

# Automating Proofs for Iterative Programs on Complex Data Structures

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- 1 Iterating over Complex Data Structures
- 2 Separation Logic with Inductive Definitions and Data Constraints
- 3 Proof Strategy
- 4 Experimental Results
- 5 Related Works and Perspectives

SL + ID = Good theory to work **complex data structures**

- Separation Logic (SL) supports local reasoning  
→ **compact proofs**
- Inductive Definitions (ID) **naturally** capture complex dynamic data structures

$$btree(E) ::= (E = nil \wedge emp)$$

$$btree(E) ::= (E \neq nil \wedge \exists L, R, d. E \mapsto ((left, L), (right, R), (data, d)) \\ \star btree(L) \star btree(R))$$

- **Decidability results** for expressive fragments **without data**
  - sat [LICS'14]
  - entailment [CADE'13]

```

/* @pre:  btree(t) */
btree* insert(btree* t, int n) {
  if (t == NULL) {
    btree* r = btree_alloc(n, NULL, NULL);
    /* r ↦ ((left, nil), (right, nil), (data, n)) */
    return r;
  }
  if (*) {
    /* ∃L, R, d. t ↦ ((left, L), (right, R), (data, d)) * btree(L) * btree(R)
    t->left = insert (t->left, n);
    /* ∃L', R, d. t ↦ ((left, L'), (right, R), (data, d)) * btree(L') * btree(R)
  } else {
    /* ∃L, R, d. t ↦ ((left, L), (right, R), (data, d)) * btree(L) * btree(R)
    t->right = insert (t->right, n);
    /* ∃L, R', d. t ↦ ((left, L), (right, R'), (data, d)) * btree(L) * btree(R')
  }
  return t;
} /* @post:  btree(@ret) */

```

## REASONING ABOUT ITERATIVE PROGRAMS

```
/* @pre: btree(t) */
btree* deleteLeftMost(btree* t) {
    if (t == NULL) return t;
    if (t->left == NULL) {
        btree* r = t->right; /* t ↦ ((left, nil), (right, r), (data, d)) * btree(r) */
        ...
        return r;
    }
    btree *p = t, *tt = t->left;

    while (tt->left != NULL) {
        p = tt; tt = tt->left;
    }
    if (tt->right == NULL) p->left = NULL;
    else p->left = tt->right;
    ...
    return t;
} /* @post: btree(@ret) */
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    if (t->left == NULL) {
        btree* r = t->right; /* t ↦ ((left, nil), (right, r), (data, d)) * btree(r) */
        ...
        return r;
    }
    btree *p = t, *tt = t->left;
    /* @inv: p ≠ nil ∧ tt ≠ nil ∧ ∃R, d. btreeh(t, p) * p ↦ ((left, tt), (right, R), (data, d)) *
    btree(tt) * btree(R) */
    while (tt->left != NULL) {
        p = tt; tt = tt->left;
    }
    if (tt->right == NULL) p->left = NULL;
    else p->left = tt->right;
    ...
    return t;
} /* @post: btree(@ret) */
```

- ID for **data structures fragments** (with a **hole**)
- Proving invariants require complex *lemmas*, e.g.,

$$\begin{aligned}
 & (\exists p', R, R', d, d'. \textit{btreeh}(t, p') \star p' \mapsto ((\textit{left}, p), (\textit{right}, R), (\textit{data}, d)) \star \textit{btree}(R) \\
 & \quad p \mapsto ((\textit{left}, tt), (\textit{right}, R'), (\textit{data}, d')) \star \textit{btree}(tt)) \\
 \implies & (\exists R, d. \textit{btreeh}(t, p) \star p \mapsto ((\textit{left}, tt), (\textit{right}, R), (\textit{data}, d)) \\
 & \quad \star \textit{btree}(R) \star \textit{btree}(tt))
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 \star \text{btree}(R) \star \text{btree}(tt))
 \end{aligned}$$

- Worse when adding data, even for simple data structures, e.g., **sorted lists**:

$$lseg(E, M, F) ::= E = F \wedge \text{emp} \wedge M = \emptyset$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 lseg(E, M, F) ::= \exists X, v, M_1. E \mapsto \{(\text{next}, X), (\text{data}, v)\} \star lseg(X, M_1, F) \\
 \wedge v \leq M_1 \wedge M = M_1 \cup \{v\}
 \end{aligned}$$



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 & \quad p \mapsto ((\text{left}, tt), (\text{right}, R'), (\text{data}, d')) \star \text{btree}(tt)) \\
 & \implies (\exists R, d. \text{btreeh}(t, p) \star p \mapsto ((\text{left}, tt), (\text{right}, R), (\text{data}, d)) \\
 & \quad \star \text{btree}(R) \star \text{btree}(tt))
 \end{aligned}$$

- Worse when adding data, even for simple data structures, e.g., **sorted lists**:

$$\exists E_2. \text{lseg}(E_1, M_1, E_2) \star \text{lseg}(E_2, M_2, E_3) \wedge M_1 \leq M_2 \implies \exists M. \text{lseg}(E_1, M, E_3)$$

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$$\begin{aligned}
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 & \quad p \mapsto ((\text{left}, tt), (\text{right}, R'), (\text{data}, d')) \star \text{btree}(tt)) \\
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 → DRYAD [POPL'12]

Automate the invariant checking for iterative programs

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Automate the invariant checking for iterative programs  
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### Approach:

- 1 propose syntax for ID supporting shape + data specifications
- 2 ... and simple lemma, automatically generated
- 3 proof strategy using lemma

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## Formulas:

 $X, Y, E \in \text{LVars}$  location variables $\vec{F} \in (\text{LVars} \cup \text{DVars})^*$  $x \in \text{Vars}$  $\rho \subseteq (\mathcal{F} \times \text{LVars}) \cup (\mathcal{D} \times \text{DVars})$  $P \in \mathcal{P}$  predicates $\Delta$  formula over DVars $\Pi ::= X = Y \mid X \neq Y \mid \Delta \mid \Pi \wedge \Pi$ 

pure formulas

 $\Sigma ::= \text{emp} \mid E \mapsto \rho \mid P(E, \vec{F}) \mid \Sigma \star \Sigma$ 

spatial formulas

 $\varphi ::= \Pi \wedge \Sigma \mid \varphi \vee \varphi \mid \exists x. \varphi$ 

formulas

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$\vec{F} \in (\text{LVars} \cup \text{DVars})^*$      $P \in \mathcal{P}$  predicates

$x \in \text{Vars}$      $\Delta$  formula over DVars

$\Pi ::= X = Y \mid X \neq Y \mid \Delta \mid \Pi \wedge \Pi$     pure formulas

$\Sigma ::= \text{emp} \mid E \mapsto \rho \mid P(E, \vec{F}) \mid \Sigma \star \Sigma$     spatial formulas

$\varphi ::= \Pi \wedge \Sigma \mid \varphi \vee \varphi \mid \exists x. \varphi$     formulas

**General Inductive Definitions:** set of rules  $P(E, \vec{F}) ::= \exists \vec{Z}. \Pi \wedge \Sigma$

- $\vec{Z} \in \text{Vars}^*$
- if  $\Sigma$  is  $\text{emp}$  or  $E \mapsto \rho$ , i.e., **base rule**
- if  $\Sigma$  with predicate atoms, i.e., **inductive rule**, then
  - it has only one points-to from  $E$
  - it is **connected**

## Sorted Lists:

$$\mathit{list}(E, M) ::= E = \mathit{nil} \wedge \mathit{emp} \wedge M = \emptyset$$

$$\mathit{list}(E, M) ::= (\exists X, v, M_1. E \mapsto \{(\mathit{next}, X), (\mathit{data}, v)\} \star \mathit{list}(X, M_1) \\ \wedge v \leq M_1 \wedge M = M_1 \cup \{v\})$$

## Sorted Lists Segments:

$$\mathit{lseg}(E, M, F, M') ::= E = F \wedge \mathit{emp} \wedge M = M'$$

$$\mathit{lseg}(E, M, F, M') ::= \exists X, v, M_1. E \mapsto \{(\mathit{next}, X), (\mathit{data}, v)\} \star \mathit{lseg}(X, M_1, F, M') \\ \wedge v \leq M_1 \wedge M = M_1 \cup \{v\}$$



## Binary Search Trees:

$$bst(E, M) ::= E = \text{nil} \wedge \text{emp} \wedge M = \emptyset$$

$$bst(E, M) ::= \exists X, Y, M_1, M_2, v. E \mapsto \{(\text{left}, X), (\text{right}, Y), (\text{data}, v)\}$$

$$\star bst(X, M_1) \star bst(Y, M_2)$$

$$\wedge E \neq \text{nil} \wedge M = \{v\} \cup M_1 \cup M_2 \wedge M_1 < v < M_2$$

## Binary Search Trees Segments:

$$bsthole(E, M_1, F, M_2) ::= E = F \wedge \text{emp} \wedge M_1 = M_2,$$

$$bsthole(E, M_1, F, M_2) ::= \exists X, Y, M_3, M_4, v. E \mapsto \{(\text{left}, X), (\text{right}, Y), (\text{data}, v)\}$$

$$\star bst(X, M_3) \star bsthole(Y, F, M_4, M_2)$$

$$\wedge M_1 = \{v\} \cup M_3 \cup M_4 \wedge M_3 < v < M_4$$

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$$\star bsthole(X, F, M_3, M_2) \star bst(Y, M_4)$$

$$\wedge M_1 = \{v\} \cup M_3 \cup M_4 \wedge M_3 < v < M_4$$

## Syntactic Compositional P

$P(E, \vec{F})$  such that:

- ①  $(E, \vec{F}) \triangleq (\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi})$  with  $\vec{\alpha}$  are **source**,  $\vec{\beta}$  are **hole**, and  $\vec{\xi}$  are **border**.
- ② size (resp. types) of  $\vec{\alpha}$  and  $\vec{\beta}$  are (resp. position-wise) the same
- ③ **exactly one base rule** of the form

$$P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) ::= \bigwedge_i \alpha_i = \beta_i \wedge \text{emp}$$

- ④ **at least one recursive rule** of the form

$$P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) ::= \exists \vec{Z}. \Pi \wedge E \mapsto \rho \star \Sigma_r \star P(\vec{\gamma}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi})$$

with  $\Sigma_r$  contains only predicate atoms,  $\gamma \subseteq \vec{Z}$ , and **the variables in  $\vec{\beta}$  don't occur elsewhere**.

## Theorem (Composition Lemma)

If  $P$  is syntactic compositional then

$$(\exists \vec{\beta}. P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \star P(\vec{\beta}, \vec{\gamma}, \vec{\xi})) \implies P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\gamma}, \vec{\xi})$$

is a valid lemma

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is a valid lemma

Examples:

$$(\exists G, M_2. lseg(E, M, G, M_2) \star lseg(G, M_2, F, M_1)) \implies lseg(E, M, F, M_1)$$

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is a valid lemma

Examples:

$$(\exists G, M_2. bsthole(E, M, G, M_2) \star bsthole(G, M_2, F, M_1)) \implies bsthole(E, M, F, M_1)$$

## Syntactic Completive P and P'

Let  $P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi})$  and  $P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\xi})$  two inductive definitions with **same parameters**  $\vec{\alpha}$  and  $\vec{\xi}$ .

$P'$  is a **completion** of  $P$  with respect to a pair of constants  $\vec{c}$  if the rules of  $P'$  are obtained from the rules of  $P$  by setting  $\vec{\beta} = \vec{c}$ .

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## Examples:

- *list* a completion of *lseg* wrt  $\text{nil}, \emptyset$ ,
- *bst* a completion of *bsthole* wrt  $\text{nil}, \emptyset$

## Theorem (Completion Lemmas)

If  $P'$  is a completion of  $P$  wrt  $\vec{c}$  and  $P$  is syntactically compositional then the following lemmas are valid:

$$P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\xi}) \Leftrightarrow P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{c}, \vec{\xi})$$

and

$$\exists \vec{\beta}. P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \star P'(\vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \implies P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\xi})$$



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Examples:

$$\text{list}(E, M) \Leftrightarrow \text{lseg}(E, M, \text{nil}, \emptyset)$$

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and

$$\exists \vec{\beta}. P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \star P'(\vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \Longrightarrow P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\xi})$$

Examples:

$$\exists F, M_2. \text{bsthole}(E, M_1, F, M_2) \star \text{bst}(F, M_2) \Longrightarrow \text{bst}(E, M_1).$$

## Stronger Lemma

If  $P'$  is **stronger** than  $P$  and  $P$  **compositional**) then the following lemmas are valid:

$$P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \implies P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi})$$
$$\exists \vec{\beta}'. P'(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}', \vec{\xi}) \star P(\vec{\beta}', \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi}) \implies P(\vec{\alpha}, \vec{\beta}, \vec{\xi})$$

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## Examples:

- $bsthole_{\geq 0}$  is stronger than  $bsthole$

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## Examples:

- $bsthole_{\geq 0}$  is stronger than  $bsthole$

... and other lemmas.

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$$\varphi_1 \implies \exists \vec{X}. \varphi_2$$

- **Slice**  $\varphi_1$  in parts entailing **spatial atoms**  $A$  of  $\varphi_2$

$$(\varphi^A, \mathcal{C}_r^A, \mathcal{C}_g^A) \implies \exists \vec{X}. A$$

with  $\mathcal{C}_r^A$  assertions on  $\vec{X}$ ,  $\mathcal{C}_g^A$  constraints on shared vars,  
such that

$$\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge \mathcal{C}_r^A \implies \text{Pure}(\varphi_2) \wedge \mathcal{C}_g^A$$

- check that **slices are disjoint**

# MAIN PROCEDURE

```
1 Procedure slice( $\varphi_1, \exists \vec{X}. \varphi_2$ )
2   if  $|\text{Spatial}(\varphi_2)| > 1$  then
3     foreach spatial atom  $A$  of  $\text{Spatial}(\varphi_2)$  different from emp do
4        $(\varphi^A, C_r^A, C_g^A) \leftarrow \text{slice}(\varphi_1, \exists \vec{X}. A)$ ;
5       if  $\varphi^A = \perp$  then return  $\perp$ ;
6        $C_r \leftarrow \bigwedge_A C_r^A$ ;  $C_g \leftarrow \bigwedge_A C_g^A$ ;
7       if  $\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge C_r \models \text{Pure}(\varphi_2) \wedge C_g$  and  $\forall A, B. \varphi_A \bowtie \varphi_B$  then
8         return ( $\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge \star_A \varphi_A, C_r, C_g$ )
9   else
10     $(A, C_r, C_g) \leftarrow \text{matchAtom}(\varphi_1, \exists \vec{X}. \text{Spatial}(\varphi_2))$ ;
11    if  $A \neq \perp$  and  $\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge C_r \models \text{Pure}(\varphi_2) \wedge C_g$  then
12      return  $(A, C_r, C_g)$ 
13    else if  $A = \perp$  and  $\text{Spatial}(\varphi_2)$  is a points-to atom then return  $\perp$ ;
14    else if  $A = \perp$  and  $\text{Spatial}(\varphi_2)$  is a predicate atom, say  $P(E, \vec{F})$  then
15      foreach lemma  $L \triangleq \exists \vec{Z}. \Pi \wedge \Sigma \Rightarrow P(E, \vec{F})$  do
16         $(A_1, C_r, C_g) \leftarrow \text{matchAtom}(\varphi_1, \exists \vec{X} \exists \vec{Z}. \text{root}(L))$ ;
17        if  $A_1 \neq \perp$  then
18           $\exists \vec{Z}'. \Pi' \wedge \Sigma' \leftarrow \text{quantElmt}(\exists \vec{X} \exists \vec{Z}. \Pi \wedge (\Sigma \setminus \text{root}(L)), C_r)$ ;
19           $(\varphi, C_r', C_g') \leftarrow \text{slice}(\varphi_1 \setminus A_1, \exists \vec{Z}'. \Pi' \wedge \Sigma')$ ;
20          if  $\varphi \neq \perp$  and  $\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge C_r \wedge C_r' \wedge \Pi \models \text{Pure}(\varphi_2) \wedge C_g \wedge C_g'$ 
          then
21            return ( $\text{Pure}(\varphi_1) \wedge A_1 * \varphi, C_r \wedge C_r' \wedge \Pi, C_g \wedge C_g'$ );
22    return  $\perp$ 
```



$$\varphi_1 \implies \exists \vec{X}. \varphi_2$$

$$\varphi_1 ::= x_1 \neq \text{nil} \wedge x_2 \neq \text{nil} \wedge v_1 < v_2 \wedge x_1 \mapsto \{(\text{next}, x_2), (\text{data}, v_1)\}$$

$$\star x_2 \mapsto \{(\text{next}, \text{nil}), (\text{data}, v_2)\}$$

$$\varphi_2 ::= \exists M. \text{lseg}(x_1, M, \text{nil}, \emptyset) \wedge v_2 \in M$$

apply the inductive rule ...

$$\varphi_1 \implies \exists \vec{X}. \varphi_2$$

$$\varphi'_1 ::= x_1 \neq \text{nil} \wedge x_2 \neq \text{nil} \wedge v_1 < v_2 \wedge x_2 \mapsto \{(\text{next}, \text{nil}), (\text{data}, v_2)\}$$

$$\varphi'_2 ::= \exists M_1. \text{lseg}(x_2, M_1, \text{nil}, \emptyset) \wedge v_1 \leq M_1$$

apply the inductive rule ...

$$\varphi_1 \implies \exists \vec{X}. \varphi_2$$

$$\varphi_1'' ::= x_1 \neq \text{nil} \wedge x_2 \neq \text{nil} \wedge \text{emp}$$

$$\varphi_2'' ::= \exists M_1''. \text{lseg}(\text{nil}, M_1, \text{nil}, \emptyset) \wedge v_2 \leq M_1''$$

apply the basic rule and **check data constraints** on the return path!

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- Extension of SMTLIB theory for SL with Int and BagInt
- Generate lemma depending on ID
- Saturate the two formulas  $\longrightarrow$  data constraints
- Apply proof strategy
- Provide diagnosis
- Rely on Z3 for checking data constraints

Data structure	Procedure	#VC	Lemma (#b, #r, #p, #c, #d)	$\Rightarrow_{\mathbb{D}}$	Time (s)	
					Spent	Z3
sorted lists	search	4	(6, 8, 17, 3, 1)	6	0.10	0.05
	insert	8	(12, 18, 30, 12, 0)	20	0.33	0.10
	delete	4	(6, 10, 16, 6, 1)	10	0.15	0.05
BST	search	4	(9, 11, 27, 9, 1)	6	0.20	0.05
	insert	14	(18, 21, 33, 14, 0)	24	0.63	0.20
	delete	25	(30, 37, 106, 25, 0)	68	1.49	0.51
AVL	search	4	(10, 12, 17, 13, 1)	6	0.23	0.15
	insert	22	(20, 27, 66, 23, 0)	48	1.94	0.63
RBT	search	4	(9, 12, 27, 12, 1)	6	0.23	0.15
	insert	21	(32, 25, 126, 22, 10)	78	2.94	0.93

#b: base rules, #r: recursive rules, #p: exact matching,  
 #c: composition lemma, #d: other lemma  
 $\Rightarrow_{\mathbb{D}}$ : data entailments generated

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For shape only:

- CYCLIST [CADE'11]
- SLIDE [ATVA'14]
- SPEN [APLAS'14]

For singly linked lists:

- SLAD [ATVA'12] for SL + ArrayLogic
- Asterix [PLDI'11,APLAS'13] for SLL + length

For complex data structures:

- Sleek [NUS] → ad-hoc?
- DRYAD [PLDI'12] → no lemma generation