

GOBLINT: Abstract Interpretation for Memory Safety and Termination

Simmo Saan¹ Julian Erhard^{2,3} **Michael Schwarz**²
Stanimir Bozhilov² Karoliine Holter¹ Sarah Tilscher^{2,3}
Vesal Vojdani¹ Helmut Seidl²

¹University of Tartu ²TUM ³LMU
m.schwarz@tum.de

TACAS 2024



GOBLINT in 4 bullet points

- ▶ Static analyzer for C programs
 - ▶ Based on abstract interpretation — sound!
 - ▶ Overapproximating — no violations!
 - ▶ Specializes in multi-threaded programs — best in *NoDataRace*!

Termination + MemorySafety

Termination + MemorySafety

Termination

- ▶ Two sources for non-termination
 - ▶ Infinite loops
 - ▶ Recursion

Termination

- ▶ Two sources for non-termination
 - ▶ Infinite loops
 - ▶ Syntactically instrument loops with a counter
 - ▶ Prove counter is bounded
 - ▶ Leverage existing numerical domains
 - ▶ Recursion

Termination

- ▶ Two sources for non-termination
 - ▶ Infinite loops
 - ▶ Syntactically instrument loops with a counter
 - ▶ Prove counter is bounded
 - ▶ Leverage existing numerical domains
 - ▶ Recursion
 - ▶ GOBLINT already computes call graph including dynamic calls
 - ▶ Check this context-sensitive call graph for cycles

Termination

- ▶ Two sources for non-termination
 - ▶ Infinite loops
 - ▶ Syntactically instrument loops with a counter
 - ▶ Prove counter is bounded
 - ▶ Leverage existing numerical domains
 - ▶ Recursion
 - ▶ GOBLINT already computes call graph including dynamic calls
 - ▶ Check this context-sensitive call graph for cycles

Result

A basic termination analysis in a few hundred lines of code.

Termination + MemorySafety

Termination + MemorySafety

Termination + MemorySafety

MemorySafety

- ▶ Points-to analysis ✓
- ▶ Identify heap objects by allocation sites & counters¹ and compute uniqueness ✓

¹Nod to Tomáš Dacík who added counters to GOBLINT during his exchange

MemorySafety

- ▶ Points-to analysis ✓
- ▶ Identify heap objects by allocation sites & counters¹ and compute uniqueness ✓

- ▶ Use-After-Free

- ▶ ...

- ▶ ...

¹Nod to Tomáš Dacík who added counters to GOBLINT during his exchange

MemorySafety

- ▶ Points-to analysis ✓
- ▶ Identify heap objects by allocation sites & counters¹ and compute uniqueness ✓
- ▶ Use-After-Free in a multi-threaded setting
- ▶ ...
- ▶ ...

¹Nod to Tomáš Dacík who added counters to GOBLINT during his exchange

Use-After-Free

Check at each access to `h` that no calls to `free(h)`

- ▶ have happened before

Use-After-Free

Check at each access to `h` that no calls to `free(h)`

- ▶ have happened before **from any thread**

Use-After-Free

Check at each access to `h` that no calls to `free(h)`

- ▶ have happened before from any thread

Reason about behavior of multiple threads.

Use-After-Free

Check at each access to `h` that no calls to `free(h)`

- ▶ have happened before from any thread

Reason about behavior of multiple threads.

Challenge: How to check this thread-modularly?

MHP information (for races)

- ▶ finite abstractions of reaching traces encoding aspects of the history, e.g., set of joined threads. [S. et al, ESOP '23]

MHP information (for races)

- ▶ finite abstractions of reaching traces encoding aspects of the history, e.g., set of joined threads. [S. et al, ESOP '23]

Approach

- ▶ Per abstract heap object:
 - ▶ Accumulate MHP information of all `free`s flow-insensitively
 - ▶ For an access, check that none of the `free`s can happen before

MHP information (for races)

- ▶ finite abstractions of reaching traces encoding aspects of the history, e.g., set of joined threads. [S. et al, ESOP '23]

Approach

- ▶ Per abstract heap object:
 - ▶ Accumulate MHP information of all `free`s flow-insensitively
 - ▶ For an access, check that none of the `free`s can happen before

Example

- ▶ t_2 accesses h (MHP: \top)
- ▶ t_1 calls `free` h (MHP: t_2 must-joined)

MHP information (for races)

- ▶ finite abstractions of reaching traces encoding aspects of the history, e.g., set of joined threads. [S. et al, ESOP '23]

Approach

- ▶ Per abstract heap object:
 - ▶ Accumulate MHP information of all `free`s flow-insensitively
 - ▶ For an access, check that none of the `free`s can happen before

Example

- ▶ t_2 accesses h (MHP: \top)
- ▶ t_1 calls `free` h (MHP: t_2 must-joined)

MHP information (for races)

- ▶ finite abstractions of reaching traces encoding aspects of the history, e.g., set of joined threads. [S. et al, ESOP '23]

Approach

- ▶ Per abstract heap object:
 - ▶ Accumulate MHP information of all `free`s flow-insensitively
 - ▶ For an access, check that none of the `free`s can happen before

Example

- ▶ t_2 accesses h (MHP: \top)
- ▶ t_1 calls `free` h (MHP: t_2 must-joined)
- ▶ ✓

First Attempt

- ▶ Poses many exciting challenges, e.g.,
 - ▶ more expressive MHP abstractions
 - ▶ more expressive (relational) heap domains
 - ▶ ...

Thank you!

- ▶ Support for termination
- ▶ Support for memory safety, also for concurrent programs
- ▶ Only **sound** tool to support all properties
- ▶ Second best score in **ConcurrencySafety-MemSafety** (after DEAGLE)



 [goblint/analyzer](https://github.com/goblint/analyzer)

Further reading



Saan, S., Erhard, J., Schwarz, M., Bozhilov, S., Holter, K., Tilscher, S., Vojdani, V., Seidl, H.

GOBLINT: Abstract Interpretation for Memory Safety and Termination

In: TACAS 2024. pp. 381–386. Springer (2024).

DOI: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-57256-2_25



<https://goblint.in.tum.de>



<https://github.com/goblint/analyzer>