JADE: Java Agent DEvelopment Framework
Advanced 2.0

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Academic Year 2015/2016
1. Directory Facilitator

2. FIPA Interaction Protocols in JADE

3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
All the material presented in these slides is rearranged by the author from a collection of documents kindly made available by the JADE team.

Credits for all the stuff (text & images) go to the JADE team, in particular to Giovanni Caire.

Credits for all the mistakes go to the author.
Outline

1. Directory Facilitator
   - API
   - Syntax
   - Usage

2. FIPA Interaction Protocols in JADE
   - Achieve Rational Effect
   - Contract Net
   - More On Responders

3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
Recap

What we already know

By default, a singleton Directory Facilitator (DF) exists for each JADE platform, which:

- provides the yellow pages service by keeping track of published services provided by advertising agents—be them local or remote.
- should be explicitly contacted by JADE agents who wish to advertise their capabilities—both to submit an advertisement and to remove it.
- can support the publish/subscribe pattern by offering a notification service.
- can be federated with other DFs to implement a truly distributed yellow pages service.
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What's new

The DF service is implemented as a JADE agent – pretty much as the AMS is – in class `jade.domain.DFService`

! being JADE DF FIPA-compliant, *all interactions with the DF must follow FIPA’s standards:*

→ interaction protocols taken from package `jade.proto`
→ `ACL` messages must adhere to the `FIPAManagementVocabulary` (ontology) in package `jade.domain.FIPAAgentManagement`
→ `ACL` messages content must adhere to the `SLOVocabulary` in package `jade.content.lang.sl`

...
JADE helps us

- static methods are provided to automatically build *semantically-correct ACL* messages:
  - `createRequestMessage()` to request the execution of a fipa-agent-management ontology action by the DF
  - `createSubscriptionMessage()` to request subscription for a given `DFAgentDescription` template
  - `decodeResult()` to process the content of the final message received as a result of `search()` operation
  - `decodeNotification()` to process the content of a notification message received as a consequence of a previous subscription

...
JADE helps us even more

- to ease developer’s work, a set of static methods embedding such interaction protocols are provided by class DFService
  - register() called by an agent wishing to advertise a service
  - deregister() called by an agent who no longer offers a previously advertised service
  - search() called by client agents looking for a service to exploit

! be careful ’cause all these methods are **blocking calls**, therefore **every activity of the agent is suspended** until success or failure of the call
  → if you need **asynchronous** interactions, go for the FIPA protocols approach
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   - Usage

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3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
The DFAgentDescription class (DFD)

The DFD is an entry in the DF, thus must contain (at least):

- the agent ID
- the set of services the agent wishes to advertise, in the form of ServiceDescription
- the set of ontologies, protocols and languages the agent is able to support/understand
The ServiceDescription class (SD)

The SD is a descriptor of the service the agent wishes to publish to the DF, thus must contain (at least):

- the service *name*
- the service *type*
- the set of *ontologies* and *languages* whose knowledge is required to exploit the service
- a number of *service-specific* properties
DF Entries Syntax III

```
DFAgentDescription {
    Name: AID (mandatory)
    Protocols: set of strings
    Ontologies: set of strings
    Languages: set of strings
    Services {
        Name: String (mandatory)
        Type: String (mandatory)
        Protocols: set of strings
        Ontologies: set of strings
        Languages: set of strings
        Properties: {
            Name: String
            Value: String
        }
    }
}
```

**Figure:** Pseudo-code view of a DF entry
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4 JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
DF APIs Usage I

- A1: Publish provided services
- A2: - serviceZ
- A3: - serviceW
  - serviceK
  - serviceH
- A4: Search for agents providing the required services
- A5: Exploit required service
- A6: - serviceX
  - serviceY

Yellow Pages service
Registering to the DF

1. Instantiate a `DFAgentDescription` object
   - `DFAgentDescription dfd = new DFAgentDescription();`

2. Fill in (at least) its `Name` field with the advertising agent AID
   - `dfd.setName(getAID());`

3. Instantiate a `ServiceDescription` object
   - `ServiceDescription sd = new ServiceDescription();`

4. Fill in (at least) its `Name` and `Type` fields with meaningful strings
   - `sd.setType("buyer");`
   - `sd.setName("online trad");`

5. Add the `ServiceDescription` to the `DFAgentDescription`
   - `dfd.addServices(sd);`

6. Call `DFService.register(this, dfd);`
**Deregistering from the DF**

Since dead agent’s AIDs are automatically removed *solely from the AMS*, it is a good practice to deregister agents upon death:

- A good place where to do this is in `takeDown()` callback method
  \[\rightarrow \text{DFService.deregister(this);}\]

! Keep in mind that each agent is allowed *only one entry* in the DF:

  \[\rightarrow \text{each attempt to register an already registered agent throws an exception}\]
“Client” agents may query the DF to know if any agents offer the services they are looking for and then acquire their AIDs:

1. create a DFD (with no AID, obviously...) filling its fields with the properties you look for
   
   → DFAgentDescription dfd = new DFAgentDescription();
   ServiceDescription sd = new ServiceDescription();
   sd.setType("buyer");
   dfd.addServices(sd);

2. specify as SearchConstraints that you want to get all the agents offering the service (skip this if you need only one)
   
   → SearchConstraints all = new SearchConstraints();
   all.setMaxResults(new Long(-1));

...
Browsing the DF II

1. launch the searching process (skip last parameter if skipped previous point)
   → DFAgentDescription[] result = DFService.search(this, dfd, all);

2. extract the AID(s) from the results set
   → AID[] providers = new AID[result.length];
   for (int i = 0; i < result.length; i++) {
       providers[i] = results[i].getName();
   }

Check the `ds.lab.jade.bookTrading` example for the whole code.
Directory Facilitator

DF APIs Usage VI

Subscribing to the DF I

**JADE** agents can ask the DF to **notify** them *as soon as* a given service is advertised:

1. as usual, create a DFD suited for the service you wish to be notified about...
   
   → DFAgentDescription dfd = new DFAgentDescription();
   ServiceDescription sd = new ServiceDescription();
   sd.setType(...);
   dfd.addServices(sd);

2. ...configure your chosen **SearchConstraints** (if you please)...
   
   → SearchConstraints sc = new SearchConstraints();
   sc.setMaxResults(new Long(1));

...
Subscribing to the DF II

1. ...then, perform your subscription

   → send(
       DFService.createSubscriptionMessage(this, getDefaultDF(), dfd, sc)
   );

Now the DF will send an `ACLMessage.INFORM` to the subscribed agent *whenever* an agent matching the supplied description registers.
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**FIPA definition**

“Predefined sequences of messages that can be reused in different domains to implement a given interaction”—some kind of “design pattern” for communications

**The jade.proto package**

jade.proto contains behaviours implementing both the initiator and responder roles in most common interaction protocols

- managing the flow of messages and checking that it is consistent to the protocol
- providing callback methods that can be overridden to take the necessary actions when a message is received
(Some) Protocol classes I

**AchieveRE[Initiator/Responder]** factorization of all the FIPA Request-like interaction protocols\(^a\), that is, those in which the initiator aims to achieve a RE (Rational Effect) and needs to verify if it has been achieved or not.

**ContractNet[Initiator/Responder]** allows the initiator to send a Call for Proposal to a set of responders, evaluate their proposals and then accept the preferred one (or even reject all of them).

\(^a\)such as FIPA-Request, FIPA-query, FIPA-Request-When, FIPA-recruiting, FIPA-brokering.
Propose[Initiator/Responder] allows the initiator to send a PROPOSE message to the participants indicating *its will to perform some action if they agrees*. The participants responds by either accepting or rejecting such proposal, then the initiator either carries out the action or not accordingly.

Subscription[Initiator/Responder] allows the initiator to *subscribe* to a target agent for certain kind of events. If the participant agrees, it communicates all content *matching the subscription condition* using an INFORM–RESULT.

... please refer to JADE APIs for the others
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4. Jade Agents Mobility
   - API
Figure: FIPA AchieveRE protocol message flow
**AchieveRE II**

**AchieveREInitiator**

*Initiator role* for FIPA request-like protocols

- constructed by passing the protocol-starting **ACL** message
  - be sure to set the protocol field of the ACLMessage with the proper constant taken from `FIPANames.InteractionProtocols` in package `jade.domain`
- to be extended by overriding its `handle[...] callback` methods, which provide hooks to handle all the states of the protocol
  - e.g. `handleAgree()`, `handleInform()`, ...
  - be aware of the functioning of callbacks such as `handleOutOfSequence()`, `handleAllResponses()`, `handleAllResultNotifications`—refer to JADE programmer’s guide
- manages an **expiration timeout** expressed by the value of the **reply-by** slot in ACLMessage
  - as defined by FIPA, such timeout refers to the *first response*: second response timeouts can be managed “by hand”
AchieveRE III

**AchieveREResponder**

*Responder role* for FIPA request-like protocols

- constructed by passing the `MessageTemplate` describing `ACL` messages we would like to manage
  - method `createMessageTemplate` is provided to create templates for each interaction protocol
- to be extended by overriding its `handle/prepare[...]` *callback* methods, which provide hooks to handle all the states of the protocol
  - `handleRequest()` to reply to first initiator message
  - `prepareResultNotification()` to send the final response about the RE achieved
  - ...

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AchieveRE IV

```java
ACLMessage msg = new ACLMessage(ACLMessage.REQUEST);
msg.setProtocol(FIPANames.InteractionProtocol.FIPA_REQUEST);
addBehaviour(new AchieveREInitiator(this, msg){
    @Override
    protected void handleAgree(ACLMessage agree) {
    }
    @Override
    protected void handleFailure(ACLMessage failure) {
    }
    @Override
    protected void handleInform(ACLMessage inform) {
    }
    @Override
    protected void handleNotUnderstood(ACLMessage notUnderstood) {
    }
    @Override
    protected void handleRefuse(ACLMessage refuse) {
    }
});
```

**Figure:** JADE AchieveREInitiator
AchieveRE V

```java
MessageTemplate template = AchieveREResponder.createMessageTemplate(
    FIPANames.InteractionProtocol.FIPA_REQUEST);
addBehaviour(new AchieveREResponder(this, template){
    @Override
    protected ACLMessage handleRequest(ACLMessage request)
        throws NotUnderstoodException, RefuseException {
            return new ACLMessage(ACLMessage.AGREE);
        }
    @Override
    protected ACLMessage prepareResultNotification(ACLMessage request,
        ACLMessage response) throws FailureException {
            return new ACLMessage(ACLMessage.INFORM);
        }
});
```

Figure: JADE AchieveREResponder
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   - API
   - Syntax
   - Usage

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3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
ContractNet II

ContractNetInitiator

*Initiator role* for FIPA contract-net protocol

- constructed by passing the protocol-starting *ACL* message
  - ! again, use FIPANames.InteractionProtocols to set the protocol field of the ACLMessage
- to be extended by overriding its handle[...] *callback* methods
  - e.g. handlePropose(), handleInform(), ...
  - ! be sure to implement handleAllResponses() by adding to the acceptances Vector all the ACLMessage.ACCEPT_PROPOSAL *ACL* messages to send
- manages the *expiration timeout*
  - ! again, reply–by timeout refers to the *first response*
  - ! late answers *are not consumed*, thus remain in the agent message box
ContractNet III

**ContractNetResponder**

*Responder role* for FIPA contract-net protocol

- constructed by passing the proper MessageTemplate
  - again, use method `createMessageTemplate`
- to be extended by overriding its `handle[...] callback` methods
  - `handleCfp()` the initial CFP message
  - `handleAcceptProposal()` when an ACCEPT_PROPOSAL message is received from the initiator
  - ...

Check the `ds.lab.jade.bookTrading.contractNet` example for the code.
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1. Directory Facilitator
   - API
   - Syntax
   - Usage

2. FIPA Interaction Protocols in JADE
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   - Contract Net
   - More On Responders

3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
### Responder Behaviours

#### Cyclic vs. single-session responders

Responder behaviours may have two forms:

**Cyclic** Serve interactions initiated by different agents sequentially

1. wait for the protocol initiation message
2. serve the protocol
3. go back waiting for a new protocol initiation message

**Single-Session** Serve interactions initiated by different agents in parallel

1. get the protocol initiation message in the constructor → requires an external behaviour to be used
2. serve the protocol
3. terminate

Check the jade.proto package to learn more.
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   - API
   - Syntax
   - Usage

2. FIPA Interaction Protocols in JADE
   - Achieve Rational Effect
   - Contract Net
   - More On Responders

3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
What’s the problem?

Whenever developing JADE agents which need to interact with a Java GUI, the \textit{thread-per-agent} concurrency model of JADE agents must work together with the Swing \textit{Event Dispatcher Thread (EDT)} concurrency model.
More in detail

- as you should know, the Swing framework is not thread-safe, so any code that updates the GUI elements must be executed within the EDT
  - since modifying a model object triggers an update of the GUI, model objects too have to be manipulated just by the EDT
- the SwingUtilities class exposes two static methods to delegate execution of Runnable objects to the EDT
  
  - invokeLater() puts the Runnable into the System Event Queue (SEQ) (accessed by the EDT only) and returns immediately— asynchronous call
  - invokeAndWait() puts the Runnable into the SEQ and blocks waiting its completion— synchronous call
GuiAgent class

To develop JADE agents interacting with a GUI, simply extend GuiAgent class in package jade.gui

`onGuiEvent(GuiEvent e)` may be viewed as the equivalent of the `actionPerformed()` method in Java Swing, that is, a callback invoked by JADE platform as soon as a GuiEvent is generated

`postGuiEvent(GuiEvent e)` used by the agent’s GUI to queue GUI events for later processing—similar to queueing ACL messages in its mailbox
GuiEvent class

A GuiEvent object has:

- two *mandatory* attributes
  - **source** the Object source of the event
  - **type** an integer identifying the kind of event generated
- an optional list of parameters eventually used for events processing

  - `addParameter()` takes the Object to add as a GuiEvent parameter
  - `getParameter()` gets the *i*-th parameter
  - `getAllParameter()` returns an Iterator to browse all parameters
One advice

From JADE programmer’s guide:

“In general, it is not a good thing that an external software component maintain a direct object reference to an agent, because this component could directly call any public method of the agent, skipping the asynchronous message passing layer and turning an autonomous agent into a server object, slave to its caller. The correct approach is that to gather all the external methods into an interface, implemented by the agent class, then an object reference of that interface will be passed to the external software component (e.g., a GUI) so that only the external methods will be available from event handlers.”

Check the ds.lab.jade.bookTrading.gui example carefully.
Outline

1. Directory Facilitator
   - API
   - Syntax
   - Usage

2. FIPA Interaction Protocols in JADE
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   - Contract Net
   - More On Responders

3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
What means “mobility” for JADE?

In JADE, mobility is the ability of an agent program to migrate or to clone (make a copy of) itself across one or multiple network hosts.

Which kind of mobility?

As you may know, at least two different forms of mobility can be defined:

- **weak**: only the program (agent) code is moved/cloned.
- **strong**: also the program (agent) state is moved/cloned along with its code—supposing to know what “state” means.

JADE supports some form of strong mobility.
JADE Mobility II

**JADE strong mobility**

A **JADE** agent can:

- move/clone its state, which means:
  1. stop its execution on the local container
  2. move/clone to a remote container
  3. resume its execution there from the *exact point* where it was interrupted

- move/clone its code, which means that if its code is not available on the destination container, then it is automagically retrieved by **JADE** platform

---

Keep in mind that...

! In order to be able to move, an agent must be **Serializable**
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   - Usage

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   - Achieve Rational Effect
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3. JADE Agents & Java Swing

4. JADE Agents Mobility
   - API
Location API

Where to move/clone to?

The jade.core.Location interface represents a place where agents can move / be cloned to

- `getID()` to obtain the Location unique ID
- `getName()` to obtain the Location name
- `getAddress()` to get its address
- `getProtocol()` to know the exploited transport protocol
Intra- vs. Inter-platform mobility

Two different classes implement the Location interface (both from its same package):

- **ContainerID** for intra-platform mobility
  - let cName be a container name, its ContainerID can be obtained with `new ContainerID(cName, null)`

- **PlatformID** for inter-platform mobility
  - requires the migration service add-on to be installed
  - it is developed and maintained by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona\(^a\)

\(^a\)tao.uab.cat/ipmp/
### Finding destinations

To get a `Location` object, an agent must query the AMS by sending it an `ACLMessage.REQUEST` (thus, expecting an `.INFORM` back) storing either

- a `new WhereIsAgentAction(AID aid)` object
  - to get the `Location` where the given agent is

- a `new QueryPlatformLocationsAction()` object
  - to get all the `Locations` available within the JADE platform

In both cases, what you get is a `Location` object which hides a `ContainerID`
What are such “actions”?

`jade.content.onto.basic.Action` is the class representing a FIPA action, that is “an act to be carried out by an agent”—do you remember we defined `ACL` messages as communicative acts?
Action how-to

To create and request an Action

1. instantiate the Action object
   \[\text{Action} \ a = \text{new Action}()\]

2. decide who should perform the action—the AMS in our case
   \[a.setActor(getAMS())\]

3. choose the action to be performed
   \[a.setAction(new QueryPlatformLocationsAction())\]

4. embed the action into the request \textit{ACL} message
   \[\text{ACLMessage} \ msg = \text{new ACLMessage(ACLMessage.REQUEST)}\]
   \[
   \quad \text{Agent.getContentManager().fillContent(msg, a)}
   \]

5. send the message to the receiver—again, the AMS for us
   \[msg.addReceiver(getAMS())\]
   \[\text{send(msg)}\]
**Action API IV**

**Collecting AMS replies I**

To collect AMS replies you can do something like:

1. create a suitable data store for locations
   
   → Map locations = new HashMap()

2. receive replies according to your preferred policy but using the correct MessageTemplate
   
   → MessageTemplate mt = MessageTemplate.and(
       MessageTemplate.matchSender(getAMS()),
       MessageTemplate.matchPerformative(ACLMessage.INFORM))
   
   ACLMessage reply = blockingReceive(mt)

3. ...

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Collecting AMS replies II

1. ... 

2. *decode* the content of AMS reply—method dual to
   
   ```java
   Agent.getContentManager().fillContent(msg, a))
   → Result res = (Result) getContentManager().extractContent(reply)
   ```

3. *(in our case)* collect all the Locations
   
   ```java
   Iterator it = res.getItems().iterator()
   while(it.hasNext()){
       Location l = (Location)it.next()
       locations.put(loc.getName(), l)
   }
   ```
doMove/doClone How-To

Self-movement
In the case an agent autonomously decides to move itself to another (remote) container in the same JADE platform, it simply calls the method doMove() passing the destination Location as a parameter—either discovered thanks to the AMS or a-priori known.

Self-cloning
The case of cloning is similar, except that method to call is obviously doClone() and that a second parameter other than the target Location should be passed to the call: the new name of the cloned agent (a String).
doMove/doClone How-To II

Request for movement/cloning I

Instead, if any JADE agent wishes to make another agent move, it can only perform a [Move/Clone]Action request, hoping the destination agent will do it—nothing more should be expected as usual.

1. create a MobileAgentDescription
   - MobileAgentDescription mad = new MobileAgentDescription

2. fill its mandatory fields
   - mad.setName(aid)
   - mad.setDestination(location)

3. embed it in a [Move/Clone]Action object
   - MoveAction ma = new MoveAction()
   - ma.setMobileAgentDescription(mad)

4. ...
doMove/doClone How-To III

Request for movement/cloning II

1. ... 
2. pack the $\textit{ACL}$ request message encoding the [Move/Clone]Action object
   
   → $\text{ACLMessage msg = new ACLMessage(ACLMessage.REQUEST)}$
   $\text{Agent.getContentManager().fillContent(msg, ma))}$

3. send the move/clone request message
   
   → $\text{msg.addReceiver(aid)}$
   $\text{send(msg)}$
doMove/doClone How-To IV

Response for movement/cloning

The receiver agent, if agrees with the request

1. decodes the content of the \textit{ACL} message conveying the action request
   \begin{itemize}
   \item ContentElement content = getContentManager().extractContent(msg)
   \end{itemize}

2. gets the [Move/Clone]Action
   \begin{itemize}
   \item MoveAction ma = (MoveAction)(((Action)content).getAction())
   \end{itemize}

3. gets the destination Location
   \begin{itemize}
   \item Location loc = ma.getMobileAgentDescription().getDestination()
   \end{itemize}

4. eventually, moves/clones itself
   \begin{itemize}
   \item if(loc != null) doMove(loc)
   \end{itemize}
doMove/doClone How-To V

The last note

To be able to call the above-used methods from the ContentManager object, the `jade.content.lang.sl.SLCodec` and the `jade.domain.mobility.MobilityOntology` must be registered with it.

→ to do so, write in agents setup() method

```java
getContentManager().registerLanguage(new SLCodec())
getContentManager().registerOntology(
    MobilityOntology.getInstance()
)
```
doMove/doClone How-To VI

**Not a FIPA standard**

Notice that such ontology is not yet a FIPA standard, hence may adapted in the future\(^a\)

---

\(^a\)not sure whether at present a standard is available nor if JADE 4.4 complies to it, cannot find references in documentation.
In our lab, yes we are.

The general answer, instead, is no. JADE offers many other things in addition to what we’ve seen during lab. lessons:

- Topic-based Communication
- Fault Tolerance Service
- Persistent Message Delivery Service
- User-defined Ontologies Support
- ...

... feel free to experiment by yourselves and ask questions!
JADE: Java Agent DEvelopment Framework Advanced 2.0

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Academic Year 2015/2016