

COWS: a Calculus for Orchestration of Web Services

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... with the contribution of Rosario Pugliese and Francesco Tiezzi

Outline

- 1 Scenario & Motivation
- 2 Goals & Features
- 3 Syntax
- 4 Modelling orchestration constructs
- 5 Conclusions

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Service-oriented computing & Web services

- *Service-oriented computing (SOC)*
 - ▶ an emerging paradigm for developing loosely coupled, interoperable, evolvable systems and applications
 - ▶ exploits the pervasiveness of the Internet and its related technologies
- *Web services* are a successful instantiation of SOC
 - ▶ autonomous, stateless, platform-independent and composable software entities
 - ▶ can be published, located and invoked through the Web via XML messages

These very features foster a programming style based on service *composition* and *reusability*

- Many new XML-based languages have been designed, e.g.
 - ▶ business coordination languages (WS-BPEL, WSFL, WSCI, WS-CDL and XLANG)
 - ▶ contract languages (WSDL and SWS)
 - ▶ query languages (XPath and XQuery)

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Services & Business processes

- A *business process* is an *orchestration* of services, namely “a collection of services, invoked in a particular sequence with a particular set of rules, to meet a business requirement [IBM]”
 - ▶ It could be considered a service in its own right
 - ▶ which leads to the idea that business processes may be composed of services of different granularities
- A same business process can be identified by means of different logic names
 - ▶ To play more than one partner role
 - ▶ To capture interdependencies with more than one partner role
- Business data are exploited to correlate interactions among instances

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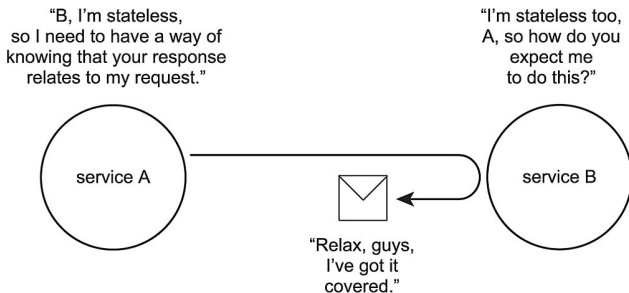
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Correlation in SOC

- An essential part of messaging within SOC
 - ▶ as it enables the persistence of activity context and state across multiple message exchangeswhile preserving
 - ▶ service statelessness and autonomy, and
 - ▶ the loosely coupled nature of service-oriented solutions
- Function of correlation: tie messages together without requiring that services somehow manage this association

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Correlation in Web service orchestration

- Added complexity of addressing specific process instances within the correlation data
- Further complicating this scenario is the fact that a single message may participate in multiple contexts, each identified by a separate correlation value
- To support these requirements, the WS-BPEL (*Web Services Business Process Execution Language*) specification defines specific syntax that allows for the creation of extensible *correlation sets*
- These message properties can be dynamically added, deleted, and altered to reflect a wide variety of message exchange scenarios and environments

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Goals

- Exploit WS-BPEL, the ‘de facto’ standard language for orchestration of Web services, to drive the design of COWS
 - ▶ threads of a same service instance *can share* the store
 - ▶ a same process can play *more than one partner role*, and
 - ▶ stateful sessions can be programmed by *correlating different interactions*
- COWS intends to be a foundational model not specifically tight to Web services’ current technology
 - ▶ Some WS-BPEL constructs, e.g. fault and compensation handlers and flow graphs, do not have an exact counterpart in COWS, rather they are expressed by exploiting COWS more primitive operators
- COWS combines in an original way a number of constructs and features borrowed from well-known process calculi
 - ▶ asynchronous communication
 - ▶ pattern matching
 - ▶ polyadic synchronization (π -calculus)
 - ▶ localized receiving ($L\pi$)
 - ▶ delimited killing activities & protection ($StAC_i$)

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Naming, communication & binding

- Basic elements: *partner* and *operation* names
- *Communication endpoint*: 'partner name' plus 'operation name' written $p \cdot o$
- Very flexible naming mechanism that allows
 - ▶ a given service to be identified by means of different logical names (i.e. to play more than one partner role)

$$p_{slow} \cdot o_{?} \bar{w}.s_{slow} + p_{fast} \cdot o_{?} \bar{w}.s_{fast}$$

- ▶ the names composing an endpoint to be dealt with separately as in a request-response interaction

$$p \cdot o_{req} ? \langle x \rangle . x \cdot o_{res} ! \langle \text{"I'm alive"} \rangle$$

- Partners and operations can be exchanged in communication
 - ▶ but dynamically received names cannot form the communication endpoints used to receive further invocations (in other words, only 'send capability' is transmitted)

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Delimitation, forced termination & protection

- The *delimitation* operator $[d]_-$ is the only binder of the calculus (*receive activities* do **not** bind names or variables)
- Delimitation is used to:
 - ▶ generate fresh names (like the restriction operator of the π -calculus)
 - ▶ regulate the range of application of substitutions generated by communication
- The *protection* operator $\{_ \}$ can be used to protect sensitive code from the effect of a forced termination

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Communication of private names & global scope of variables

$$\begin{aligned} [n] (p \cdot o! \langle n \rangle) \mid [x] (s \mid p \cdot o? \langle x \rangle . s') &\equiv (n \text{ fresh}) \\ [n] [x] (p \cdot o! \langle n \rangle \mid s \mid p \cdot o? \langle x \rangle . s') &\rightarrow \\ [n] (s \mid s') \cdot \{x \mapsto n\} & \end{aligned}$$

- Interacting receive and invoke activities must be in the scopes of the delimitations that bind the variables argument of the receive
- Substitution $\{x \mapsto n\}$ is applied to all terms delimited by $[x]$, not only to the continuation s' of the service performing the receive

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Interplay between communication and kill activity

$$p \bullet o! \langle n \rangle \mid [k] ([x] p \bullet o? \langle x \rangle . s \mid \mathbf{kill}(k)) \xrightarrow{\dagger} p \bullet o! \langle n \rangle \mid [k] [x] \mathbf{0}$$

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- Communication can be guaranteed by protecting the receive

$$p \bullet o! \langle n \rangle \mid [k] ([x] \{ p \bullet o? \langle x \rangle . s \} \mid \mathbf{kill}(k)) \xrightarrow{\dagger} \longrightarrow [k] \{ s \cdot \{ x \mapsto n \} \}$$

Service instances & correlation

- Computational entities are called *services*
 - ▶ One specific instance to serve each received request
 - ▶ An instance contains concurrent threads (with a shared state) that may offer a choice among alternative receive activities (*multiple start activities* in WS-BPEL terminology)
- *Pattern-matching* is used for
 - ▶ correlating, *by means of their same contents*, different service interactions logically forming a same 'session'
 - ▶ isolating those data that are important to
 - ★ identify service instances for the routing of messages, and
 - ★ program stateful multi-partners sessions
- Flexible mechanism of identifying sessions
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$$* [x, y] (p \bullet O_{order_garage} ? \langle x, y \rangle . S_1 \mid p \bullet O_{order_rental_car} ? \langle x \rangle . S_2)$$
$$\mid p \bullet O_{order_garage} ! \langle id, gps \rangle \mid p \bullet O_{order_rental_car} ! \langle id \rangle$$

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The service and the created instance *compete* for processing the request $p \bullet O_{order_rental_car} ! \langle id \rangle$

However, by exploiting the correlation data, our (prioritized) semantics for “[” only allows the existing instance to process the request because its input parameter is ‘more defined’ (and, thus, prevents creation of a new instance)

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kill (k)	(kill)	k (<i>killer</i>) labels
$ u \cdot u' ! \bar{e}$	(invoke)	e expressions
$ \sum_{i=0}^r p_i \cdot o_i ? \bar{w}_i . s_i$	(receive-guarded choice)	x variables
$ s \mid s$	(parallel composition)	v values
$ \{s\}$	(protection)	n, p, o names
$ [d] s$	(delimitation)	u : names vars
$ * s$	(replication)	w : values vars
		d : labels names vars

$\bar{}$ denotes tuples of objects, e.g. \bar{e} is a tuple of expressions

Only one *binding* construct: $[d] s$ binds d in the scope s
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$s \mid s$	(parallel composition)	v values
$\{s\}$	(protection)	n, p, o names
$[d] s$	(delimitation)	u : names vars
$* s$	(replication)	w : values vars
		d : labels names vars

$\bar{\cdot}$ denotes tuples of objects, e.g. \bar{e} is a tuple of expressions

Only one *binding* construct: $[d] s$ binds d in the scope s
(free/bound name/variable/label defined accordingly)

Abbrev. \hat{n} stands for a (fresh) endpoint $n_p \cdot n_o$

Syntax of COWS

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COWS: a Calculus for Orchestration of Web Services

- 1 Scenario & Motivation
- 2 Goals & Features
- 3 Syntax
- 4 Modelling orchestration constructs**
 - Fault and compensation handlers
- 5 Conclusions

Fault and compensation handlers: syntax

- *Compensation*: execution of specific activities (attempting) to reverse the effects of previously executed activities

Syntax for compensation

```
 $s ::= \dots$  (services)  
| throw( $\phi$ ) (fault generator)  
| undo( $\iota$ ) (compensate)  
|  $\langle s : \mathbf{catch}(\phi_1)\{s_1\} : \dots : \mathbf{catch}(\phi_n)\{s_n\} : s_c \rangle_{\iota}$  (scope)
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- **throw**(ϕ): rises a fault signal ϕ that triggers execution of s if a construct **catch**(ϕ){ s } exists within the same scope
- **undo**(ι): invokes a compensation handler of an inner scope ι that has already completed normally (i.e. without faulting)
- $\langle s : \mathbf{catch}(\phi_1)\{s_1\} : \dots : \mathbf{catch}(\phi_n)\{s_n\} : s_c \rangle_{\iota}$:
is uniquely identified by ι and groups together a service s representing the normal behaviour, an optional list of fault handlers, and a compensation handler s_c

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$$\begin{aligned} \langle\langle s : \widehat{\text{catch}}(\phi_1)\{s_1\} : \dots : \widehat{\text{catch}}(\phi_n)\{s_n\} : s_c \rangle\rangle_k = \\ \widehat{\text{throw}} \left(\langle\langle \widehat{\text{catch}}(\phi_1)\{s_1\} \rangle\rangle_k \mid \dots \mid \langle\langle \widehat{\text{catch}}(\phi_n)\{s_n\} \rangle\rangle_k \mid \right. \\ \left. [k] \left(\langle\langle s \rangle\rangle_k ; (x_{done} \bullet o_{done}! \langle \rangle \mid [k] \{ \widehat{\text{undo}}?\langle i \rangle . \langle\langle s_c \rangle\rangle_k \}) \right) \right) \end{aligned}$$

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- s_c is installed when the normal behaviour s successfully completes, but it is activated only when signal $\widehat{\text{undo}}!\langle i \rangle$ occurs
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Achievements

- COWS permits modelling different and typical aspects of services and Web services technologies, such as
 - ▶ multiple start activities, receive conflicts, routing of correlated messages, service instances and interactions among them
- COWS can express the most common workflow patterns and can encode other process and orchestration languages
 - ▶ Orc \Rightarrow COWS (without $\{_|_|\}$)
 - ▶ WS-BPEL_{light} \Rightarrow COWS
- Accommodation of timed activities
- COWS type system permits [FSEN'07] specifying and forcing policies for constraining the partners, and hence the services, that can safely access any given datum
- COWS interpreter

<http://fmt.isti.cnr.it/cows/V0.1/cows.html>

COWS Web Site <http://rap.dsi.unifi.it/cows/>

On-going and future work

- Java-based implementation of COWS and its type system
- Development of more powerful type systems based on, e.g., *resource usage types*
 - ▶ permit to express and enforce policies for, e.g., disciplining partners usage, constraining the sequences of messages accepted by services, checking that interaction between partners obeys given protocols
 - ▶ need non trivial adaptations to deal with all COWS peculiar features (e.g. killing and protection activities)
- Definition of behavioural equivalences for COWS services
 - ▶ They could provide a means to establish formal correspondences between different views (abstraction levels) of a service, e.g. the contract it has to honour and its true implementation
- Development of static analysis techniques and logics

Thank you!

Similarities with localised π -calculus ($L\pi$)

- Variant of π -calculus closest to COWS

Syntax of $L\pi$ processes

$$P ::= \mathbf{0} \mid a(b).P \mid \bar{a}b \mid P \mid P \mid (\nu a)P \mid !a(b).P$$

with the constraint that in processes $a(b).P$ and $!a(b).P$ name b may not occur free in P in input position

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- All $L\pi$ constructs have a direct counterpart in COWS
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- $L\pi$ channel name = COWS communication endpoint consisting of
 - ▶ variables, if the channel name is bound by an input prefix
 - ▶ names, otherwise
- Encoding of process $P = \text{service } \langle\langle P \rangle\rangle_S$ with $S = \emptyset$

As the encoding proceeds, S records the names that have been freed and were initially bound by an input prefix

$$\langle\langle a \rangle\rangle_{S \cup \{a\}} = x_a \cdot y_a$$

$$\langle\langle a \rangle\rangle_S = p_a \cdot o_a \quad \text{if } a \notin S$$

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Orc: syntax

Orc is a recently proposed task orchestration language with applications in workflow, business process management, and Web service orchestration

```
 $f, g ::= \mathbf{0} \mid S(w) \mid E(w) \quad (\text{Expressions})$   
|  $f > x > g \quad (\text{sequential composition})$   
|  $f \mid g \quad (\text{symmetric parallel composition})$   
|  $g \textbf{ where } x : \in f \quad (\text{asymmetric parallel composition})$   
  
 $w ::= x \mid v \quad (\text{Parameters})$ 
```

S ranges over *site* names, x over *variables*, and v over *values*

Elementary expressions: $\mathbf{0}$, $S(w)$ (site call) and $E(w)$ (expression call)

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Orc: asynchronous operational semantics

$S(v) \stackrel{!v'}{\hookrightarrow} \mathbf{0}$ (*SiteCall*)

$$\frac{E(x) \triangleq f}{E(w) \stackrel{\tau}{\hookrightarrow} f \cdot \{x \mapsto w\}} \text{ (Def)}$$

$$\frac{f \stackrel{l}{\hookrightarrow} f'}{f \mid g \stackrel{l}{\hookrightarrow} f' \mid g} \text{ (Sym1)}$$

$$\frac{g \stackrel{l}{\hookrightarrow} g'}{f \mid g \stackrel{l}{\hookrightarrow} f \mid g'} \text{ (Sym2)}$$

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- Evaluation of expressions may call a number of sites and returns a (possibly empty) stream of values
- A site call can progress only when the actual parameter is a value (rule *(SiteCall)*); it elicits one response
- Expression calls are evaluated using call-by-name (rule *(Def)*) namely the actual parameter replaces the formal one and then the corresponding expression is evaluated
- Symmetric parallel composition $f \mid g$ consists of concurrent evaluations of f and g (rules *(Sym1)* & *(Sym2)*)
- Sequential composition $f > x > g$ activates a concurrent copy of g with x replaced by v , for each value v returned by f (rules *(S1)* & *(S2)*)
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Orc: auxiliary function for the encoding

$$\langle\langle \mathbf{0} \rangle\rangle_{\hat{r}} = \mathbf{0}$$

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Endpoint \hat{r} returns the result of expressions evaluation

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Orc: encoding

For each site S , we define the service

$$* [x, y] \hat{S}?\langle x, y \rangle.y!e_x^S \quad (1)$$

For each expression declaration $E(x) \triangleq f$ we define the service

$$* [y, z] \hat{E}?\langle y, z \rangle.[\hat{r}] (z!\hat{r} \mid [x] (\hat{r}?\langle x \rangle \mid \langle\langle f \rangle\rangle_y)) \quad (2)$$

$\llbracket f \rrbracket_{\hat{r}}$ is the parallel composition of $\langle\langle f \rangle\rangle_{\hat{r}}$, of a service of the form (1) or (2) for each site or expression called in f , in any of the expressions called in f , and so on recursively

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Orc: operational correspondence

There is a formal correspondence, based on the operational semantics, between Orc expressions and the COWS services resulting from their encoding

Operational correspondence

Given an Orc expression f and a communication endpoint \hat{r}

$$f \xrightarrow{I} f' \text{ implies } \llbracket f \rrbracket_{\hat{r}} \equiv \langle\langle f \rangle\rangle_{\hat{r}} \mid s \xrightarrow{\alpha} \langle\langle f' \rangle\rangle_{\hat{r}} \mid s$$

where $\alpha = \hat{r} \triangleleft v$ if $I = !v$, and $\alpha = p \cdot o[\emptyset] \bar{w} \bar{v}$ if $I = \tau$

Proof: by induction on the length of the inference of $f \xrightarrow{I} f'$

$s \xrightarrow{\alpha} s'$ denotes that there exist two services, s_1 and s_2 , such that s_1 is a reduct of s , $s_1 \xrightarrow{\alpha} s_2$ and s' is a reduct of s_2

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Flow graphs

- Provide a direct and intuitive way to structure workflow processes, where activities executed in parallel can be synchronized by settling dependencies (*flow links*) among them
- Initially, all involved links are inactive and only those activities with no synchronization dependencies can execute
- Once all incoming links of an activity are active (i.e., they have been assigned either a positive or negative state), a guard (*join condition*) is evaluated
- When an activity in the flow graph cannot execute because its join condition fails, a *join failure* fault is emitted, unless attribute *suppress join failure* is set to 'yes' (*Dead-Path Elimination* effect)
- When an activity terminates, the status of each outgoing link is determined through evaluation of a *transition condition*

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Flow graphs: syntax

$s ::= \dots \mid [\bar{fl}] ls \mid \sum_{i \in I} p_i \bullet o_i ? \bar{w}_i . s_i$	(services)
$ls ::= (jc) \xrightarrow{sjf} s \Rightarrow (\bar{fl}, \bar{e}) \mid s \Rightarrow (\bar{fl}, \bar{e}) \mid ls \mid ls$	(linked services)
$jc ::= \mathbf{true} \mid \mathbf{false} \mid fl \mid \neg jc \mid jc \vee jc \mid jc \wedge jc$	(join conditions)
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a delimited *linked service* ls whose internal activities can synchronize by means of the flow links in \bar{fl}
- Flow links \bar{fl} are (boolean) variables
- $(jc) \xrightarrow{sjf}$ denotes a join condition jc with attribute sjf
- $\Rightarrow (\bar{fl}, \bar{e})$ denotes services' outgoing links,
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a delimited *linked service* ls whose internal activities can synchronize by means of the flow links in \bar{fl}
- Flow links \bar{fl} are (boolean) variables
- $(jc) \xrightarrow{sjf}$ denotes a join condition jc with attribute sjf
- $\Rightarrow (\bar{fl}, \bar{e})$ denotes services' outgoing links,
i.e. pairs (fl_i, e_i) with fl_i flow link and e_i transition (boolean) condition

Flow graphs: encoding

$$\langle\langle \overline{fl} \mid s \rangle\rangle = \overline{fl} \langle\langle s \rangle\rangle$$

$$\langle\langle s_1 \mid s_2 \rangle\rangle = \langle\langle s_1 \rangle\rangle \mid \langle\langle s_2 \rangle\rangle$$

$$\langle\langle s \Rightarrow (\overline{fl}, \overline{e}) \rangle\rangle = \langle\langle s \rangle\rangle; \overline{fl} = \overline{e}$$

$$\langle\langle (jc) \stackrel{yes}{\Rightarrow} s \Rightarrow (\overline{fl}, \overline{e}) \rangle\rangle = \text{if } (jc) \text{ then } \{ \langle\langle s \rangle\rangle; \overline{fl} = \overline{e} \} \text{ else } \{ [outLinkOf(s) = \overline{false}] \}$$

$$\langle\langle (jc) \stackrel{no}{\Rightarrow} s \Rightarrow (\overline{fl}, \overline{e}) \rangle\rangle = \text{if } (jc) \text{ then } \{ \langle\langle s \rangle\rangle; \overline{fl} = \overline{e} \} \text{ else } \{ \text{throw}(\phi_{join_f}) \}$$

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