Distributed Systems Debugging

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Overview

- Introduction
- Two main approaches to distributed systems debugging:
  - Model checking
  - Record/Replay
- Distributed Java
- Further Work

Introduction

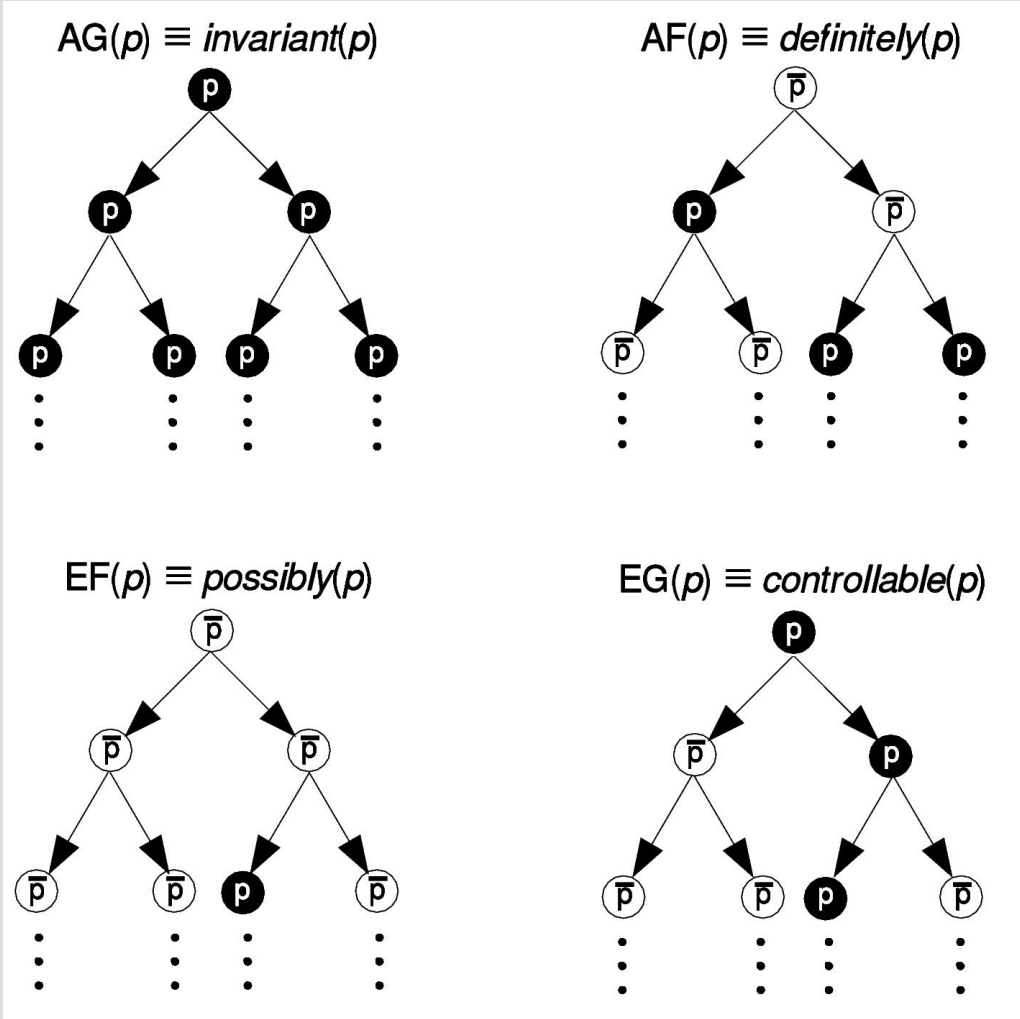
- What is a ***distributed system***?
  - A system with components that must co-operate on some task and which are distributed over a private or public network.
- Drawbacks of such a system are:
  - It does not have a ***global time***
  - It does not have a ***global state***

Predicates

- The truth value of a ***local predicate*** depends on the state of a single process.
- Detecting a condition (***true***/***false***) in a distributed system equals to evaluating a ***global state predicate***.
- Four operators are used for predicate detection (possibly, definitely, controllable, and invariant).

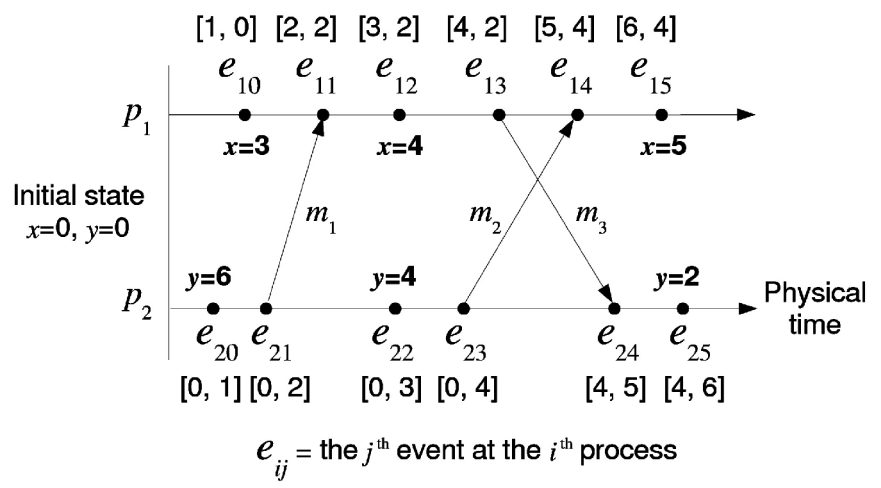
Predicates and CTL*

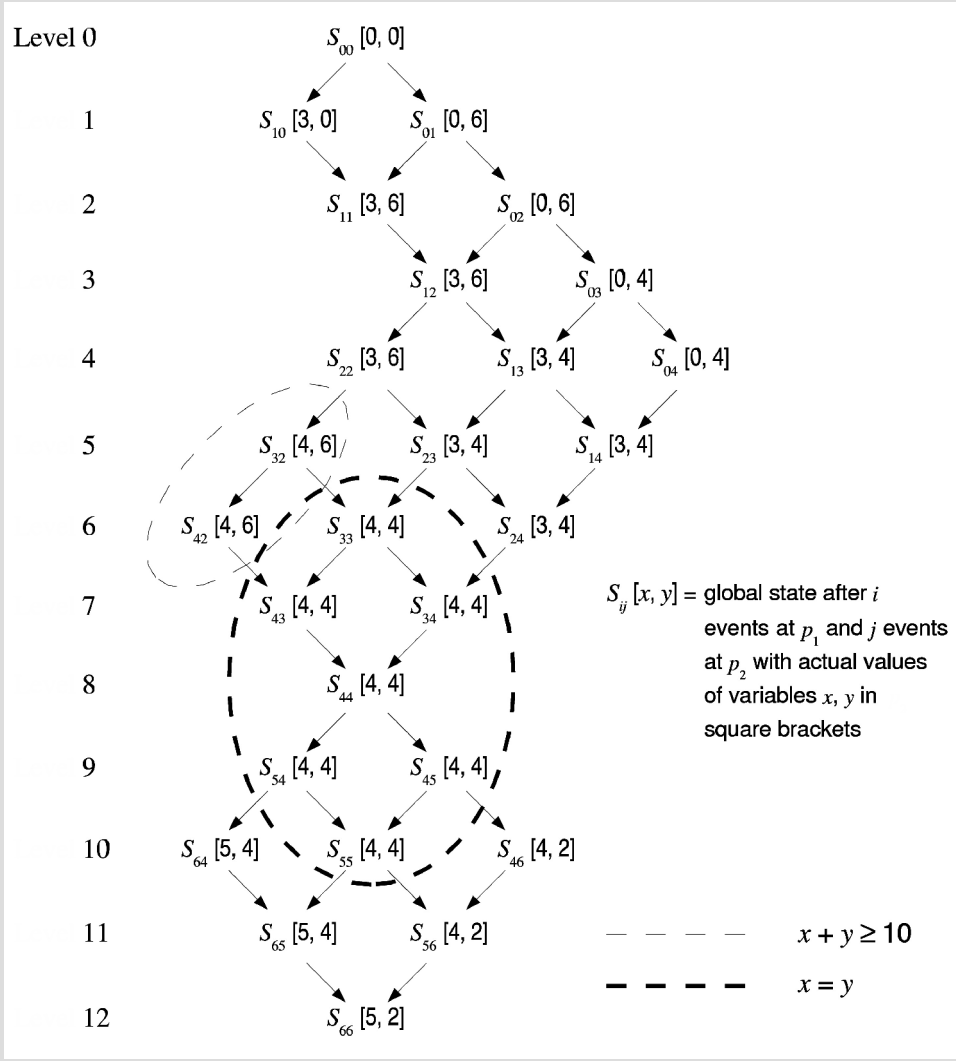
- The picture shows the connection of predicates and CTL* temporal logic operators.



Global State Lattice

- Composed of consistent global states only





Model of Observation

- The detection of a global predicate is divided among a ***checker*** and ***non-checker processes***.
  - Non-checker processes send messages to the checker. They are situated at computation nodes and monitor local variables and messages.
  - The checker process searches for a consistent cut that satisfies a predicate.

Model of Control

- Every process has associated with it a ***supervisory process***.
  - This process observes the underlying process and controls it by delaying, disabling, or by changing the order of incoming and outgoing messages.
- Useful for testing under some desired conditions.

Replaying a Distributed Execution

- The amount of recorded information depends on how it will be used.
  - ***Browsing*** (minimal information)
  - ***Replay***
  - ***Simulation*** (maximal information)
- Two possible ways of doing record/replay:
  - ***Deterministic replay***, ***incremental replay***.

Pros and Cons

- The model checking approach
  - Advantage is that it checks all possible ways of execution.
  - Drawback is that its complexity grows exponentially with the number of processes.
- The record/replay approach
  - Advantage is that it is not as complex as the previous one.
  - Drawback is that it checks only one run of many possible.

Distributed Java

- Java is a programming language suitable for distributed heterogenous environments.
- However, Java debuggers do not fully support applications distributed across multiple JVMs.

Java Drawbacks

- There are two types of distributed debuggers for the Java language:
  (1) The first type is based on a modified JVM on each of the co-operating nodes.
  (2) The second one is based on compiling the source codes while adding DSM capabilities to the final application.
- Drawbacks:
  (1) No portability between different JVMs.
  (2) Need of a dedicated compiler. No portability between JVMs with different compilers.

Further Work

- Detailed investigation and analysis of approaches to the debugging of distributed Java programs.
- Proposal of a new method for the debugging of distributed programs, a method which is based on a modification of the Java bytecode.
- Experimental implementation and testing of the proposed method.

Publications

- Patera, Jiří: Web mail, Diploma Thesis (Supervisored by Ing. Jiří Ledvina, Csc.), FAV-ZČU, 2002.
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- Patera, Jiří -- Šafařík, Jiří: On Deterministic Replay, Proceedings of the 26th International Autumn Colloquium: ASIS-2004, Czech Republic, ISBN:80-86840-03-4, 2004.
- Patera, Jiří: Distributed Systems Debugging, Tech-Report, University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, Czech Republic, No. DCSE/TR-2004-08, 2004.

Thank You

Thank you for your attention...