A Primer on Testing Database-Driven Applications

Gregory M. Kapfhammer
Department of Computer Science
Allegheny College

3rd Biennial Intramural Faculty Conference
May 18 - 19, 2004
Outline

- Introduction and Motivation
- Testing Challenges
- Database-Driven Applications
- A Unified Representation
- Test Adequacy Criteria
- Test Suite Execution
- Test Coverage Monitoring
- Conclusions and Resources
Thus spake the master, “Any program, no matter how small, contains bugs.”

The novice did not believe the master’s words. “What if the program were so small that it performed a single function?”

The master thoughtfully responded, “Such a program would have no meaning. But, if such a one existed, the operating system would fail eventually, producing a bug.”
But the novice was not satisfied. “What if the operating system did not fail?”

The master responded, “There is no operating system that does not fail. But if such a one existed, the hardware would fail eventually, producing a bug.”

The novice still was not satisfied. “What if the hardware did not fail?”
Invocation

The master gave a great sigh. “There is no hardware that does not fail. But if such a one existed, the user would want the program to do something different, and this too is a bug.”

A program without bugs would be an absurdity, a nonesuch. If there were a program without any bugs then the world would cease to exist.

Geoffrey James

The Zen of Programming

(Adaptation)
The programming language compiler produces a representation of a program that can be executed.
The virtual machine executes the program’s byte codes
I shall not deny that the construction of these testing programs has been a major intellectual effort: to convince oneself that one has not overlooked “a relevant state” and to convince oneself that the testing programs generate them all is no simple matter. The encouraging thing is that (as far as we know!) it could be done.

Edsger W. Dijkstra, 1968
Motivation

The Risks Digest, Volume 22, Issue 64, 2003

**Jeppesen reports airspace boundary problems**

About 350 airspace boundaries contained in Jeppesen NavData are incorrect, the FAA has warned. The error occurred at Jeppesen after a software upgrade when information was pulled from a database containing 20,000 airspace boundaries worldwide for the March NavData update, which takes effect March 20.
More Testing Challenges

- Should consider the environment in which software applications execute
- Must test a program and its interaction with a database
- Database-driven application’s state space is well-structured, but infinite (Chays et al.)
- Need to show program does not violate database integrity, where integrity = consistency + validity (Motro)
- Must locate program and database coupling points that vary in granularity
Database-Driven Applications

Program $P$ interacts with two relational databases
A program can interact with a database at different levels of granularity.
Database Interaction Levels

A program can interact with a database at different levels of granularity:

1. **Relation Level**
2. **Module Level**
3. **Application Level**
4. **Database Level**

### UserInfo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>card_number</th>
<th>pin_number</th>
<th>user_name</th>
<th>acct_lock</th>
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Record Level
Database Interaction Levels

A program can interact with a database at different levels of granularity:

- P
- D1
- Dn

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Attribute Level
Database Interaction Levels

A program can interact with a database at different levels of granularity.

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Attribute Value Level
Database Interaction Points

\[
\text{select } A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_q \\
\text{from } r_1, r_2, \ldots, r_m \\
\text{where } Q
\]
\[
\text{delete from } r \\
\text{where } Q
\]
\[
\text{insert into } r(A_1, A_2, \ldots, A_q) \\
\text{values}(v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_q)
\]
\[
\text{update } r \\
\text{set } A_l = F(A_l) \\
\text{where } Q
\]
$\text{select } * \text{ from } R_1$

where $A < (\text{select } \text{avg}(G) \text{ from } R_2)$

$\text{update } R_3$

set $J = 500$

$\text{where } L < 1000$
Data Flow Information

- **Interaction point:** `UPDATE UserInfo SET acct_lock=1 WHERE card_number='' + card_number + '';`
  - **Database Level:** `define(BankDB)`
  - **Attribute Level:** `define(acct_lock)` and `use(card_number)`
- Data flow information varies with respect to the granularity of the database interaction
Test Adequacy Criteria

- Database interaction association (DIA) involves the def and use of a database entity
- DIA can be located in the DICFG with data flow analysis
- all-database-DUs requires tests to exercise all DIAs for all of the accessed databases
Generating Test Requirements

Database Seeder → Database

System Under Test ($P$) → Test Adequacy Criterion ($C$)

Relational Schema

Test Case Specification

Test Requirements
DIA coverage can be tracked by recording which DIGs within a DICFG were executed during testing.
Types of Test Suites

- **Independent**
  - $T_I$
  - $\Delta_0$
  - $m_I$
  - $\Delta_I$
  - $\Delta_{e-1}$
  - $T_e$
  - $m_e$
  - $\Delta_e$

- **Partially Independent**
  - $T_I$
  - $\Delta_0$
  - $m_I$
  - $\Delta_I$
  - $\Delta_{e-1}$
  - $T_e$
  - $m_e$
  - $\Delta_e$

- **Non-restricted**
  - $T_I$
  - $\Delta_0$
  - $m_I$
  - $\Delta_I$
  - $\Delta_{e-1}$
  - $T_e$
  - $m_e$
  - $\Delta_e$
Calculating Adequacy

\[ T_f \]

\[ m_i \]

\[ m_j \]

**Test Requirements \( M_i \)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DIA</th>
<th>COV?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e1),\text{use}(e1)&gt;)</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e2),\text{use}(e2)&gt;)</td>
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<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e3),\text{use}(e3)&gt;)</td>
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<tr>
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**Test Requirements \( M_j \)**

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<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e6),\text{use}(e6)&gt;)</td>
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<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e7),\text{use}(e7)&gt;)</td>
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<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e8),\text{use}(e8)&gt;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e9),\text{use}(e9)&gt;)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>(&lt;\text{def}(e10),\text{use}(e10)&gt;)</td>
<td>✔</td>
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\[ \text{cov}(m_i) = \frac{2}{4} \quad \text{cov}(m_j) = \frac{4}{6} \quad \text{cov}(T_f) = \frac{6}{10} \]
Conclusions

- Software testing is hard, especially when interaction with the application’s environment is considered.
- Must test the program’s interaction with the database.
- Many challenges associated with (1) unified program representation, (2) test adequacy criteria, (3) test coverage monitoring, (4) test suite execution.
- Unique family of test adequacy criteria to ensure that test suites detect violations of database validity and completeness.
Resources


http://cs.allegheny.edu/~gkapfham/research/diatoms/