A Basic Model for Components Implementation of Software Architecture

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Abstract

Components defined in software architecture have two features: as basic elements of the architecture, they must conform to the architectural constraints and in the meantime, similar to the common components, they should be designed flexibly enough to be able to be developed independently for the late third party integration. However, these two important issues have always been handled separately from different point of views, which leads to the extra work, confusions in the program structures as well as the difficulty in maintenance. This paper presents a basic model of the architecture-based components implementation to band these two issues together. It firstly describes a novel design pattern, triple-C pattern which stands for Components-Communicate-through-Connector. This pattern not only emphasizes that implementation must completely conform to the architectural definition, but also attempts to change the fundamental way of components communication with suggesting provided service should be transferred through the connector instead of directly between the client and server components. Second, it describes a novel ADL JCMPL, toolset JCMP and techniques to keep architectural conformance in the implementation as well as support the architectural integration from separate components. Finally, this model is evaluated in a case study.

Keywords: Software Architecture, component, triple-C pattern, JCMP, JCMPL

1. Introduction

Software architecture [8, 21, 22] describes the structure of a system, enabling more effective design, program understanding, formal analysis, and software product line building [29]. Component development under the control of the architectural constraints can aid in the specification and analysis of high-level designs, facilitate the implementation and evolution of large software systems, and enable the architectural reasoning. This makes components defined in the architecture differ from common components in the fact that they must conform to the overall architectural conformance. On the other hand, as the independent modules, they should also be developed individually without dependency on each other for the better reuse.

1.1 The problem

However, these two issues have always been handled separately without any relations. Existing approaches to solving one of these two problems can be no longer available when facing another one.

1.1.1 Methods for keeping architectural conformance

In order to enable architectural reasoning about an implementation, the implementation must conform to its architecture. One of the famous works is the three criteria identified by Luckham and Vera [12] for architectural conformance:

- **Decomposition:** For each component in the architecture, there should be a corresponding component in the implementation.
- **Interface Conformance:** Each component in the implementation must conform to its architectural interface.
- **Communication Integrity:** Each component in the implementation may only communicate directly with the components to which it is connected in the architecture.

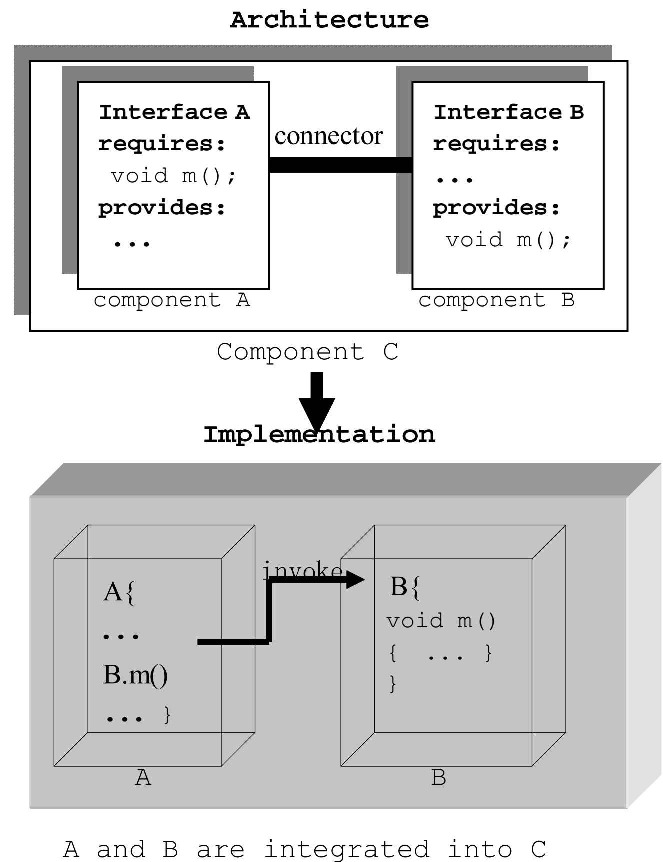

Figure1. The direct client-server relationship between component

According to these three criteria, a number of researchers have developed a wide variety of Architecture Definition Languages (ADLs) to describe, model, check and implement software architectures [20]. In these languages software connectors are recognized as an important consideration to adapt one component's interface to the interface of another [25, 12, 3, 24]. One of the good examples is ArchJava [1, 2, 3, 5]. ArchJava unifies architectural abstraction and detailed implementation in one language, using type to enforce the architectural conformance, especially the communication integrity in the implementation. Figure 1 shows the architectural abstraction and the implementation representation in ArchJava. In this system, based on the communication integrity criterion, component A directly invokes B's provided method m if and only if their interfaces are connected in the architecture.

However, we notice there is the direct client-server relationship between A and B. This direct invocation requires that the "requires" method declared in A's interface must have the same name and signature with the "provides" method in B's interface. That is if B evolves changing the name of method from *m* to *n*, or B is replaced by a new component D with it providing a method *p* which has the same function and arguments type with *m* of B, the "requires" interface of component A must also be modified manually.

If both concrete components A and B have existed and been built by different software houses, can they be reused in the architecture? The answer might be no since the existing ADLs require the signature of required-provided methods pairs must be completely same. They only focus on architectural conformance problems without considering how to separate the whole architecture into independent reusable building blocks and the integration of pre-build generic components into the architecture-based application. This problem may greatly hinder the component reuse.

1.1.2 Methods for composite adaptation

Generally speaking, there are two major kinds of approaches to supporting system composition from individual modules. One is to use Module Interconnection Language (MIL) which describes the uses relationship between components, such as Jiazzi [13], a component infrastructure for Java and a similar system, knit for component-based programming in C. However, MILs can not be used to describe the architecture and therefore, this kind of implementation does not support architectural reasoning.

Another kind of approaches is like Pluggable Composite Adapters (PCAs) [19] and their predecessor, Adaptive Plug and Play Components (APPCs) which offers different means for on-demand remodularization. The on-demand remodularization means the abstractions and vocabulary of an existing code base are translated into the vocabulary understood by a set of components that are connected by a common collaboration interface. However, this approach has not considered the architectural constraints, and communication integrity can not be enforced.

1.1.3 Problems summary

From the above discussion, we notice these two issues are totally handled separately. However, if the generic components composition is not supported, software architecture will be far from practical. On the other hand, if architectural conformance can not be enforced, the architectural definition will be meaningless in the components development. These two problems are far from irrelevant although what they concern is different.

1.2 Our approach

We try to band these two problems together for consideration and put forward a novel design pattern triple-C pattern to solve them. Triple-C pattern stands for Components-Communicate-through-Connector. Triple-C pattern is derived from the three criteria in

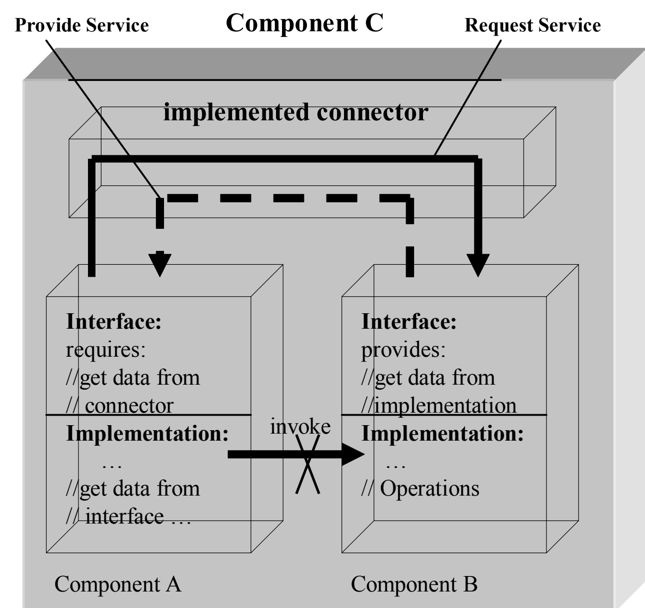

Figure 2. Connector is not only to explicitly specify the communication permission in the architecture but also implemented as a proxy to transfer service in the implementation. Therefore the connector is the direct client or server of the two components and the direct client-server relationship between connected components is broken.

[12], but there are two major differences between them. One is that in triple-C pattern, there should be not only a concrete component in the implementation for each one defined in the architecture, but also a concrete connector for each abstract connection. Another one lies with the change of definition of communication integrity. Since we have discussed the harm resulting from the direct client-server relationship in components communication, in triple-C pattern, a component can only communicate with another one through the invocation transfer performed in the connector if they are connected in the architecture.

Since in triple-C pattern, the implemented connector is the direct client and server of two connected components, components are able to be built independently without knowing the detailed methods they want, which supports the integration of generic components. On the other hand, because the connectors are also elements in the architecture, this implementation better reflects the architecture definition, therefore helps architectural reasoning and keep the architectural conformance.

The rest of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 describes the previous work. Section 3 gives the complete definition of triple-C pattern. Section 4 describes the ADL JCMPL and JCMP. Section 5 presents techniques for integrating pre-building components and keeping the architectural constraints, especially the communication integrity. After our approach is evaluated in a case study in section 6, we conclude and describe the future work in section 7.

2. Previous work

2.1 Architecture Definition Languages

Many of architectural definition languages [20] have been defined to support sophisticated analysis and reasoning. Wright [4] allows architects to specify temporal communication protocols and check properties such as deadlock freedom. SADL [17] formalizes architectures in terms of theories, shows how generic refinement operations can be proved correct, and describes a number of flexible refinement patterns. Rapide [12] supports event-based behavioral specification and simulation of reactive architectures. Darwin [14] was designed to support dynamically changing distributed architectures.

While Wright and SADL are pure design languages, other ADLs have supported implementation in a number of ways. UniCon's tools [25] generate code to connect components implemented in other languages, while C2 [16] provides runtime libraries in C++ and Java that connect components together. Rapide architectures can be given implementations in an executable sub-language or in languages such as C++ or Ada. However, all these ADLs do not enforce the communication integrity.

More recently, ArchJava [5, 1, 2, 3] was designed to seamlessly unify architectural structure and implementation in one language, ensuring traceability between architecture and code. In addition, ArchJava provides a language support to guarantee communication integrity between the architecture and its implementation. However, ArchJava only tries to keep the implementation conform to the architectural abstraction without considering how to build the architecture from pre-building components.

2.2 Module Interconnection Languages (MILs)

ADLs differ from MILs in that the former make connectors explicit in order to describe data and control flow between components, while the latter focus on describing the uses relationship between modules [20]. Jiazzi [13] is a component infrastructure for Java, and a similar system, Knit, supports component-based programming in C. These tools are derived from research into advanced module systems, exemplified by MzScheme's Units [7] and ML's functors. However, existing MILs cannot be used to describe dynamic architectures, where component object instances are created and linked together at run time.

2.3 Component Infrastructure

There are many specific language level abstractions for component-oriented programming. The most popular supporting models [23, 9, 18] provide sophisticated services such as naming, transactions and distribution for component-based applications, but do not include mechanisms for explicitly describing software architecture.

The Arabica environment [22] supports C2 architectures built from off the shelf Java Beans components. This system shows how software architecture can be expressed in the context of component infrastructures, but it still can not enforce the communication integrity. The component-oriented programming languages ComponentJ [24] and ACOEL [26] extend a Java-like base language to explicitly support component composition. Although these systems provide a language support for the type-safety of composition, they do not support architectural reasoning and can not explicitly describe the overall architecture.

2.4 Composite Adapters

Approaches like Pluggable Composite Adapters (PCAs) [19] and their predecessor, Adaptive Plug and Play Components (APPCs) are designed to solve composite adaptation problems by offering different means for on-demand remodularization. Mezini and Ostermann describe adaptor connections that allow components with different data models to work together [15]. Their language makes wrapper codes less tedious to write and supports the on-demand remodularization which means the abstractions and vocabulary of an existing code base are translated into the vocabulary understood by a set of components that are connected by a common collaboration interface. However, this approach was designed for the common composite adaptation without taking into account the overall architectural constraints.

3. Triple-C pattern

We give the definition of triple-C pattern as follows.

• **Infrastructure Definition:** In architecture, a system is composed by components which are then composed by other subcomponents recursively until all their subcomponents are primitive components. We call components other than primitive ones advanced components. Primitive components are distinguished from advanced ones in the fact that connectors are only defined in latter.

• **Decomposition:** For each component in the architecture, there should be a corresponding component in the implementation. For each connection in the architecture, there also should be a concrete connector in the implementation.

• **Interface Conformance:** Each component in the implementation must conform to its architectural interface.

• **Communication Rule:** Each component in the implementation can not communicate with any other components to which it is not directly connected. A component may only communicate with the components to which it is connected through the invocation transfer performed by the connector.

• **Interface Matching:** Component Interface Matching is done in the connector according to a certain strategy when two subcomponents are integrated. The strategies used may include manually specifying in the program or in a configuration file and automated matching. Actually, the interface matching is to find "requires-provides" methods pairs in the connected two ports.

The triple-c pattern focuses on two problems. The first four are rules for keeping architectural conformance in the implementation while the last one is the rule for composite adaptation.

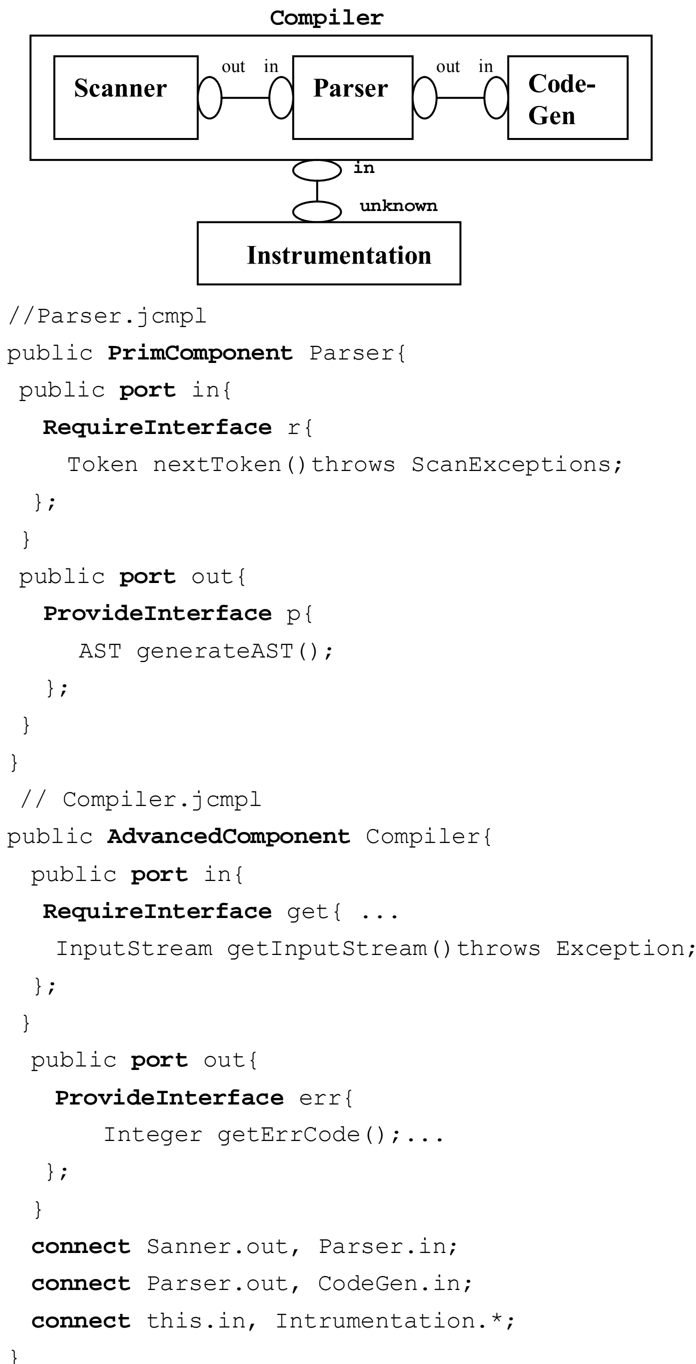

Figure 3. A graphic compiler architecture and its representation in JCMPL

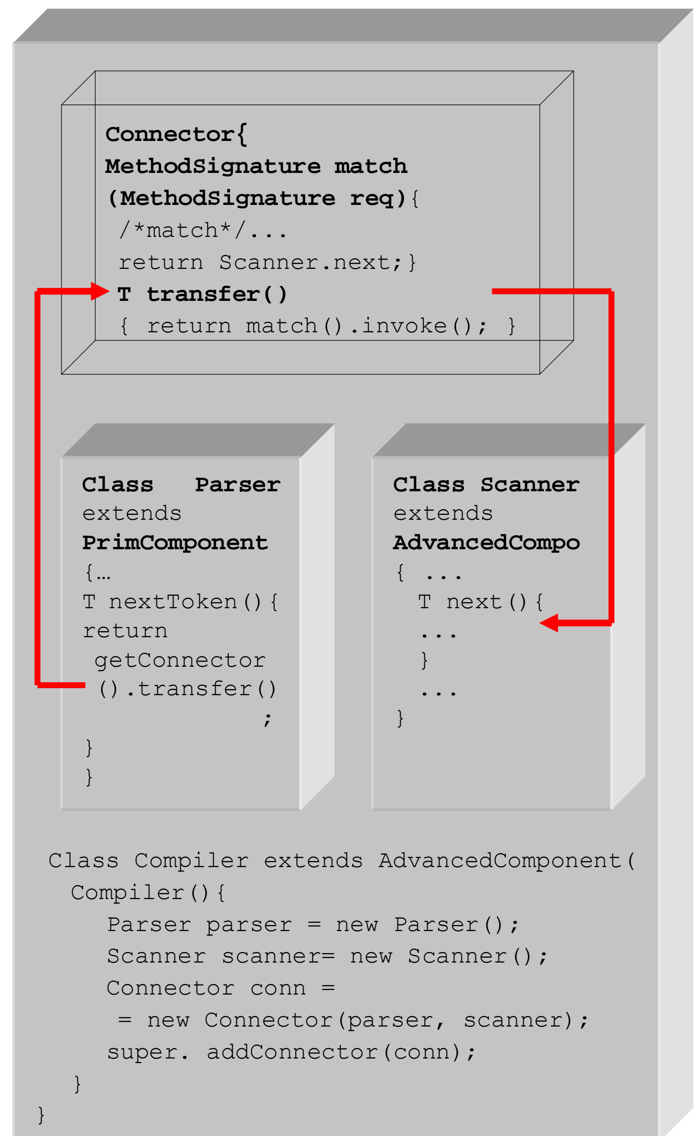

Figure 4. The graphic description of the parser and scanner integration and the pseudo codes for generated skeleton

4. JCMPL language and JCMP toolset

A novel ADL JCMPL and a toolset JCMP are designed to support the application of triple-C pattern in Java programs.

4.1 JCMPL language

JCMPL is an ADL designed based on the triple-C pattern's infrastructure definition. Similar to ArchJava, JCMPL uses the Java-like grammar and explicitly describes the architecture with component, port, interface, and connect clauses. However, JCMPL only describes the abstraction without any detailed assignment, which makes JCMPL a pure abstract language for the abstract structure design.

Figure3 gives the JCMPL representation of a compiler architecture which follows the well-known pipeline compiler design [8]. The compiler is integrated with three primitive components[1]: a scanner, a parser and a code generator. A port contains a required interface and a provided interface. According to the triple-C pattern, the compiler is an advanced component in which the ports of scanner and parser, and of parser and codeGen are explicitly connected with connect clauses, which specifies communication permissions in the implementation. Since ADL only defines the abstraction, the ports connected are represented as *ComponentClass.portName*, instead of *ComponentObject.portName* which is adopted in ArchJava. Also, when the architecture is designed, there might be some existing components to be reused. These components may be

[1] We assume these three components are not composed by others.

provided by another software house or their interfaces are not very clear. JCMPL uses the wildcard * to substitute any of these unknown ports.

Architectural abstractions defined by JCMPL can be recognized and translated to the corresponding java implementation by JCMP toolset.

4.2 JCMP toolset

We have also developed a toolset JCMP to generate codes, implement automated interface matching and enforce the architectural conformance. JCMP consists of four tools: JCMP/Compiler which parses the JCMPL language and generate the corresponding codes skeleton; JCMPL/Kernel which contains the prototypes of PrimComponent, AdvancedComponent, port, interface and connector to be extended by components in the implementation; JCMP/Match which performs the automated methods matching in the two connected ports; and JCMP/Checker which checks the validity of implementation codes after programmers finish them.

Figure 4 illustrates the translated codes skeleton of the compiler model. The red line shows the invocation flow. Note that in this model, the connector performs the methods matching and invocation transfer for the parser and scanner. The actual communication happens between methods *nextToken* of the parser and *next* of the scanner although their names are different.

5. Communication integrity and composite adaptation

As what we discuss in section 1, our approach bands two issues of keeping architectural conformance and supporting composite adaptation together for consideration. This section presents how to solve these problems in our implementation.

5.1 Keeping communication integrity

Figure 5 illustrates the detailed implementation of Parser component. There is an inner class RequireInterface to define the required interface methods. This class only collects the signatures of methods exposed in the components' interfaces. The collection of signatures is important in the methods matching which will be presented later.

The decomposition and interface conformance criteria are easily to be implemented since the generated codes skeleton implements every element including port, connector, component, and interfaces defined in the architecture. But how can we keep the communication integrity in the implementation? Note that each method exposed in the interfaces is generated with a modifier of *protected*, such as the *nextToken* in the parser. Since triple-C pattern prohibits the direct client-server relationship, we do not generate any public methods if they are in component's interface. Therefore, no interface methods can be directly visited except through connector since the connector can invoke any methods by suppressing the Java access checking. Connector conforms to the connection in the architecture, therefore, only methods in ports connected directly in the architecture can communicate with each other. ArchJava uses language level type checking to enforce communication integrity while in our approach, it is much easier

```
Class Parser
  extends PrimComponents{ //component Parser
  Class ParserReqInterface //interface
        extends RequiresInterface{
     // only signature here
     public String nextToken(){return null);
  }
  //constructor
  Parser(){
    ParserReqInterface req
      = new ParserReqInterface();
    Port in = new Port("in");// port in
    in.setRequiredInterface(req);
    super.addPort(in);
  }
  // the required method
  protected String nextToken(){
   RequireInterface req = //get interface
     super.getPort("in").getReqiredInter();

     MethodSignature ms //create its signature
      = new MethodSignature("nextToken",
         new Class[]{},String.class);

     //invoke the requires$$ method with
     //signature and parameters. This method
     //then passes the parameters to the
     //connector.
     Object result
       = req.requires$$(ms,new Object[]{});
     if(result instanceof String)
       return (String)result;
     else // report errors
  }
}
```

Figure 5. The detailed generated implementation of the Parser component

to be done since we use Java access checking to keep the integrity. Finally, JCMP/Checker checks the validity of implementations including whether interface methods are protected, whether corresponding ports, interfaces and connectors are established in component's constructor, etc.

5.2 Automated interface matching

In the implementation following triple-C pattern, connector is considered as a composite adaptor to perform the methods matching and invocation transfer, which makes it possible to automate the matching process. The policy we use in JCMP/Match integrates component testing and interface matching. Given a "requires" method R and a "provides" method P, we want to test if P is behaviorally equivalent to R. That is to see whether P and R have the same observable behavior. Since program invariants are easily specified manually with formal specifications or generated automatically by a certain tool like Daikon [30], we determine whether two methods can be matched by dynamically discovering the runtime state of program invariants. We define the match strategy formally as follows:

```
boolean match(MethodSignature r, MethodSignature p)
{
  try{
  //test if r and p have the same arguments and return
  //type
    ...
    for(; …;… ){ …  //get test inputs from JMLAutoTest
    //use the test cases as arguments to invoke r
    r.invoke(testInputs);  …
  }catch(JMLEntryPreconditionError ex){
    try{ // r's pre is false
        // directly invoke p to check if p's pre is false
       p.invoke(testInputs);
    }catch(JMLEntryPreconditionError ex1){
      //both r'pre and p'pre are false, so continue
      continue;
    }
     //r's pre is false while p'pre is true
    return false;
 }catch(ProvidesPreconditionError ex){
   //r's pre is true while p'pre is false
    return false;
 }catch(ProvidesPostconditionError ex){
    //p's post is false which means there are errors
    //in p
   throw new Exception("Errors exist in method p");

 }catch(JMLPostconditionError ex){
  // r's post is false
    return false;
 }
 }catch(java.lang.throwable ex){
    continue;
 }
 }  return true;
}
```

```
//exception mapping for p's pre or post violation
  T r (Object[] args){
    try{
   //indirectly invoke the method p through the
   //connector.
   this.getConnector().transfer();
    }catch(JMLEntryPreconditionError ex){
     //p'pre is false;
    throw new ProvidesPreconditionException();
    }catch(JMLPostconditionError ex){
      //p's post is false.
      throw new ProvidesPostconditionError();
    }catch(throwable ex){
        throw ex;
    }
 }
```

Figure 6. Psedo codes for automated matching Strategy in JCMP/Match

$$match_{jcmp/match}(P, R) = (R_{pre} \Rightarrow P_{pre}) \wedge ((P_{pre} \wedge P_{post}) \Rightarrow R_{post})$$

That is P and R match iff. P's precondition is implied by R's precondition and P's postcondition implies R's postcondition. In addition, P's postcondition must be in accordance with its precondition, otherwise, there exist errors in p's implementation.

In JCMP/Match, we use JML specifications [11, 6] as the program invariants. Based on the above definition, a specific testing approach is designed to finish the match as shown in Figure.6. This approach can also be implemented in components made with other languages and formal specifications.

JMLAutoTest [27] is an automated testing framework for Java programs annotated with JML specifications. This tool is used here to automatically generate a large number of test cases. We invoke the "requires" method r in which the "provides" method q is invoked indirectly through the connector and use the exceptions thrown by JML runtime assertion checker [6] to check whether they match.

Note that we must distinguish the pre and post condition violation in method r and q. We make an exception mapping in r's body. That is a *ProvidesPreconditionError* is throw if p's precondition is violated and a *ProvidesPostconditionError* is throw if p's postcondition is violated. If p's postcondition is false, there exist errors in p's implementation. If r's precondition exception is caught, we must invoke p explicitly outside since p will not be invoked by r.

5.3 Instrumentation for arguments of primitive types and arrays

Since we want the all methods in components' interfaces get their service from or put their service to the connector, the connector-component communication interface can not change. In JCMP, we use array of Object to represent the arguments passed in for Object is the super class of all classes in Java. However, arguments of a lot of methods are of primitive types or arrays. To adapt JCMP in all these situations, JCMP firstly instruments the interface methods with arguments of primitive types and arrays. For example, a method *void mm(int i)* will be instrumented as follows:

void mm(PrimitiveInteger arg0){

original$$ mm(args0.getValue());

}

the name of original method *mm* is changed to *original$$mm* which is invoked in the instrumented method *mm*. Methods with arguments of arrays are instrumented in the same way, with arrays being put into a vector .

6. A case study

In order to determine whether triple-C pattern meets its design goals, we undertook a case study to answer the following experimental questions:

- Does triple-C pattern help to keep the architectural conformance in the implementation?
- Does the application of triple-C pattern enhance communication and help components integration?
- Can our approach of interface matching discover the potential "requires-provides" methods pairs effectively?

```
public PrimComponent LinkedList{
 public port operation_on_node{
  ProvideInterface pro1{
    void append(Node node);//append a node
    void remove(Integer num);//remove a node
    Integer retrieve(Integer num);//get a node
    void clear(); //clear the list
  };
 }
 public port operation_on_whole_list{
  ProvideInterface pro2{
   constructList(Nodes[] nodes);
  };
 }
}
public PrimComponent Sorter{
  public port Sort{
    ProvideInterface pvdInterface{
       LinkedList sort();//quick sort
       void setList(LinkedList list);//set list
    };
 }
  public port List{
    RequireInterface reqInterface{
       //get data of node indexed by ID
       Integer getNodeData(Integer ID);
       void append(Node node);//append a node
      //get the node indexed by Id and delete it
       Integer getandDelete(Integer ID);
  };
 }
}
```

Figure 7. The two components' JCMPL representation made by two developers.

6.1 Methodology.

We used JCMPL and JCMP toolset to design a Java system. What we looked for was a system small enough that we could describe the whole design and implementation process in this section. Finally we chose the quick sort program described in a data structure book [10]. The function of this program is to give a quick sort on the input linked list which is made up of a couple of nodes. To demonstrate the flexibility of interface matching resulting from triple-C pattern, two developers made components respectively with the help of JCMP toolset. Then the third one was in charge of the late integration.

6.2 Experience

Hypothesis 1: JCMPL can support the separation of architecture design.

Two sub-components. Our target system includes only two components. One is the linked list and another is a list sorter which receives the list as input and uses the quick sort algorithm to sort it. These two developers use JCMPL respectively to describe the two components' interfaces. Figure.7 illustrates the ports and interfaces of List and Sorter. We can find that these two developers

```
public component class QuickSort{
  public port in{
     RequireInterface req{
        void constructList(Vector nodes);
        LinkedList sort();
     };
     ProvideInterface pvd{
        void startSort();
        void setListtoSorter(List list);
     };
   }
  connect
     Sorter.List, LinkedList.operation_on_node;
  connect this.in, Sorter.Sort;
  connect
    this.in,Linkedlist.operation_on_whole_list;
}
```

Figure 8. The architectural abstraction of QuickSort

```
Starting...
Trying to match methods getandDelete and retrieve…
Fails!...
Pre1 is true: 100    Pre2 is true:100
Pre1 is false:1      Pre2 is false:1
Post1 is true:0      Post2 is true:1
Post1 is false:1     Post2 is false:0
Exception in thread "main"
org.jmlspecs.jmlrac.runtime.JMLNormalPostconditionErr
or: by method Sorter.getandDelete regarding
specifications at
File "sample\Sorter.java", line 31, character 35
when
        '\old(size())' is 6
        'ID' is 4
        '\result' is 3
```

made the interfaces based on their own understanding of the system which resulted in the fact that most of methods declared in the interfaces were totally different in their names and signatures and could not match directly. Especially, the *getandDelete* method required in the Sorter could not even be satisfied by any individual method provided by the List.

In addition, the use of JCMPL to design a part of architecture individually reminds us that using JCMPL, the design of architecture itself can also be separated into parts and each part can be designed without dependency on each other, since JCMPL does not require there must be a corresponding provided method for each required method. That is the architectural abstraction itself is also available for reuse.

Late Integration. The third developer integrated two sub components into one advanced component. The architectural abstraction of the system is described in JCMPL as Figure 8. The port *list* in the component Sorter and *operation_on_node* in

R' pre	P's pre	R's post	P's post	Output	Errors in P	P and R match
ID.intValue() >=0	num.intValue() >=0	\result.intValue() >=0	\result.intValue() >=0	R's pre is true:101 P's pre is true: 101 R's pre is false: 100 P's pre is false:100 R 's post is true: 101 P's post is true:101 R's post is false: 0 P's post is false:0	N	Y
>=0	>=0	>=0	<0	pre: (1,1), (100,100); post: (0,0), (0,1)	Y	N
.>=0	>=0	<0	>=0	pre: (1,1), (100,100); post: (0,1), (1,0)	N	N
>=0	<0	>=0	>=0	pre: (0,1), (1,0); post: (0,0), (0,0)	N	N
<0	>=0	>=0	>=0	pre: (1,0), (0,1); post: (0,0), (0,0)	N	N

Table 1. The outputs and results with different program invariants when Jcmp/Match tries on methods *getNodeData*(R) and *retrieve*(P) with test cases from -100 to 100

```
class SortConnector extends Connector{
  …
//overrides the transfer$$ method
 public Object transfer$$
  (MethodSignature sig, Object[] args){

 //if the "requires" method is
 //getandDelete
  if(sig.getMethodName()
              .equals("getandDelete")){

  //invoke the list.retrieve method
  //invoke the list.remove method
  }
  else //invoke the transfer$$ method of
        //its super class
    return super.transfer$$(sig, args);
 }
}
```

Figure 10. the overridden *transfer$$* method

Linkedlist are connected since their operations have the similar functions. A new port *in* is added to the advanced component QuickSort to contain its own published *requires* and *provides* methods. Then the port *in* is connected with Sorter.Sort and LinkedList.operation_on_whole_list.

Hypothesis 2：Each required method in one port will be satisfied as long as the operations it requires can be performed by a method or the combination of a set of methods provided in another port, no matter whether their signatures are the same.

Interfaces Matching. The integrator uses the JCMP/Match to automatically search for the matched methods pairs in three ports connected in the architecture. JCMP/Match tries on every possible *requires* and *provides* methods in the connected ports. It starts with scanning the arguments types and return type of each possible pair to prune large portions of search space, so most of pairs with different arguments types and return types are eliminated very quickly. The only candidate pairs left in this case are {operation_on_node.append, list.append} {operation_on_node.retrieve, list.getData} , {operation_on_node.retrieve, list.getandDelete}, {in.setListtoSorter, Sort.setList}, and { Sort.sort, in.sort}. JCMP/Match then uses the matching algorithm discussed above to find the most accurate methods pairs. Figure 9 illustrates the output when we generated integers from -100 to 100 to test the method *getandDelete* and *retrieve*. The automated matching process stopped as soon as the post condition of *getandDelete* was violated. Finally, JCMP/Match found four pairs, {operation_on_node.retrieve, list.getData}, {operation_on_node.append, list.append}, {Sort.sort, in.sort} and {in.setListtoSorter, Sort.setList}. The matched results were saved in the XML file.

We also changed the program invariants to test if JCMP/Match works effectively in all possible cases. Table 1 illustrates the outputs and results with different program invariants when JCMP/Match tries on the methods *getNodeData* and *retrieve*. The experimental results demonstrate the effectiveness of our matching policy.

Careful readers might wonder that how we could satisfy the method *getandDelete* in the Sorter since what it requires can not be satisfied by any individual methods provided by the list. This problem was solved by overriding the *transfer$$* method in the connector. The integrator made a new user-defined connector which extends the Connector class of JCMP/Kernel to override the *transfer$$* method as illustrated in Fig.10 in which the overridden *transfer$*$ method is used as a filter. If the "requires" method is *getandDelete*, both the *retrieve* and *remove* methods were invoked; otherwise, the *transfer$$* in its super class was invoked.

6.3 Performance

The major cost of running the triple-C pattern based implementation has two components: the runtime cost of type reflection and the extra cost of invocation transfer through the connector. The type reflection includes three parts: the

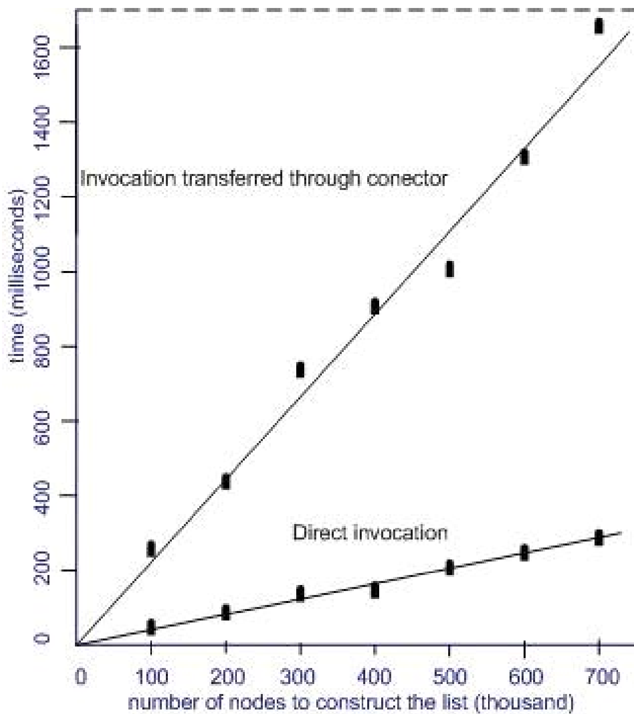

Figure 11. The performance comparison of invocation transfer based on triple-C pattern and common direct invocation when the list is constructed with number of nodes changing

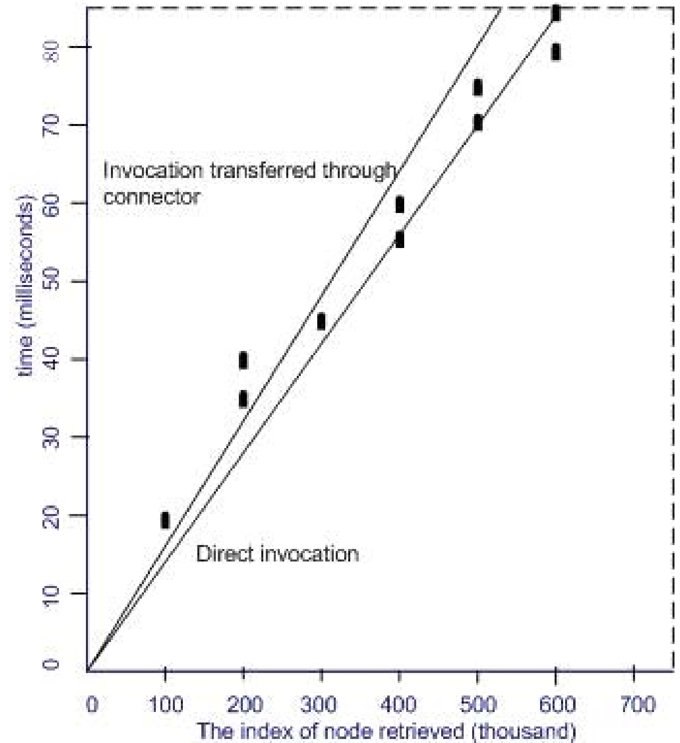

Figure 12. The performance comparison when the different nodes are retrieved.

-

primitive or array arguments encapsulating at the entrance of the connector, releasing at the exit, and the reflection from methods name to method class and from class name to instance performed by JVM. The cost of invocation transfer mainly consists of three extra function call time including the call of the RequiredInterface method *requires$$* in the required methods, the call of the Connector method *transfer$$* in *requires$$* and the call of the ProvideInterface method *provides$$* in *transfer$$*.

Figure 11 illustrates the performance comparison of invocation transfer based on triple-C pattern and common direct invocation when the list is constructed with increasing numbers of nodes. It is very clear that the time cost increases much more quickly in the invocation transfer than the common direct invocation. Figure 12 illustrates another comparison when different nodes are retrieved in the list. This test is done in a 800,000-nodes list. Note that in this test, the time increase of invocation transfer is very close to that of common invocation.

We were so curious on such large differences of performance behaviors of our system between two tests. We divided the whole process of the first test into three phases. The first phase was the period before the connector getting the arguments, the second phase was from the connector getting the data to passing them to the provided method and then the third phase included the rest part. We made statistics on the average time cost of each phase and found that the average time costs of three phases are 38.9%, 17.8% and 43.3% respectively after testing it for eight times. It is not strange that the time of third phase is largest since the specific operations are performed in it. However, the abnormally large time cost of the first phase reminds us the major cost of the process lies with encapsulating the nodes array into a vector since the original argument of method *construct* has the type *Nodes[]* and it has been instrumented. In the test shown in Figure 12, the type of argument of the *retrieve* method is integer, therefore it does not need the instrumentation and encapsulation of arguments.

Then it has been clear that the cost of invocation transfer is not obvious while the type reflection takes most of time. The experimental results demonstrate that our approach of implementing connector as proxy to transfer service works and is practical. We will make every effort to optimize the encapsulation of primitive and array type arguments, but for right now, we suggest Objects should be used in running our system.

6.4 Case study summary.

In this case study, we have evaluated our approach and reached four conclusions.

Firstly, we can find in this case study that we were able to make the implementation conform to the architectural definition although it was developed separately. This implementation was generated with the help of the JCMP tools which were designed based on the triple-C pattern. Therefore, following triple-C pattern helps to make modules done independently and keep the architectural conformance.

In the second place, two pre-building components are conven-

iently integrated not only in the architecture, but also in the implementation. The communication-through-connectors rule enhances the components communication which results in the flexible interface matching.

Thirdly, the case study also shows us a feasible approach to automated interface matching. Since triple-C pattern breaks the direct client-server relationship and uses the connector as the proxy to transfer services, the user-defined connector becomes a good service exchanging place to perform intelligent data analysis, which enables the automation.

Finally, the experimental results demonstrate the time cost of connector transfer is not obvious and our approach of implementing connector from architecture is practical.

7. Conclusions and future work

In this paper, we analyze the present problems in implementing software architecture and components composite adaptation and give solutions as defining a novel design pattern, Components-Communicating-through-Connector (Triple-C) pattern, which provides guidelines for the methodology of how to implement the architectural abstraction into the detailed code and solves component communication problems for composite adaptation.

We introduce the JCMPL language and toolset JCMP which are designed to help apply triple-C pattern in Java implementations. JCMPL only defines the abstraction without any detailed implementations and JCMP parses the architectural definition of JCMPL and translate it into triple-C pattern based implementation.

We also present the techniques to keep the architectural conformance, especially the communication integrity in the implementation and perform the automated interface matching for the composite adaptation. We determine whether methods can be matched by discovering the runtime state of program invariants in the connector and finally, we evaluate the triple-C pattern in a case study.

In the future work, we plan to optimize the encapsulation of primitive and array types arguments. We also plan to test our approach in the larger and widely used systems to discover new problems and explore solutions. In addition, implementing connectors as data exchanging proxy also discovers the possibility of applying automated processing in many areas of CBSE, such as automatically reengineering existing systems and automated components producing and assembly. All of them will be our future research goals.

Acknowledgement

We would like to give our thanks for Gary T. Leavens for his helpful discussion and comments on this paper. We are also grateful to all members in the Software Engineering Lab for their comments on JCMPL language and JCMP toolset.

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