Session Types and Higher-Order Concurrency

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#### Joint work with

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## Keywords and Slogans

Concurrency Theory, Message-Passing, Programming Languages, Verification

#### • Type systems

Slogan: Well-typed programs can't go wrong (Milner)

#### • Process calculi

Slogan: The  $\pi$ -calculus treats **processes** like the  $\lambda$ -calculus treats **functions** 

#### • Session types for communication correctness Slogan: What and when should be sent through a channel

• Relative expressiveness of (typed) programming calculi

# This Talk: Bridging Functions and Concurrency



- Bridges between functional and concurrent programming calculi
   → Encodings as formal compilers (language translations)
- Encodings informed by **session types**:
  - Protocols guide encoding definitions
  - Linearity is key to enforce optimizations
  - Encoding correctness based on prior work on typed equivalences [CONCUR'15]
- Type-based extensions of known encodings
- New encodings not available in untyped settings

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# When is a Program Correct?

Sequential Programs					
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"Programs produce outputs that					
are consistent with their input"					

#### **Concurrent Programs**





#### **Sequential Languages**

- Data type systems classify values in a program
- Examples: Integers, strings of characters

#### **Concurrent Languages**

- Behavioral type systems classify protocols in a program
- Example: "first send username, then receive true/false, finally close"
- A typical bug: sending messages in the wrong order

# Protocols as Session Types

Session types uniformly describe protocols in terms of

- communication actions (input and output)
- labeled choices (offers and selections)
- sequential composition
- recursion

Session protocols are attached to interaction devices:

- $\pi$ -calculus names
- service endpoints
- Go channels
- • •

Sequentiality in types goes hand-in-hand with sequentiality in processes

## Protocols as Session Types

S ::=	U;S	<b>output</b> value of type $U$ , continue as $S$
	?U;S	<b>input</b> value of type $U$ , continue as $S$
	$\&\{l_i:S_i\}_{i\in I}$	<b>offer</b> a selection between $S_1, \ldots, S_n$
	$\oplus \{l_i:S_i\}_{i\in I}$	<b>select</b> between $S_1,\ldots,S_n$
	$\mu t.S \mid t$	recursion
	end	terminated protocol
7		ant )

(Labels  $l_1, \ldots, l_n$  are pairwise different.)

Notice:

- U stands for basic values (e.g. int) but also sessions S (aka delegation)
- Sequential communication patterns (no built-in concurrency)

## Session-Based Concurrency

Two phases:

- Services advertise their session protocols along channel names. Agreements are realized by their point-to-point interaction, in an unrestricted and non-deterministic way.
- II. After agreement, services establish a session using session names. Intra-session interactions follow the intended protocol, in a linear and deterministic way.

#### Notice:

• 'Linear' and 'unrestricted' in the sense of Girard's linear logic.

# Challenge

- Many behavioral type systems!
- Correctness via various behavioral properties
  - Protocol fidelity, comm. safety, deadlock-freedom
- Different type systems, properties and insights
- A program can be both correct and incorrect!



#### Relative Expressiveness

#### Connect behavioral type systems

by relating the **concurrent languages** on which they operate

## 

#### **Highlights:**

 $\Rightarrow$  A general, rigorous, flexible, and practical approach

## Higher-Order Concurrency

- Process languages in which values may contain processes
- Natural bridge between the  $\lambda$ -calculus and process calculi
- Key example: the higher-order  $\pi$ -calculus

#### A celebrated result, by Sangiorgi (1992)

- Process passing is representable using name passing
- Encoding is **fully abstract** wrt barbed congruence (contextual equivalence)
- Highlights **significance** of the  $\pi$ -calculus
- Enables transfer reasoning techniques



# Higher-Order **Session** Concurrency



Two alternative sources:

- Higher-order  $\pi$ -calculi
  - + session communication (establishment, input/output, labeled choice)
- Session  $\pi$ -calculi
  - + passing of **abstractions**  $\lambda x.P$  (functions from names to processes)

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Session Types and Higher-Order Concurrency

Higher-order  $\pi$ -calculus with sessions (HO $\pi$ )

$$\begin{array}{rcl}n,m ::= & a, b & \mid s, \overline{s} & \text{names: shared and linear}\\u,w ::= & n & \mid x, y, z & \text{name identifiers}\end{array}$$

$$V,W ::= & u & \mid \lambda x.P & \mid x, y, z & \text{values: names, abstractions}\\P,Q ::= & u?(x).P & \mid u!\langle V\rangle.P & \text{input / output}\\ & \mid u \triangleright \{l_i : P_i\}_{i \in I} & \mid u \triangleleft l.P & \text{labeled choice}\\ & \mid X & \mid \mu X.P & \text{recursion}\\ & \mid P \mid Q & \mid (\nu n)P & \mid 0 & \text{parallel, restriction, inaction}\\ & \mid V u & \text{name application}\end{array}$$

Reduction Semantics: Key Rules

$$egin{array}{rll} (\lambda x.\,P)\,u&\longrightarrow&P\{u/x\}\ n!ig\langle Vig
angle.P\mid\overline{n}?(x).Q&\longrightarrow&P\mid Q\{V/x\}\ n\triangleleft l_j.Q\mid\overline{n}hdep\{l_i:P_i\}_{i\in I}&\longrightarrow&Q\mid P_j\ (j\in I) \end{array}$$

## Example: Two Different Clients in $HO\pi$

$$\begin{array}{l} \mathsf{Client}_1 \triangleq (\nu \ h_1, h_2)(s_1! \left\langle \lambda x. \ P_{xy}\{h_1/y\} \right\rangle. s_2! \left\langle \lambda x. \ P_{xy}\{h_2/y\} \right\rangle. 0 \mid \\ \hline h_1?(x). \overline{h_2}?(y). \texttt{if} \ x \leq y \ \texttt{then} \\ (\overline{h_1} \triangleleft \texttt{accept}. \overline{h_2} \triangleleft \texttt{reject}. 0 \ \texttt{else} \ \ \overline{h_1} \triangleleft \texttt{reject}. \overline{h_2} \triangleleft \texttt{accept}. 0)) \\ P_{xy} \triangleq x! \langle \texttt{room} \rangle. x?(quote). y! \langle quote \rangle. y \triangleright \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \texttt{accept} : x \triangleleft \texttt{accept}. x! \langle \texttt{credit} \rangle. 0 \ \texttt{reject} : x \triangleleft \texttt{reject}. 0 \end{array} \right\} \end{array}$$

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Client}_2 \triangleq (\nu \ h)(s_1! \left\langle \lambda x. \ Q_1 \{ \frac{h}{y} \right\rangle . s_2! \left\langle \lambda x. \ Q_2 \{ \overline{h}/y \} \right\rangle . 0) \\ \\ Q_1 \triangleq x! \langle \text{room} \rangle . x?(quote_1) . y! \langle quote_1 \rangle . y?(quote_2) . R_x \\ \\ Q_2 \triangleq x! \langle \text{room} \rangle . x?(quote_1) . y?(quote_2) . y! \langle quote_1 \rangle . R_x \\ \\ R_x \triangleq \text{if } quote_1 \leq quote_2 \text{ then } (x \triangleleft \text{accept} . x! \langle \text{credit} \rangle . 0 \text{ else } x \triangleleft \text{reject} . 0) \end{array}$$

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# Session Types for $HO\pi$

first-order types functional types (shared / linear) value types output input selection branching recursive and terminated type

Judgements for values and processes:

$$\Gamma; \Lambda; \Delta \vdash V \triangleright U$$

 $\Gamma; \Lambda; \Delta \vdash P \triangleright \diamond$ 

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# Example: Typing a Client $Client_{1} \triangleq (\nu h_{1}, h_{2})(s_{1}! \langle \lambda x. P_{xy} \{h_{1}/y\} \rangle . s_{2}! \langle \lambda x. P_{xy} \{h_{2}/y\} \rangle . 0 |$ $\overline{h_{1}}?(x).\overline{h_{2}}?(y).if \ x \leq y \ then$ $(\overline{h_{1}} \triangleleft \operatorname{accept}.\overline{h_{2}} \triangleleft \operatorname{reject}.0 \ else \ \overline{h_{1}} \triangleleft \operatorname{reject}.\overline{h_{2}} \triangleleft \operatorname{accept}.0))$ $P_{xy} \triangleq x! \langle \operatorname{room} \rangle . x?(quote). y! \langle quote \rangle . y \triangleright \begin{cases} \operatorname{accept} : x \triangleleft \operatorname{accept}.x! \langle \operatorname{credit} \rangle . 0 \ , \\ \operatorname{reject} : x \triangleleft \operatorname{reject}.0 \end{cases}$

A session type (with base types quote, room, and credit):

 $U = !(\text{room}); ?(\text{quote}); \oplus \{\text{accept } :!(\text{credit}); \text{end}, \text{reject } : \text{end}\}$ 

Typing judgments:

$$\begin{split} \emptyset; \emptyset; y :&: \{ \mathsf{quote} \rangle; \& \{ \mathsf{accept} : \mathsf{end}, \mathsf{reject} : \mathsf{end} \} \vdash \lambda x. \ P_{xy} \triangleright U \multimap \diamond \\ \emptyset; \emptyset; s_1 :&: \{ U \multimap \diamond \rangle; \mathsf{end} \cdot s_2 :: \{ U \multimap \diamond \rangle; \mathsf{end} \vdash \mathsf{Client}_1 \triangleright \diamond \end{split}$$

At the level of **processes**, two mechanisms: name passing and abstraction passing (first- and higher-order concurrency).

- Are both mechanisms fundamental?
- Can one of them be represented using the other?

At the level of **types**:

► To what extent the structure of session types play a role?

## Sub-languages of HO $\pi$



- HO isolates higher-order features: only abstraction passing, no name passing
- $\pi$  isolates **first-order** features:

only name passing, no abstraction passing

• HO + **MST** is as HO but without sequentiality in session types

#### Sub-calculi of HO $\pi$

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- HO lacks shaded constructs
- $\pi$  lacks boxed constructs

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choice

shared and linear

names, abstractions

# Session Types for HO and $\pi$

C	::=	$S \hspace{.1 in}   \hspace{.1 in} \langle S  angle \hspace{.1 in}   \hspace{.1 in} \langle L  angle$	first-orde
L	::=	$C { ightarrow} \diamond \mid C { ightarrow} \diamond$	shared /
U	::=	$C \mid L$	value typ
S	::=	$\left \left\langle U ight angle  ight angle  ight angle S$	output
		?(U);S	input
		$\oplus \{l_i : S_i\}_{i \in I}$	selection
		$\&\{l_i:S_i\}_{i\in I}$	branching
		$\mu$ t. $S \mid$ t $\mid$ end	recursive

er types linear functional types es and terminated type

- Types for HO lack shaded constructs
- Types for  $\pi$  lack boxed constructs

# Minimal Session Types for HO

value types

```
functional types
```

output

input

selection

branching

recursive and terminated type

- Sequentiality in types
- + Polyadic communication

# Expressivity Results for HO $\pi$



#### ${\rm HO}\pi$ and its sub-calculi are ${\bf equally\ expressive}$

• Encoding HO $\pi$  into  $\pi$ 

Refines Sangiorgi's with session types

Encoding HOπ into HO
 New encoding, even in untyped settings

#### Minimal Session Types for HO

- Session types explained in terms of themselves
- Closer to types in actual PLs

#### HO $\pi$ encodes its **extensions**

- Higher-order abstractions
- Polyadic communication
- Their super-calculus





- $\cdot$  Encoding HO  $\pi$  into  $\pi$  and HO
- $\cdot$  Minimal session types for HO

#### Further Results

- · The notion of precise encodings
- $\cdot\,$  New typed equivalence for HO  $\!\pi$
- $\cdot$  Encoding extensions of HO  $\!\pi$  into HO  $\!\pi$
- Negative result, using minimal encodings: session names can't encode shared communication
- $\cdot$  Comparing HO and  $\pi,$  using tight encodings

# Two **Precise** Encodings



Recall:

- $\pi$  lacks higher-order features (abstraction passing, application)
- HO lacks first-order features (name passing and recursion)

Approach

- Abstract definition of **precise encoding** (translation + correctness criteria)
- Instantiate the definition with typed calculi, typed semantics, equivalences

#### Encoding #1: HO $\pi$ into $\pi$ Sangiorgi's encoding refined using **linearity**.

Translating processes:

$$\begin{split} \llbracket u! \langle \lambda x. Q \rangle.P \rrbracket & \triangleq \begin{cases} (\nu a)(u! \langle a \rangle.(\llbracket P \rrbracket \mid a?(y).y?(x).\llbracket Q \rrbracket)) & \text{if } Q \text{ is linear} \\ (\nu a)(u! \langle a \rangle.(\llbracket P \rrbracket \mid *a?(y).y?(x).\llbracket Q \rrbracket)) & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \\ \llbracket u?(x).P \rrbracket & \triangleq u?(x).\llbracket P \rrbracket \\ \llbracket x u \rrbracket & \triangleq (\nu s)(x! \langle s \rangle.\overline{s}! \langle u \rangle.0) \\ \llbracket (\lambda x. P) u \rrbracket & \triangleq (\nu s)(s?(x).\llbracket P \rrbracket \mid \overline{s}! \langle u \rangle.0) \end{cases}$$

Translating types:

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Example: Encoding #1 at Work  

$$\begin{aligned}
\text{Client}_1 &\triangleq (\nu \ h_1, h_2)(s_1! \langle \lambda x. \ P_{xy} \{h_1/y\} \rangle. s_2! \langle \lambda x. \ P_{xy} \{h_2/y\} \rangle. 0 \mid \\
\overline{h_1}?(x).\overline{h_2}?(y). \text{if } x \leq y \text{ then} \\
& (\overline{h_1} \triangleleft \operatorname{accept.} \overline{h_2} \triangleleft \operatorname{reject.} 0 \text{ else } \overline{h_1} \triangleleft \operatorname{reject.} \overline{h_2} \triangleleft \operatorname{accept.} 0)) \\
P_{xy} &\triangleq x! \langle \operatorname{room} \rangle. x?(quote). y! \langle quote \rangle. y \triangleright \begin{cases} \operatorname{accept} : x \triangleleft \operatorname{accept.} x! \langle \operatorname{credit} \rangle. 0 \\
& \operatorname{reject} : x \triangleleft \operatorname{reject.} 0 \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

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# Encoding #2: HO $\pi$ into HO

#### Two Challenges

#### 1. Encoding **name passing into abstraction passing** No completely satisfactory encoding known in the literature

2. Encoding recursion  $\mu X.P$  using session names How to model **infinite behavior** using only **linear names**?

## Encoding HO $\pi$ into HO: Challenge 1 of 2

How to encode the output of a name b along channel a?

Idea: "Pack" b into an abstraction

The receiver "unpacks" *b* following a protocol on a fresh session:

$$egin{aligned} & \llbracket a 
vert \langle b 
angle . P 
rbracket &= a 
vert \langle \lambda z. \ z?(x).(x \ b) 
angle . \llbracket P 
rbracket \ & \llbracket a?(x).Q 
rbracket &= a?(y).(
u \ s)(y \ s \ | \ arsim{s}! \langle \lambda x. \ \llbracket Q 
rbracket \rangle.0) \end{aligned}$$

**Type preservation:** Input/outputs are preserved!

#### Example: Encoding Name-Passing in HO

With name-passing, we can have the following reduction:

$$n!\langle m
angle.P\mid\overline{n}?(x).Q\longrightarrow P\mid Q\{m\!/x\}$$

No name-passing in HO! Using the encoding, we have:

$$\begin{split} \llbracket n! \langle m \rangle .P \mid \overline{n}?(x) . Q \rrbracket &= n! \Big\langle \lambda z. \ z?(x) . (x \ m) \Big\rangle . \llbracket P \rrbracket \mid n?(y) . (\nu \ s)(y \ s \mid \overline{s}! \langle \lambda x. \llbracket Q \rrbracket \rangle) \\ & \longrightarrow \llbracket P \rrbracket \mid (\nu \ s)(\lambda z. \ z?(x) . (x \ m) \ s \mid \overline{s}! \langle \lambda x. \llbracket Q \rrbracket \rangle) \\ & \longrightarrow \llbracket P \rrbracket \mid (\nu \ s)(s?(x) . (x \ m) \mid \overline{s}! \langle \lambda x. \llbracket Q \rrbracket \rangle) \\ & \longrightarrow \llbracket P \rrbracket \mid (\lambda x. \llbracket Q \rrbracket) m \\ & \longrightarrow \llbracket P \rrbracket \mid \llbracket Q \rrbracket \{ m/x \} \end{split}$$

# Encoding HO $\pi$ into HO: Challenge 2 of 2

#### Key Idea for Translating $\mu X.P$

- Treat *P* as an **abstraction** with variables instead of names
- Having no linear names, this abstraction can be **duplicated**; its (recursive) type captures infinite behavior

Formally

- Map · converts free session names into name variables.
- Below,  $\tilde{n} = fn(P)$ :

$$\begin{split} \llbracket \mu X.P \rrbracket_f &\triangleq (\nu s)(\overline{s}! \Big\langle \lambda(\lVert \tilde{n} \rVert, y). \ y?(z_X). \llbracket \llbracket P \rrbracket_{f, \{X \to \tilde{n}\}} \rrbracket_{\emptyset} \Big\rangle.0 \mid s?(z_X). \llbracket P \rrbracket_{f, \{X \to \tilde{n}\}}) \\ \llbracket X \rrbracket_f &\triangleq (\nu s)(z_X(\tilde{n}, s) \mid \overline{s}! \langle z_X \rangle.0) \quad (\tilde{n} = f(X)) \end{split}$$

• Moreover:  $(\!(\Gamma \cdot X : \Delta)\!) = (\!(\Gamma)\!) \cdot z_X : (\tilde{S}, \mu t.?((\tilde{S}, t) \rightarrow \diamond); end) \rightarrow \diamond$ .

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# Session Types: The Reality

- Sequential composition not supported in types for actual PLs.
- Channel types declare payload types and channel directions, not structure.
  - In Go:
    - ch := make(chan int)
  - In CloudHaskell:

(s,r) <- newChan::Process (SendPort Int, ReceivePort Int)

• Programmers must enforce sequentiality themselves  $\rightsquigarrow$  Error-prone

# On Sequentiality in Processes: Trios in Concert

#### A beautiful result, by Parrow (1996)

- π-calculus processes decomposed as a collection of trios processes with at most 3 nested prefixes
- *P* and its decomposition  $\mathcal{D}(P)$  are tightly related, up to weak bisimilarity:

 $P \approx \mathcal{D}(P)$ 

- Untyped setting: No constraints on name usage
- Replication instead of recursion
- No higher-order communication nor choices



## Bridge the gap!

Can we dispense with sequential composition in session types?

- Yes! Sequentiality in types can be codified by sequentiality in processes. Key inspiration from Parrow's decomposition approach.
- Only sequential composition in processes is truly indispensable.

#### Key Ideas

A process P typed with standard session types  $S_1, \ldots, S_n$ :

- Sequencing in  $S_1, \ldots, S_n$  is codified by  $\mathcal{D}(P)$ , the decomposition of P.
- Each  $S_i$  is decomposed into  $\mathcal{G}(S_i)$ , a **list** of minimal session types.
- Roughly: If  $\Gamma \vdash P$  then  $\mathcal{G}(\Gamma) \vdash \mathcal{D}(P)$ .

#### Example: Decomposing Processes



Example: Decomposing Session Types



Session Types and Higher-Order Concurrency

# **Concluding Remarks**

- Expressivity results for HO process calculi with session types
- Different calculi with functional and concurrent features, tightly connected
- Session types guide encodings, and induce strong forms of correctness
- Session types explained in terms of themselves
- More results in Inf & Comp'19 / ECOOP'19.



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