Slides mostly a reproduction of Theo C. Ruys – SPIN Beginners’ Tutorial

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Introduction to SPIN and Promela

- SPIN Background
- Promela processes
- Promela statements
- Promela communication primitives
- Architecture of (X)Spin
- Some SPIN demo’s
  - hello world
  - mutual exclusion
  - alternating bit protocol

Slides based heavily on: Theo C. Ruys - SPIN Beginners’ Tutorial
SPIN Documentation

Input:
- (Abstract) model of system
- Behavior specification

Output:
- Says whether model satisfies specification
- If models fails specification, give a system run that violates requirement (counterexample)

Focused on correctness of process communications and interactions

Internal details generally abstracted away
SPIN Introduction

SPIN = Simple Promela Interpreter
- Tool for analyzing logical consistency of concurrent systems
- specifically data communication protocols
- state-of-the-art model checkers, thousands of users
- Concurrent systems described in modelling language Promela

Promela = Protocol/Process Meta Language
- Resembles C programming language
- Supports dynamic creation of concurrent processes
- limited to describing finite-state systems
- Communication via message channels
  - Synchronous (rendezvous)
  - Asynchronous (buffered)
Promela Models

Promela model consist of:

- **type** declarations
- **channel** declarations
- **variable** declarations
- **process** declarations
- **[init process]**

A Promela model corresponds with a (usually very large, but) **finite transition system**, so

- no unbounded **data**
- no unbounded **channels**
- no unbounded **processes**
- no unbounded **process creation**
Promela Skeleton Example

\[
\text{mtype} = \{\text{MSG, ACK}\};
\]

\[
\text{chan toS} = \ldots
\]

\[
\text{chan toP} = \ldots
\]

\[
\text{bool flag};
\]

\[
\text{proctype Sender()} \{ \\
\ldots \quad /\!* \text{process body} */ \\\n\}
\]

\[
\text{proctype Receiver()} \{ \\
\ldots \quad /\!* \text{process body} */ \\\n\}
\]

\[
\text{init} \{ \\
\ldots \quad /\!* \text{creates processes} */ \\\n\}
\]
A process type (proctype) consists of

- a name
- a list of formal parameters
- local variable declarations
- body consisting a sequence of statements
proctype Sender (chan in; chan out) {
    bit sndB, rcvB; /* local variables */
    do /* body beginning */
        :: out ! MSG, sndB ->
        in ? ACK, rcvB;
        if
            :: sndB == rcvB -> sndB = 1-sndB
        :: else -> skip
        fi
    od /* body end */
}

The body consist of a sequence of statements.
A process

- is defined by a proctype definition
- executes concurrently with all other processes, independent of speed of behaviour
- communicate with other processes
  - using global (shared) variables
  - using channels

May be several processes of the same type
Each process has own local state:
- process counter (location within the proctype)
- contents of the local variables
Process Creation

- Processes created with `run` statement
  - Returns process id
- Process created at any point in execution (of any process)
- Processes start after execution of `run` statement
- Also created by `active` keyword before `proctype` declaration
proctype Foo(byte x) {
    ...
}

active[3] proctype Bar(byte y) { /* [3] opt; y init to 0 */

    ...

}

init {
    int pid2 = run Foo(2);
    run Bar(17);
    run Foo (27);
}
Hello World

/* A "Hello World" Promela model for SPIN. */
active proctype Hello() {
    printf("Hello process, my pid is: %d\n", _pid);
}
init {
    int lastpid;
    printf("init process, my pid is: %d\n", _pid);
    lastpid = run Hello();
    printf("last pid was: %d\n", lastpid);
}

bash-3.2$ spin hello.pml
    init process, my pid is: 1
    Hello process, my pid is: 0
    Hello process, my pid is: 2
    last pid was: 2
3 processes created
bash-3.2$ spin hello.pml
    Hello process, my pid is: 0
    init process, my pid is: 1
    last pid was: 2
    Hello process, my pid is: 2
3 processes created
Hello Processes

print "Hello"

Hello()

init()

print "init"

run Hello()

print "last"

Hello()

print "Hello"
Hello Processes Interleavings

Hello()

print "Hello"

init()

print "init"

run Hello()

print "last"

Hello()

print "Hello"
Interleaving Semantics

- **Promela processes** execute **concurrently**.
- **Non-deterministic** scheduling of the processes.
- Processes are **interleaved**
  - Only one process can execute a statement at each point in time.
  - Exception: **rendez-vous communication**.
- All statements are **atomic**
  - Each statement is executed without interleaving it parts with other processes.
- Each process may have several **different possible actions** enabled at each point of execution.
  - Only one choice is made, **non-deterministically** (randomly).