MGS 2005
Functional Reactive Programming
Lecture 3: Dynamic System Structure

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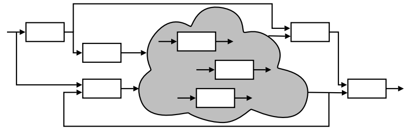
Outline

- Describing systems with highly dynamic structure: a generalized `switch`-construct.
- Example: Space Invaders

Highly dynamic system structure?

The basic switch allows one signal function to be replaced by another.

- What about more general structural changes?



- What about state?

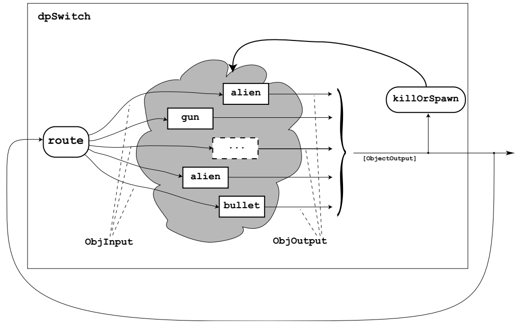
The challenge

George Russel said on the Haskell GUI list:

> “I have to say I’m very sceptical about things like Fruit which rely on reactive animation, ever since I set our students an exercise implementing a simple space-invaders game in such a system, and had no end of a job producing an example solution. . . . My suspicion is that reactive animation works very nicely for the examples constructed by reactive animation folk, but not for my examples.”

Example: Space Invaders

Overall game structure

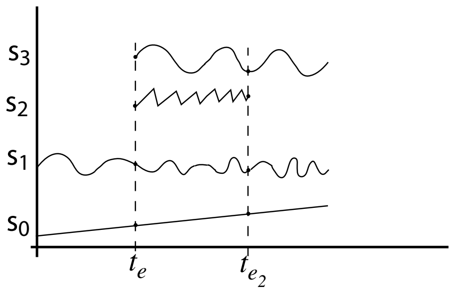


Dynamic signal function collections

Idea:

- Switch over ***collections*** of signal functions.
- On event, “freeze” running signal functions into collection of signal function ***continuations***, preserving encapsulated ***state***.
- Modify collection as needed and switch back in.

Dynamic signal function collections



`dpSwitch`

Need ability to express:

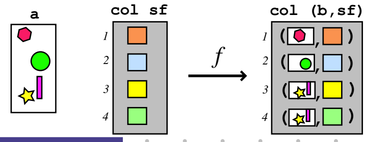
- How input routed to each signal function.
- When collection changes shape.
- How collection changes shape.

```
dpSwitch :: Functor col =>
   (forall sf . (a -> col sf -> col (b,sf)))
   -> col (SF b c)
   -> SF (a, col c) (Event d)
   -> (col (SF b c) -> d -> SF a (col c))
   -> SF a (col c)
```

Routing

Idea:

- The routing function decides which parts of the input to pass to each running signal function instance.
- It achieves this by pairing a projection of the input with each running instance:



The routing function type

Universal quantification over the collection members:

```
Functor col =>
  (forall sf . (a -> col sf -> col (b,sf)))
```

Collection members thus ***opaque***:

- Ensures only signal function instances from argument can be returned.
- Unfortunately, does not prevent duplication or discarding of signal function instances.

The game core

```
gameCore :: IL Object
            -> SF (GameInput, IL ObjOutput)
                  (IL ObjOutput)
gameCore objs =
  dpSwitch route
           objs
           (arr killOrSpawn >>> notYet)
           (\sfs' f -> gameCore (f sfs'))
```


Describing the alien behavior (1)

```
type Object = SF ObjInput ObjOutput

alien :: RandomGen g =>
  g -> Position2 -> Velocity -> Object
alien g p0 vyd = proc oi -> do
  rec
    -- Pick a desired horizontal position
    rx   <- noiseR (xMin, xMax) g -< ()
    smpl <- occasionally g 5 ()   -< ()
    xd   <- hold (point2X p0) -< smpl `tag` rx
    ...
```


Describing the alien behavior (2)

```
...
-- Controller
let axd = 5 * (xd - point2X p)
          - 3 * (vector2X v)
    ayd = 20 * (vyd - (vector2Y v))
    ad  = vector2 axd ayd
    h   = vector2Theta ad
...
```


Describing the alien behavior (3)

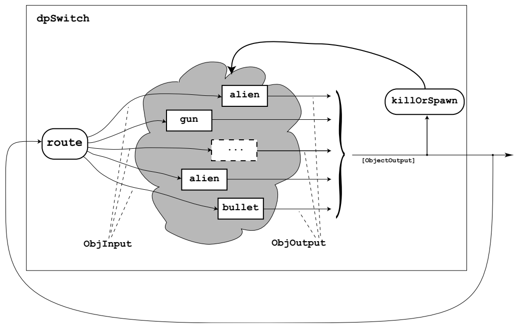
```
...
-- Physics
let a = vector2Polar
            (min alienAccMax
                 (vector2Rho ad))
            h
vp  <- iPre v0    -< v
ffi <- forceField -< (p, vp)
v   <- (v0 ^+^) ^<< impulseIntegral
      -< (gravity ^+^ a, ffi)
p   <- (p0 .+^) ^<< integral -< v
...
```


Describing the alien behavior (4)

```
    ...
    -- Shields
    sl  <- shield -< oiHit oi
    die <- edge   -< sl <= 0

  returnA -< ObjOutput {
               ooObsObjState = oosAlien p h v,
               ooKillReq     = die,
               ooSpawnReq    = noEvent
             }
  where
    v0 = zeroVector
```


Recap: Overall game structure



Closing the feedback loop (1)

```
game :: RandomGen g =>
  g -> Int -> Velocity -> Score ->
  SF GameInput ((Int, [ObsObjState]),
                Event (Either Score Score))
game g nAliens vydAlien score0 = proc gi -> do
  rec
    oos <- gameCore objs0 -< (gi, oos)
  score    <- accumHold score0
                 -< aliensDied oos
  gameOver <- edge -< alienLanded oos
  newRound <- edge -< noAliensLeft oos
  ...
```

Closing the feedback loop (2)

```
...
returnA -< ((score,
             map ooObsObjState
                 (elemsIL oos)),
            (newRound ‘tag‘ (Left score))
            ‘lMerge‘ (gameOver
                      ‘tag‘ (Right score)))
where
  objs0 =
    listToIL
      (gun (Point2 0 50)
       : mkAliens g (xMin+d) 900 nAliens)
```


Other functional approaches?

Transition function operating on world model with explicit state (e.g. Asteroids by Lüth):

- Model snapshot of world with ***all*** state components.
- Transition function takes input and current world snapshot to output and the next world snapshot.

One could also use this technique ***within*** Yampa to avoid switching over dynamic collections.

Why use Yampa, then?

- Yampa provides a lot of functionality for programming with time-varying values:
  - Captures common patterns.
  - Carefully designed to facilitate reuse.
- Yampa allows state to be nicely encapsulated by signal functions:
  - Avoids keeping track of all state globally.
  - Adding more state usually does not imply any major changes to type or code structure.

State in `alien`

Each of the following signal functions used in `alien` encapsulate state:

- `noiseR`
- `occasionally`
- `hold`
- `iPre`
- `forceField`
- `impulseIntegral`
- `integral`
- `shield`
- `edge`

Why not imperative, then?

If state is so important, why not stick to imperative/object-oriented programming where we have “state for free”?

- Advantages of declarative programming retained:
  - High abstraction level.
  - Referential transparency, algebraic laws: formal reasoning ought to be simpler.
- Synchronous approach avoids “event-call-back soup”, meaning robust, easy-to-understand semantics.

Yet some more reading

- Henrik Nilsson, Antony Courtney, and John Peterson. Functional reactive programming, continued. In *Proceedings of the 2002 Haskell Workshop*, pp. 51–64, October 2002.
- Antony Courtney and Henrik Nilsson and John Peterson. The Yampa Arcade. In *Proceedings of the 2003 Haskell Workshop*, pp. 7–18, August 2003.

Obtaining Slides and Yampa

The lecture slides will be available from:
`http://www.cs.nott.ac.uk/~nhn`

Yampa 0.92 is available from

`http://www.haskell.org/yampa`