# A (Not So Gentle) Introduction To Systems Programming In ATS

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# Outline

- Is an ML (not standard)
  - ADTS, pattern-matching etc.
- FP fully supported (TCO)
- Exactly the same performance/memory predictability
  - Decompiles to C
  - No optimizations (except TCO)
  - GCC does the rest
- Exactly the same control of C
  - Pointer arithmetic
  - malloc/free
  - stack allocation
- Completely verified at compile time
  - type system has zero overhead



- Top of The Benchmarks Game
- Now taken down in 2015
  - No idea why!

- Linear logic to manage resources
  - Prove it exists, consume proof, repeat
  - file handles, sockets, anything

```
fun bar
    =
   let
      val (awesome_proof | fd) = open_file("some_file.txt")
           ~~~~~~~~~
      val contents = read_file (awesome_proof | fd)
      . . .
   in
   end
```

#### ATS<sup>1</sup>

- Especially memory
  - Prove pointer is initialized, dereference, repeat
  - Type checked pointer arithmetic



```
fun foo
{
    (i : int ) ...
```

```
fun foo
{
     (i : int n) ...
```

```
fun foo
   {n:int | n > 0 }
   (i : int n) ...
```

```
fun foo
  {n:int | n > 0 && n < 10}
  (i : int n) ...</pre>
```

- Very Difficult
- Intersects
  - refinement types
  - linear logic
  - proofs
  - C
- Research!
  - Funded by the NSF
- No easy story, or newcomer "onboarding"
- Tiny community
- Sparse docs

- Easiest way to get started is C interop
- A generic swap in C
  - Yes, I realize 'size t' is bad!

```
void swap (void* p1, void* p2, size_t size) {
  char* buffer = (char*)malloc(sizeof(char)*size);
  memcpy(buffer, p1, size);
  memcpy(p1, p2, size);
  memcpy(p2, buffer, size);
  free(buffer);
}
```

A slightly non-standard swap

```
%{
    #include <stdio.h>
    #include <stdlib.h>
    void swap(void *i, void *j, size_t size) {
        ...
    }
%}
```

A slightly non-standard swap

```
%{
    #include <stdio.h>
    #include <stdlib.h>
    void swap(void *i, void *j, size_t size) {
        ...
    }
%}
extern fun swap (i:ptr, j:ptr, s:size_t): void = "ext#swap"
```

A slightly non-standard swap

```
%{
    #include <stdio.h>
    #include <stdlib.h>
    void swap(void *i, void *j, size_t size) {
        ...
    }
%}
extern fun swap (i:ptr, j:ptr, s:size_t) : void = "ext#swap"
extern fun malloc(s:size_t):ptr = "ext#malloc"
```

```
implement main0 () =
  let
    val i = malloc(sizeof<int>)
    val j = malloc(sizeof<double>)
    val _ = swap(i,j,sizeof<double>)
  in
    ()
  end
```

```
implement main0 () =
  let
    val i = malloc(sizeof<int>) // all good
  in
  end
```

```
implement main0 () =
  let
    val i = malloc(sizeof<int>)
    val j = malloc(sizeof<double>) // uh oh!
  in
  end
```

```
implement main0 () =
  let
    val i = malloc(sizeof<int>)
    val j = malloc(sizeof<double>)
    val _ = swap(i,j,sizeof<double>) // oh noes!
  in
  end
```

```
implement main0 () =
  let
    val i = malloc(sizeof<int>)
    val j = malloc(sizeof<double>)
    val _ = swap(i,j,sizeof<double>)
  in
       () // free as in leak
  end
```

- Can totally mimic C
- Including the bugs
- Gradual migration

• Safe swap

```
extern fun swap (i:ptr, j:ptr, s:size_t) : void = "ext#swap"
```

• Safe swap

extern fun swap

: void = "ext#swap"

• Safe swap

extern fun swap

Safe swap

extern fun swap

Safe swap

```
extern fun swap
{a : t@ype}
```

```
extern fun swap
{a : t@ype}
{l1: addr | }
```

```
= "ext#swap"
```

Safe swap

```
extern fun swap
{a : t@ype}
{l1: addr | l1 > null}
```

```
extern fun swap
  {a : t@ype}
  {11: addr | 11 > null}
  {12: addr | 12 > null}
  = "ext#swap"
```

```
extern fun swap
{a : t@ype}
{11: addr | 11 > null}
{12: addr | 12 > null}
(a @ 11 , a @ 12 | i : ptr 11, j : ptr 12, s: sizeof_t a):
    (a @ 11, a @ 12 | void) = "ext#swap"
```

```
extern fun malloc(s:size_t):ptr = "ext#malloc"
```

• Safe swap

extern fun malloc

= "ext#malloc"

• Safe swap

```
extern fun malloc
{a:t@ype}
```

= "ext#malloc"

Safe swap

```
extern fun malloc
    {a:t@ype}
    (s:sizeof_t a):
```

= "ext#malloc"

Safe swap

in

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (  | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
```

in

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
```

in

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
```

in

Safe swap

in

Safe swap

in

Safe swap

in

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
```

in

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
```

in

Safe swap

Safe swap

Safe swap

Safe swap

Safe swap

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2 | ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
```

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
```

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj2 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
```

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfj2 | j);
end
```

```
implement main0 () = let
 val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
 val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
 val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfj2 | j);
end
```

```
implement main0 () = let
 val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
 val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
 val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfi2 | j);
end
```

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfj2 | j);
end
```

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfj2 | j);
end
```

Safe swap

```
implement main0 () = let
  val (pfi | i) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfj | j) = malloc (sizeof<int>)
  val (pfi1 | ()) = ptr_set(pfi | i, 1)
  val (pfj2 | ()) = ptr_set(pfj | j, 2)
  val (pfi2,pfj2| ()) = swap(pfi1, pfj1 | i, j, sizeof<int>)
in
  free(pfi2 | i);
  free(pfj2 | j);
end
```

Safe swap

Idiomatic swap

```
fun {...}
    swap
    {...}
    (...) : void =
let
    val tmp = !p1
in
    !p1 := !p2;
    !p2 := tmp
end
```

# Step back

- Step back.
- Overwhelmed?
  - I am!
- Breathe ...

- Recursion
  - First class support!
- Allows typechecker to prove by induction!

```
fun factorial
    \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
        \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
        . < n > .
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
      case- i of
      1 => acc
      | i when i > 1 => loop(acc * i, i - 1)
  in
    loop(1.0, i)
  end
```

```
fun factorial
```

```
let
  fun loop
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
   (i : int ) : =
   let
   fun loop
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
   (i : int ) : double =
   let
   fun loop
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    (i : int n) : double =
    let
    fun loop
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    { n : int | n >= 1 }
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    { n : int | n >= 1 }
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
        { n : int | n >= 1 }
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    { n : int | n >= 1 }
    (i : int n) : double =
    let
    fun loop
        { n : int | n >= 1 }
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    { n : int | n >= 1 }
    (i : int n) : double =
    let
    fun loop
        { n : int | n >= 1 }
        .<n>.
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
in
  loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
    \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
        \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
        . < n > .
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
      case- i of
      1 => acc
  in
    loop(1.0, i)
  end
```

```
fun factorial
    {n : int | n >= 1}
    (i : int n) : double =
 let
    fun loop
        \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
        . < n > .
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
      case- i of
      1 => acc
      Ιi
  in
    loop(1.0, i)
  end
```

```
fun factorial
    \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
        \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
        . < n > .
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
      case- i of
      1 => acc
      | i when i > 1
  in
    loop(1.0, i)
  end
```

```
fun factorial
    \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
    (i : int n) : double =
  let
    fun loop
        \{ n : int | n >= 1 \}
        . < n > .
        (acc : double, i : int (n)) : double =
      case- i of
      1 => acc
      | i when i > 1 => loop(acc * i, i - 1)
  in
    loop(1.0, i)
  end
```

```
fun factorial
```

```
let
  fun loop
      { n : int | n >= 1 } <---
    case- i of
    | i when i > 1 => loop(acc * i, i - 1)
        ~~~~~~~
in
 loop(1.0, i)
end
```

```
fun factorial
```

```
let
  fun loop
      { n : int | n >= 1 } <---
    case- i of
    | i when i > 1 => loop(acc * i, i - 1)
in
 loop(1.0, i)
end
```

Factorialfun factorial

```
let
  fun loop
      .<n>. <---
    case- i of
    | i when i > 1 => loop(acc * i, i + 1)
in
 loop(1.0, i)
end
```

- Viewtype
  - Connects ADTs, linear resources

Remember 'swap'?

```
extern fun swap
  {a:t@ype}
  {11: addr | 11 > null}
  {12: addr | 12 > null}
  (a @ 11 , a @ 12 | i : ptr 11, j : ptr 12, s: sizeof_t a):
        (a @ 11, a @ 12 | void) = "ext#swap"
```

• Remember 'swap'?

• Remember 'swap'?

):

• Remember 'swap'?

):

Remember 'swap'?

• Remember 'swap'?

Remember 'swap'?

Remember 'swap'?

• Remember 'swap'?

- Viewtypes are the basic building block
- Can create algebras of linear resources!

## Algebraic datatypes

Linear lists

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil(a, 0) of ()
  | {n:int | n > 0}
    list_vt_cons(a, n) of (a, list_vt(a, n-1))
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
   (          ) =
   | list_vt_nil
   |
   list_vt_cons
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype    ) =
    | list_vt_nil
    |
    list_vt_cons
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil
  |
  list_vt_cons
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil(a, 0) of ()
  |
   list_vt_cons
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil(a, 0) of ()
  |
  list_vt_cons(a, n)
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil(a, 0) of ()
  |
  list_vt_cons(a, n) of (a, list_vt(a, n-1))
```

```
dataviewtype list_vt
  (a:viewt@ype, int) =
  | list_vt_nil(a, 0) of ()
  | {n:int | n > 0}
    list_vt_cons(a, n) of (a, list_vt(a, n-1))
```

```
list_vt_cons(1,
   list_vt_cons(2,
       list_vt_nil())) : list_vt(int,2)
```

• A factorial that preserves intermediate results in a list

```
factorial(10) => [(10 * 9), (10 * 9 * 8), (10 * 9 * 8 * 7) ...]
```

```
fun factorial
       {n:int | n >= 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = g0i2f(i) * g0i2f(i-1)
      val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
  in
      res
  end
```

fun factorial

Factorial with intermediate results

```
let
    var res : ptr
    fun loop
in
    res
end
```

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```
fun factorial
       (i:int ):
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
  in
      res
  end
```

```
fun factorial
       {n:int | n \ge 2}
       (i:int n):
                                          =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
  in
      res
  end
```

Factorial with intermediate results

```
fun factorial
       {n:int \mid n \geq 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
  in
      res
  end
```

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```
fun factorial
       {n:int \mid n \geq 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = g0i2f(i) * g0i2f(i-1)
  in
      res
  end
```

```
fun factorial
       {n:int | n >= 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = g0i2f(i) * g0i2f(i-1)
      val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
  in
      res
  end
```

```
fun factorial
```

```
let
    var res : ptr
    fun loop
        ...
    val initial = ...
    val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
in
    res
end
```

Factorial with intermediate results

```
fun factorial
       {n:int \mid n \geq 2}
       (i:int n):
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = ...
      val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
  in
      res
  end
```

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Factorial with intermediate results

```
fun factorial
       {n:int \mid n \geq 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = ...
      val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
  in
      res
  end
```

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```
fun factorial
       {n:int | n >= 2}
       (i:int n): list_vt(double, n-1) =
  let
      var res : ptr
      fun loop
      val initial = g0i2f(i) * g0i2f(i-1)
      val () = loop(initial,i-2,res)
  in
      res
  end
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        seed: double,
        next: int n1,
        res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
    ) : void = ...
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        next: int n1,
    ) : void = ...
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        next: int n1,
    ) : void = ...
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        seed: double,
        next: int n1,
    ) : void = ...
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        seed: double,
        next: int n1,
        res: &ptr?
    ): void = ...
```

```
fun loop
    {n1:int | n1 >= 0 && n1 <= n-2}
    .<n1>.
    (
        seed: double,
        next: int n1,
        res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
    ) : void = ...
```

Inner loop

```
fun loop
```

Inner loop

#### Factorial<sup>b</sup>

Inner loop

- Solve this puzzle in a strict FP language!
- Fold over a list and copy it!
- As efficiently as a while/for loop with initial null
- That's it!

- But!
  - No reversing at the end! (1-pass only)
  - No macros!
  - No continuations!
  - No peep holing!
  - No weird optimization pragmas

- MLTon reverses
- OCaml peep holes
- Rust (uses macros or peep holes)

#### Factorial<sup>b</sup>

- Until recently these were elegant!
- Now just dissatisfied!
- ATS supports "tail allocation"
  - A principled, safe way of passing along a "hole"

Inner loop

Inner loop

in end

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Inner loop

```
fun loop ( seed: double,
           next: int n1,
           res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
         ) : void = ...
  case- next of
     0 =>
                         =>
     let
        val () = res := list_vt_cons{..}{n1+1}(seed, _)
                         an uninitialized hole----+
```

```
fun loop ( seed: double,
           next: int n1,
           res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
         ) : void = ...
  case- next of
     0 =>
                          =>
      let
        val () = res := list_vt_cons{..}{n1+1}(seed, _)
        val+list_vt_cons(_,hole) = res
                             +-- uninitialized hole --+
      in
      end
```

```
fun loop ( seed: double,
           next: int n1,
           res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
         ) : void = ...
  case- next of
     0 =>
                          =>
      let
        val () = res := list_vt_cons{..}{n1+1}(seed, _)
        val+list_vt_cons(_,hole) = res
        val curr = seed * g0i2f(next)
      in
      end
```

```
fun loop ( seed: double,
           next: int n1,
           res: &ptr? >> list_vt(double, n1+1)
         ) : void = ...
  case- next of
     0 =>
                          =>
      let
        val () = res := list_vt_cons{..}{n1+1}(seed, _)
        val+list_vt_cons(_,hole) = res
        val curr = seed * g0i2f(next)
        val () = loop(curr, next-1, hole)
      in
                     to be filled! --+
      end
```

```
fun loop
```

```
case- next of
    next
    let
                res := list_vt_cons
                                  , hole)
                loop(
    in
    end
```

# Sum up

- ATS is rough
  - but contains glimpses of the sys. programming future!
- Linear logic
  - Great idea!
  - Need 1st class access
- Refinement types
  - Great idea!
  - Other languages are coming around to it

# Sum up

- Smart typechecker/dumb compiler
  - Amazing idea!
  - ATS is a frontend to C
- Haven't even talked about
  - ATS has a whole proof level language
  - Pattern matching and all!

#### The end

- Repo for this talk
  - https://github.com/deech/ATS-Strange-Loop-Talk
- Will add more links to resources.
- Thanks!