Diagnosis of Harmful Aspects Using Regression Verification

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Do aspects applied to an original system cause harm?

- Assume the original system has a **specification** of its essential properties.
- Show that the aspects maintain those properties (but can change others).
- Ignore the properties added by the aspects—at least “Do No Harm”.
- Limits the obliviousness of the system to aspects applied over it; if “harm is caused”, at least be aware of it.
Possible Approaches

- Regression testing
- Static code type analysis
- Deductive verification
- Model checking

**Aspect code** analysis: consider only the aspect code, (a) for families of systems or (b) for one instance

**Augmented code** analysis: consider the combination of the original and the aspects
Why not regression testing?

- Aspects make many changes at many points and can redirect control and results
- Entire computation paths/methods/fields are not tested
- Inherently global, for augmented system, and can demand excessive resources

Previous tests are often insufficient/irrelevant
Static aspect code analysis: Example—spectative aspects

- If the binding of aspect code to a system is only through explicit parameters, can see that only aspect fields are modified, and original control is unaffected
- Use data-flow techniques (define-use pairs)
- Thrm: For any original system, properties only involving original fields, methods, are not harmed by applying a spectative aspect.
- But: New method exposing a hidden value could be even in a spectative aspect ...
Deductive verification for aspect code: Invariant extension

- IF $I$ is an invariant of the original system, and is inductive, we can just show that

  $$\{I\} \ t \ {\{I\}}$$

holds for each action $t$ of the aspect code, without considering when $t$ is applied, and conclude that $I$ is an invariant of the entire augmented system.

Useful example of aspect code analysis for a particular application, using info on original.
Example of invariant extension for a particular instance

- \((x>y>0)\) is an invariant of some system
- An aspect has the form
  \[
  \langle \text{complex} \rangle \rightarrow \text{double} \ (x,y)
  \]

Then check \(\{x>y>0\} \ \text{double}(x,y) \ \{x>y>0\}\)
and conclude \((x>y>0)\) is an invariant of the entire augmented system
(Note: no need to analyze \(\langle \text{complex} \rangle \))
Using Aspect Validation for augmented system analysis

For situations where original system has been proven correct for its specification using software model checking (e.g., Bandera)

- Reprove for augmented system without new manual setup (just push a button...)
- Reuse the specification and annotations, given as verification aspects
- Treats all new paths/methods....
- In many cases uses the same abstractions
Conclusions

- Aspect code analysis for large families of properties/original programs---is best
- Sometimes static data-flow and simple inductions suffice for aspect code
- Otherwise augmented system analysis is sometimes inevitable—and a “validation” technique is recommended.
- Diagnosis of harm is a valuable step towards routine application of formal methods for aspect-oriented systems