Remote Method Invocation

Part 1: Alternate RPCs Models

Part 2: Remote Method Invocation (RMI)
- Design issues

Part 3: RMI and RPC Implementation and Examples

Lightweight RPCs

- Many RPCs occur between client and server on same machine
  - Need to optimize RPCs for this special case => use a lightweight RPC mechanism (LRPC)
- Server $S$ exports interface to remote procedures
- Client $C$ on same machine imports interface
- OS kernel creates data structures including an argument stack shared between $S$ and $C$
Lightweight RPCs

• RPC execution
  – Push arguments onto stack
  – Trap to kernel
  – Kernel changes mem map of client to server address space
  – Client thread executes procedure (OS upcall)
  – Thread traps to kernel upon completion
  – Kernel changes the address space back and returns control to client
• Called “doors” in Solaris
• Which RPC to use? - run-time bit allows stub to choose between LRPC and RPC

Other RPC Models

• Asynchronous RPC
  – Request-reply behavior often not needed
  – Server can reply as soon as request is received and execute procedure later
• Deferred-synchronous RPC
  – Use two asynchronous RPCs
  – Client needs a reply but can’t wait for it; server sends reply via another asynchronous RPC
• One-way RPC
  – Client does not even wait for an ACK from the server
  – Limitation: reliability not guaranteed (Client does not know if procedure was executed by the server).
Asynchronous RPC

- The interconnection between client and server in a traditional RPC
- The interaction using asynchronous RPC

Deferred Synchronous RPC

- A client and server interacting through two asynchronous RPCs
Part 2: Remote Method Invocation (RMI)

- RPCs applied to objects, i.e., instances of a class
  - Class: object-oriented abstraction; module with data and operations
  - Separation between interface and implementation
  - Interface resides on one machine, implementation on another
- RMIs support system-wide object references
  - Parameters can be object references

Distributed Objects

- When a client binds to a distributed object, load the interface (“proxy”) into client address space
  - Proxy analogous to stubs
- Server stub is referred to as a skeleton
Proxies and Skeletons

• Proxy: client stub
  – Maintains server ID, endpoint, object ID
  – Sets up and tears down connection with the server
  – [Java:] does serialization of local object parameters
  – In practice, can be downloaded/constructed on the fly (why can’t this be done for RPCs in general?)

• Skeleton: server stub
  – Does deserialization and passes parameters to server and sends result to proxy

A. Example with implicit binding using only global references

```c
Distr_object* obj_ref; //Declare a systemwide object reference
obj_ref = ...;        // Initialize the reference to a distributed object
obj_ref-> do_something(); // Implicitly bind and invoke a method
```

B. Example with explicit binding using global and local references

```c
Distr_object obj_ref; //Declare a systemwide object reference
Local_object* obj_ptr; //Declare a pointer to local objects
obj_ref = ...;        //Initialize the reference to a distributed object
obj_ptr = bind(obj_ref); //Explicitly bind and obtain a pointer to the local proxy
obj_ptr -> do_something(); //Invoke a method on the local proxy
```

A. Example with implicit binding using only global references
B. Example with explicit binding using global and local references
Parameter Passing

- Less restrictive than RPCs.
  - Supports system-wide object references
  - [Java] pass local objects by value, pass remote objects by reference
  - Local objects: all normal classes; Remote objects: classes with RMIs (UnicastRemoteObject)

Part 3: Implementation & Examples

- Java RMI
- C RPC
- Python Remote Objects (PyRO)
- gRPC
Java RMI

• Server
  – Defines interface and implements interface methods
  – Server program
    • Creates server object and registers object with "remote object" registry

• Client
  – Looks up server in remote object registry
  – Uses normal method call syntax for remote methods

• Java tools
  – Rmiregistry: server-side name server

Java RMI Example

```java
package example.hello;

import java.rmi.Remote;
import java.rmi.RemoteException;

public interface Hello extends Remote {
    String sayHello() throws RemoteException;
}

Server

try {
    Server obj = new Server();
    Hello stub = (Hello) UnicastRemoteObject.exportObject(obj, 0);

    // Bind the remote object's stub in the registry
    Registry registry = LocateRegistry.getRegistry();
    registry.bind("Hello", stub);

    System.err.println("Server ready");
} catch (Exception e) {
    System.err.println("Server exception: "+ e.toString());
    e.printStackTrace();
}

Client

String host = (args.length < 1) ? null : args[0];
try {
    Registry registry = LocateRegistry.getRegistry(host);
    Hello stub = (Hello) registry.lookup("Hello");
    String response = stub.sayHello();
    System.out.println("response: "+ response);
} catch (Exception e) {
    System.err.println("Client exception: "+ e.toString());
    e.printStackTrace();
}
```

Java RMI and Synchronization

- Java supports Monitors: synchronized objects
  - Serializes accesses to objects
  - How does this work for remote objects?
- Options: block at the client or the server
- Block at server
  - Can synchronize across multiple proxies
  - Problem: what if the client crashes while blocked?
- Block at proxy
  - Need to synchronize clients at different machines
  - Explicit distributed locking necessary
- Java uses proxies for blocking
  - No protection for simultaneous access from different clients
  - Applications need to implement distributed locking

C/C++ RPC

- Uses rpcgen compiler to generate stub code; link with server and client C code

- Q_xdr.c: do XDR conversion
- Sample code in lablet
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Binder: Port Mapper

- Server start-up: create port
- Server stub calls `svc_register` to register prog. #, version # with local port mapper
- Port mapper stores prog #, version #, and port
- Client start-up: call `clnt_create` to locate server port
- Upon return, client can call procedures at the server

Python Remote Objects (PyRO)

```python
import Pyro5.api

@Pyro5.api.expose
class GreetingMaker(object):
    def get_fortune(self, name):
        return "Hello, {}! Here is your fortune message:
        ""{}"
        "Behold the warranty -- the bold print giveth and the fine print taketh away.".format(name)

daemon = Pyro5.api.Daemon()  # make a Pyro daemon
uri = daemon.register(GreetingMaker)  # register the greeting maker as a Pyro object

print("Ready. Object uri =", uri)
daemon.requestLoop()  # print the uri so we can use it in the client later
# start the event loop of the server to wait for calls

$ python greeting-server.py
Ready. Object uri = PYRO:obj_fbf1d6f83e49728b4bf89b9466965d5@localhost:35845

import Pyro5.api

uri = input("What is the Pyro uri of the greeting object? ").strip()
name = input("What is your name? ").strip()

greeting_maker = Pyro5.api.Proxy(uri)  # get a Pyro proxy to the greeting object
print(greeting_maker.get_fortune(name))  # call method normally

uri = daemon.register(GreetingMaker)  # register the greeting maker as a Pyro object
ns.register("example.greeting", uri)  # register the object with a name in the name server

greeting_maker = Pyro5.api.Proxy("PYRONAME:example.greeting")  # use name server object lookup uri
```

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gRPC

• Google’s RPC platform: now available to all developers
  – Modern, high-performance framework
  – designed for cloud apps
• Works across OS, hardware and languages
• Supports python, java, C++, C#, Go, Swift, Node.js, ….
• Uses http/2 as transport protocol
• ProtoBuf for serializing structured messages

Protocol Buffers (ProtoBuf)

• Allow message structure to be defined for communication
  – Platform-independent; marshalling/serialization built-in
• Define message structure in .proto file

```protobuf
message SearchRequest {
  required string query = 1;
  optional int32 page_number = 2;
  optional int32 result_per_page = 3;
}
```

• Use protocol compiler protoc to generate classes
  – Classes provide methods to access fields and serialize / parse from raw bytes e.g., set_page_number()
  – Like JSON, but binary and more compact
  – https://developers.google.com/protocol-buffers
gRPC Example

• Define gRPCs in proto file with RPC methods
  – params and returns are protoBud messages;

```protobuf
// The greeter service definition.
service Greeter {
  // Sends a greeting
  rpc SayHello (HelloRequest) returns (HelloReply) {};
}

// The request message containing the user's name.
message HelloRequest {
  string name = 1;
}

// The response message containing the greetings
message HelloReply {
  string message = 1;
}
```

– use protoc to compile and get client stub code in preferred language
– gRPC server on server side

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gRPC Features

• Four types of RPCs supported
  – Unary RPC, server streaming, client streaming, bi-directional
  – Unary RPC sends single response message, streaming can send any number of messages

```protobuf
rpc LotsOfReplies(HelloRequest) returns (stream HelloResponse);
rpc LotsOfGreetings(stream HelloRequest) returns (HelloResponse);
```

• Supports synchronous and asynchronous calls
• Deadlines/timeouts: client specifies timeout, server cn query to figure out how much time is left to produce reply
• Cancel RPC: server or client can cancel rpc to terminate it