronized (buffer) {
        buffer.put(value);
        buffer.notify();
    }
}
```

Producer notifies consumer that the condition `buffer.size() == 0` is no longer true
Java Threads

Deadlocks
The problem of deadlock

The ability to hold resources exclusively is central to providing process synchronization for resource access.

Unfortunately, it brings about other problems!

A deadlock is the situation where a group of processes blocks forever because each of the processes is waiting for resources which are held by another process in the group.
Deadlock example in Java

Consider the class

```java
public class C extends Thread {
    private Object a;
    private Object b;

    public C(Object x, Object y) {
        a = x;
        b = y;
    }

    public void run() {
        synchronized (a) {
            synchronized (b) {
                ...
            }
        }
    }
}
```

... and this code being executed:

```java
C t1 = new C(a1, b1);
C t2 = new C(b1, a1);
t1.start();
t2.start();
```
Dining philosophers
Are deadlock & data races of the same kind?

No

Two kinds of concurrency issues (Lamport):

- **Safety**: bad things do not happen
- **Liveness**: some (good) thing will happen
Data from the field

Source for the next few slides:

Learning from Mistakes -
Real World Concurrency Bug
Characteristics

Yuanyuan(YY) Zhou
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Microsoft Faculty Summit, 2008
See also her paper at ASPLOS 2008
105 real-world concurrency bugs from 4 large open-source programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Software Type</th>
<th>MySQL</th>
<th>Apache</th>
<th>Mozilla</th>
<th>OpenOffice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>C++/C</td>
<td>Mainly C</td>
<td>C++</td>
<td>C++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOC (M line)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bug history</td>
<td>6 years</td>
<td>7 years</td>
<td>10 years</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Methodology: Bug Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MySQL</th>
<th>Apache</th>
<th>Mozilla</th>
<th>OpenOffice</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-deadlock</strong></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deadlock</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Non-Deadlock Bug Pattern

Classified based on root causes

Categories

- Atomicity violation
  - The desired atomicity of certain code region is violated

- Order violation
  - The desired order between two (sets of) accesses is flipped

- Others
We should focus on atomicity violation and order violation. Bug detection tools for order violation bugs are desired.

*There are 3-bug overlap between Atomicity and Order*
Note that order violations can be fixed by adding locks to ensure atomicity with the previous operation to ensure order. But the root cause is the incorrect assumption about execution order.
Another Example

Thread 1

```c
int ReadWriteProc (...)
{
    S1: PBReadAsync (&p);
    S2: io_pending = TRUE;
    S3: while (io_pending) {...};
}
```

Thread 2

```c
void DoneWaiting (...)
{
    /*callback function of PBReadAsync*/
    S4: io_pending = FALSE;
}
```

Mozilla macio.c
Mozilla macthr.c
101 out of 105 (96%) bugs involve at most two threads

- Most bugs can be reliably disclosed if we check all possible interleaving between each pair of threads

Few bugs cannot

- Example: Intensive resource competition among many threads causes unexpected delay
Concurrent Programming:

The SCOOP approach
Then and now

Sequential programming:

Used to be messy
Still hard but key improvements:

- Structured programming
- Data abstraction & object technology
- Design by Contract
- Genericity, multiple inheritance
- Architectural techniques

Concurrent programming:

Used to be messy

Still messy

Example: threading models in most popular approaches

Development level: sixties/seventies

Only understandable through operational reasoning
Simple Concurrent Object-Oriented Programming

Evolved through the last two decades

- Comm. ACM paper (1993)
- Chap. 30 of *Object-Oriented Software Construction*, 2nd edition, 1997
- Piotr Nienaltowski’s ETH thesis, 2008
- Current work by Sebastian Nanz, Benjamin Morandi, Scott West and other at ETH
- Implementation available as part of EVE (research version of EiffelStudio)
Object-oriented computation

To perform a computation is
- To apply certain actions
- To certain objects
- Using certain processors
What makes an application concurrent?

**Processor:**
*Thread of control* supporting sequential execution of instructions on one or more objects

Can be implemented as:
- Computer CPU
- Process
- Thread
- AppDomain (.NET) ...

Will be mapped to computational resources
Feature call: sequential

\[ x.r(a) \]

Client

\textit{previous}

\[ x.r(a) \]

\textit{next}

Supplier

\[ r(x : A) \]

\textbf{do}

\[ \ldots \]

\textbf{end}

Processor
Feature call: asynchronous

Client

\[ x.r(a) \]

next

\textit{previous}

Client's handler

Supplier

\[ r(x : A) \]

do

... 

end

Supplier's handler
The fundamental difference

To wait or not to wait:

- If same processor, synchronous
- If different processor, asynchronous

Difference must be captured by syntax:

- \( x: T \)
- \( x: \text{separate } T \)  -- Potentially different processor

Fundamental semantic rule: \( x.r(a) \) waits for non-separate \( x \), doesn’t wait for separate \( x \).
Consistency rules: avoiding traitors

\[ \text{nonsep: } T \]

\[ \text{sep: separate } T \]

\[ \text{nonsep := sep} \]

\[ \text{nonsep.p (a)} \]

Traitor!
Wait by necessity

No explicit mechanism needed for client to resynchronize with supplier after separate call.

The client will wait only when it needs to:

\[ x.f \]
\[ x.g(a) \]
\[ y.f \]
\[ ... \]
\[ value := x.some_query \]

Lazy wait (Denis Caromel, wait by necessity)
SCOOP

Mutual exclusion
Separate argument rule (1)

Target of a separate call must be formal argument of enclosing routine:

```plaintext
put (b: separate BUFFER[T]; value : T)
  -- Store value into buffer.

  do
    b.put (value)
  end
```

To use separate object:

```plaintext
buffer: separate BUFFER[INTEGER]
create buffer
put (buffer, 10)
```
Separate argument rule (2)

The target of a separate call must be an argument of the enclosing routine

Separate call: \( \mathit{x}.f(...) \) where \( x \) is separate
Wait rule

A routine call with separate arguments will execute when all corresponding processors are available

and hold them exclusively for the duration of the routine

• Since all processors of separate arguments are locked and held for the duration of the routine, mutual exclusion is provided for the corresponding objects
Dining philosophers

class PHILOSOPHER inherit PROCESS
    rename
        setup as getup
    redefine step end

feature {BUTLER}
    step
        do
            think; eat (left, right)
        end

eat (l, r: separate FORK)
    -- Eat, having grabbed l and r.
        do ... end

end
Typical traditional (non-SCOOP) code

Listing 4.33: Variables for Tanenbaum’s solution

```python
1 state = ['thinking'] * 5
2 sem = [Semaphore(0) for i in range(5)]
3 mutex = Semaphore(1)
```

The initial value of `state` is a list of 5 copies of 'thinking'. `sem` is a list of 5 semaphores with the initial value 0. Here is the code:

Listing 4.34: Tanenbaum’s solution

```python
1 def get_fork(i):
2     mutex.wait()
3     state[i] = 'hungry'
4     test(i)
5     mutex.signal()
6     sem[i].wait()
7
8 def put_fork(i):
9     mutex.wait()
10    state[i] = 'thinking'
11    test(right(i))
12    test(left(i))
13    mutex.signal()
14
15 def test(i):
16    if state[i] == 'hungry' and
17        state[left(i)] != 'eating' and
18        state[right(i)] != 'eating':
19        state[i] = 'eating'
20        sem[i].signal()
```
SCOOP

Condition synchronization
Condition synchronization

• SCOOP has an elegant way of expressing condition synchronization by reinterpreting preconditions as wait conditions
• Completed wait rule:

A call with separate arguments waits until:
  ➢ The corresponding objects are all available
  ➢ Preconditions hold
Producer-Consumer problem: Consumer code

consume (a_buffer: separate BUFFER[INTEGER])
  require
    not (a_buffer.count == 0)
  local
    value: INTEGER
  do
    value := a_buffer.get (a_value)
  end

• Consumer blocks itself if the condition buffer.size() == 0 is found to be true (waiting for a notify() from the producer)
Producer-Consumer problem: Producer code

```plaintext
produce (a_buffer: separate BUFFER[INTEGER])
    require
        not a_buffer.is_full
    local
        value: INTEGER
    do
        value := random.produceValue
        a_buffer.put (value)
    end
```

- Very easy to provide a solution for bounded buffers
- No need for notification, the SCOOP scheduler ensures that preconditions are automatically reevaluated at a later time
Contracts

\[
\text{put (buf: separate QUEUE[INTEGER]; v: INTEGER)}
\]

-- Store v into buffer.

\[
\text{require}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{not buf.is_full} \\
& v > 0
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{do}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{buf.put(v)}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{ensure}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
& \text{not buf.is_empty}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{end}
\]

...

\[
\text{put (my_buffer, 10)}
\]

Precondition becomes wait condition.
SCOOP

Deadlocks
Deadlocks

- Deadlocks are still possible in SCOOP. Work for deadlock prevention, based on locking orders, is underway.

```plaintext
class C
  feature
    a : separate A
    b : separate A

    make (x : separate A, y : separate A)
      do
        a := x
        b := y
      end
    f do g (a) end
    g (x : separate A) do h (b) end
    h (y : separate A) do ... end
  end

create c1.make (a, b)
create c2.make (b, a)
c1.f
c2.f
```
For more

Several concurrency courses in the ETH curriculum, including our (Bertrand Meyer, Sebastian Nanz) “Concepts of Concurrent Computation” (Spring semester)

Good textbooks:

Kramer
Herlihy