

ESC/Java2

Use and Features

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The ESC/Java2 tool

Structure of ESC/Java2

ESC/Java2 consists of a

- parsing phase (syntax checks),
- typechecking phase (type and usage checks),
- static checking phase (reasoning to find potential bugs) - runs a behind-the-scenes prover called Simplify

Parsing and typechecking produce **cautions** or **errors**.

Static checking produces **warnings**.

*The focus of ESC/Java2 is on static checking, but reports of bugs, unreported errors, confusing messages, documentation or behavior, and even just email about your application and degree of success are **Very Welcome**. [and Caution: this is still an **alpha** release]*

Running ESC/Java2

- Download the binary distribution from <http://secure.ucd.ie/products/opensource/ESCJava2>
- Untar the distribution and follow the instructions in **README.release** about setting environment variables.
- Run the tool by doing one of the following:
 - Run a script in the release: **escjava2** or **escj.bat**
 - Run the tool directly with **java -cp esctools2.jar escjava.Main**, but then you need to be sure to provide values for the **-simplify** and **-specs** options.
 - Run a GUI version of the tool by double-clicking the release version of **esctools2.jar**
 - Run a GUI version of the tool by executing it with **java -jar esctools2.jar** (in which case you can add options).

Supported platforms

ESC/Java2 is supported on

- **Linux**
- **MacOSX**
- **Cygwin on Windows**
- **Windows (but there are some environment issues still to be resolved)**
- **Solaris (in principle - we are not testing there)**

Note that the tool itself is relatively portable Java, but the underlying prover is a Modula-3 application that must be compiled and supplied for each platform.

Help with platform-dependence issues is welcome.

The application relies on the environment having

- a Simplify executable (such as `Simplify-1.5.4.macosx`) for your platform, typically in the same directory as the application's jar file;
- the `SIMPLIFY` environment variable set to the name of the executable for this platform;
- a set of specifications for Java system files - by default these are bundled into the application jar file, but they are also in `jmlspecs.jar`.
- The scripts prefer that the variable `ESCTOOLS_RELEASE` be set to the directory containing the release.

Command-line options

The items on the command-line are either options and their arguments or input entries. Some commonly used options (see the documentation for more):

- **-help** - prints a usage message
- **-quiet** - turns off informational messages (e.g. progress messages)
- **-nowarn** - turns off a warning
- **-classpath** - sets the path to find referenced classes [best if it contains '.']
- **-specs** - sets the path to library specification files
- **-simplify** - provides the path to the simplify executable
- **-f** - the argument is a file containing command-line arguments
- **-nocheck** - parse and typecheck but no verification
- **-routine** - restricts checking to a single routine
- **-eajava, -eajml** - enables checking of Java assertions
- **-counterexample** - gives detailed information about a warning

Input entries

The input entries on the command-line are those classes that are actually checked. Many other classes may be referenced for class definitions or specifications - these are found on the classpath (or sourcepath or specspath).

- **file names** - of java or specification files (relative to the current directory)
- **directories** - processes all java or specification files (relative to the current directory)
- **package** - (fully qualified name) - found on the classpath
- **class** - (fully qualified name) - found on the classpath
- **list** - (prefaced by **-list**) - a file containing input entries

Specification files

- Specifications may be added directly to `.java` files
- Specifications may alternatively be added to specification files.
 - No method bodies
 - No field initializers
 - Recommended suffix: `.refines-java`
 - Recommend a `refines` annotation (see documentation)
 - Must also be on the classpath

Specification file example

```
package java.lang;
import java.lang.reflect.*;
import java.io.InputStream;

public final class Class implements java.io.Serializable {

    private Class();

    /*@ also public normal_behavior
       @   ensures \result != null && !\result.equals("")
       @       && (* \result is the name of this class object *);
       @*/
    public /*@ pure @*/ String toString();

    ....
}
```

Bag demo

ESC/Java2 reasons about every method individually. So in

```
class A{
  byte[] b;
  public void n() { b = new byte[20]; }
  public void m() { n();
                   b[0] = 2;
                   ... }
}
```

ESC/Java2 warns that `b[0]` may be a null dereference here, even though you can see that it won't be.

To stop ESC/Java2 complaining: add a postcondition

```
class A{
  byte[] b;
  //@ ensures b != null && b.length = 20;
  public void n() { b = new byte[20]; }
  public void m() { n();
                   b[0] = 2;
                   ... }
}
```

So: property of method that is relied on has to be made explicit.

Also: subclasses that override methods have to preserve these.

Similarly, ESC/Java will complain about `b[0] = 2` in

```
class A{
  byte[] b;
  public void A() { b = new byte[20]; }
  public void m() { b[0] = 2;
                  ... }
}
```

Maybe you can see that this is a spurious warning, though this will be harder than in the previous example: you'll have to inspect *all* constructors and *all* methods.

To stop ESC/Java2 complaining here: add an invariant

```
class A{
  byte[] b;
  //@ invariant b != null && b.length == 20;
  // or weaker property for b.length ?
  public void A() { b = new byte[20]; }
  public void m() { b[0] = 2;
                  ... }
}
```

So again: properties you rely on have to be made explicit.

And again: subclasses have to preserve these properties.

Alternative to stop ESC/Java2 complaining: add an assumption:

```
...  
//@ assume b != null && b.length > 0;  
b[0] = 2;  
...
```

Especially useful during development, when you're still trying to discover hidden assumptions, or when ESC/Java2's reasoning power is too weak.

(requires can be understood as a form of assume.)

need for assignable clauses

```
class A{  
  byte[] b;  
  ...  
  public void m() { ...  
    b = new byte[3];  
    //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok!  
    o.n(...);  
    //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok?  
    ...  
  }  
}
```

What does ESC/Java need to know about `o.n` to check the second assert ?

need for assignable clauses

```
class A{
  byte[] b;
  ...
  public void m() { ...
    b = new byte[3];
    //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok!
    o.n(b);
    //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok?
    ...
  }
```

A detailed spec for `o.n` might give a postcondition saying that `b[0]` is still 0.

need for assignable clauses

```
class A{  
    byte[] b;  
    ...  
    public void m() { ...  
        b = new byte[3];  
        //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok!  
        o.n();  
        //@ assert b[0] == 0; // ok?  
        ...  
    }  
}
```

If the postcondition of `o.n` doesn't tell us `b` won't be not null – and can't be expected to – we need the assignable clause to tell us that `o.n` won't affect `b[0]`.

Declaring `o.n` as pure would solve the problem.

ESC/Java is not complete

ESC/Java may produce warnings about correct programs.

```
/*@ requires 0 < n;  
   @ ensures \result ==  
   @         (\exists int x,y,z;  
   @         pow(x,n)+pow(y,n) == pow(z,n));  
   @*/  
public static boolean fermat(double n) {  
    return (n==2);  
}
```

Warning: *postcondition possibly not satisfied*
(Typically, the theorem prover times out in complicated cases.)

ESC/Java is not sound

ESC/Java may fail to produce warning about incorrect program.

```
public class Positive{
    private int n = 1;    //@ invariant n > 0;

    public void increase(){ n++; }
}
```

ESC/Java(2) produces no warning, but `increase` may break the invariant, namely if `n` is $2^{32} - 1$.

This can be fixed by improved model of Java arithmetic, but this does come at a price (both in specs and in code).

ESC/Java is not sound

More fundamental problem: **sound modular verification for OO programs with invariants.**

```
public class A{  
    B b;  
    int x;  
    //@ invariant x <= b.y;  
    void decr_x() {  
        x--; }  
}
```

```
public class B{  
    int y;  
    void decr_y() {  
        y--; }  
}
```

How can we know that invoking `decr_y` on some `B` won't break the invariant of some `A`, or some object whose invariant depends on a `B` object.

ESC/Java is not sound

```
public class A{  
    B b;  
    int x;  
    //@ invariant x <= b.y;  
    void decr_x(){x++;}  
}
```

```
public class B{  
  
    int y;  
  
    void incr_y(){y++;}
```

```
public class D{  
    B b;  
    void decr_y(){  
        b.y--; }  
}
```

How can D know it might be breaking A's invariant?

Modularity problem

Modular verification for (open) OO programs with invariants is a big & fundamental problem. Most verification tools fail here. Root causes:

- 1. invariants talking about another object's fields**
- 2. object modifying another object's field**
- 3. possibility of **aliasing****

NB 1 & 2 are unavoidable, eg. think of an object modifying – or its invariant mentioning – the contents of an array field

Alias control and ownership might provide solutions, eg. universes by Peter Müller & co or explicit pack/unpack operations by Rustan Leino & co.