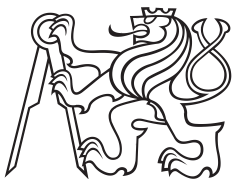


Bachelor's Thesis



**Czech
Technical
University
in Prague**

F3

Faculty of Electrical Engineering
Department of Control Engineering

ORTE communication middleware for Android OS

Martin Vajnar

Cybernetics and Robotics
Systems and Control

May 2014

Supervisor: Ing. Michal Sojka, Ph.D.

České vysoké učení technické v Praze
Fakulta elektrotechnická

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ZADÁNÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Student: **Martin Vajnar**

Studijní program: Kybernetika a robotika
Obor: Systémy a řízení

Název tématu: **Komunikační middleware ORTE pro OS Android**

Pokyny pro vypracování:

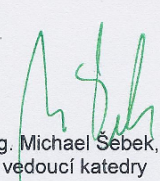
1. Seznamte se komunikačním middlewareem ORTE vyvinutým na katedře, který implementuje komunikační protokol Real-Time Publish-Subscribe (RTPS). Dále se seznamte s aplikací ORTE v řídicím systému mobilních robotů.
2. Portujte ORTE na mobilní zařízení s operačním systémem Android.
3. Vyvíjejte aplikaci pro mobilní telefony, která bude umožňovat sledovat a ovládat mobilním telefonem roboty.
4. Analyzujte rozdíly mezi aktuální implementací ORTE a novějšími verzemi RTPS standardu. Navrhněte jaké změny je potřeba v ORTE provést, aby bylo kompatibilní s RTPS standardem.
5. Vše pečlivě otestujte a zdokumentujte.

Seznam odborné literatury:

- [1] Object Management Group, The real-time publish-subscribe wire protocol, DDS interoperability wire protocol specification (DDS-RTPS), Online: <http://www.omg.org/spec/DDS-RTPS/2.1>, Nov 2010.
[2] P. Smolík and P. Piša, ORTE: The Open Real-Time Ethernet, Czech Technical University in Prague, Tech. Rep., 2008, Online: http://orte.sf.net/rtn08_orte.pdf.

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V Praze dne 30. 1. 2014

Czech Technical University in Prague
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BACHELOR PROJECT ASSIGNMENT

Student: **Martin Vajnar**

Study programme: Cybernetics and Robotics
Specialisation: Systems and Control

Title of Bachelor Project: **ORTE communication middleware for Android OS**

Guidelines:

1. Get familiar with the ORTE middleware developed at the Department that implements the Real-Time Publish-Subscribe (RTPS) protocol. Get familiar with ORTE's use in the control system of mobile robots.
2. Port ORTE to mobile device built on Android Operating System.
3. Develop an application for mobile phones that will allow to monitor and control robots by a mobile phone.
4. Analyze differences between current implementation of ORTE and newer versions of the RTPS standard. Propose changes necessary for ORTE to be compatible with the RTPS standard.
5. Test and document everything thoroughly

Bibliography/Sources:

- [1] Object Management Group, The real-time publish-subscribe wire protocol, DDS interoperability wire protocol specification (DDS-RTPS), Online: <http://www.omg.org/spec/DDS-RTPS/2.1>, Nov 2010.
[2] P. Smolík and P. Píša, ORTE: The Open Real-Time Ethernet, Czech Technical University in Prague, Tech. Rep., 2008, Online: http://orte.sf.net/rtn08_orte.pdf.

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Dean

Prague, January 30, 2014

Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že jsem předloženou práci vypracoval samostatně a že jsem uvedl veškeré použité informační zdroje v souladu s Metodickým pokynem o dodržování etických principů při přípravě vysokoškolských závěrečných prací.

V Praze, dne 22.5.2014.....

Wojnar
.....
Podpis

Acknowledgement /

First, I would like to thank my supervisor Ing. Michal Sojka, Ph.D. for his patience, useful advices and guidance.

Next, I would like to thank Ing. Pavel Píša, Ph.D. for his notes on several implementation problems I have faced.

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Abstrakt / Abstract

Real-Time Publish-Subscribe je protokol, který umožňuje snadnou a efektivní implementaci datově řízených distribuovaných aplikací, pracujících v reálném čase. Protokol byl přijat jako standard Object Management Group (OMG) a je určen k zajištění spolupráce aplikací postavených na Data Distribution Service (DDS) API. RTPS je využíván v mnoha průmyslových aplikacích a existují jak komerční, tak svobodné implementace. Jedna ze svobodných implementací se nazývá Open Real-Time Ethernet (ORTE) a funguje na řadě platform. Např. GNU/Linux, Windows, FreeBSD a MacOS. V této práci popisují nový přírůstek k podporovaným platformám, kterým je operační systém Android pro mobilní zařízení.

Tato práce uvádí přehled kroků, které byly nutné k portování na platformu Android. Portoval jsem existující nativní knihovnu a Java wrapper. Popíšeme problémy, na které jsem narazil, a jejich řešení. Porovnáme výkon ORTE na Androidu s dalšími platformami a představíme aplikaci k ovládání a monitorování mobilního robotu pro telefony s Androidem.

Klíčová slova: DCPS, DDS, RTPS, ORTE, OS Android, Java Native Interface, komunikace v reálném čase.

Překlad titulu: Komunikační middleware ORTE pro OS Android

Real-Time Publish-Subscribe is a protocol that allows easy and efficient implementation of data-driven distributed real-time applications. The protocol was adopted as an Object Management Group (OMG) specification and it is intended as an interoperability protocol for applications based on the Data Distribution Service (DDS) API. RTPS is widely used in many industrial applications and it has both commercial and open source implementations. One open-source implementation is called Open Real-Time Ethernet (ORTE) and it is known to work on many platforms including GNU/Linux, Windows, FreeBSD and MacOS. In this thesis a new addition to the supported platforms is described, which is an Android operating system for mobile devices.

We provide an overview of the steps that were needed to port the protocol to the Android platform. I ported the existing native library and a Java wrapper around it. We comment on the troubles I had and their solutions. We compare the performance of ORTE on Android with other platforms and present an Android phone application for controlling and monitoring a mobile robot.

Keywords: DCPS, DDS, RTPS, ORTE, Android OS, Java Native Interface, real-time communication.

/ Contents

1 Introduction	1
2 DDS, RTPS and ORTE	3
2.1 Compatibility of ORTE with the Latest RTPS standard	4
2.1.1 Mapping of objects in ORTE to the RTPS V2.1 ..	4
2.1.2 List of required changes to ORTE	5
3 Porting to Android	6
3.1 Android Permission Model	7
3.2 Overview of the porting pro- cess	7
3.3 Technical Details	8
3.3.1 Class Loading	8
3.3.2 Direct ByteBuffer	8
3.3.3 64-bit Support	9
3.3.4 Use of WifiLock and MulticastLock	9
3.3.5 Java Manager	10
4 Evaluation	11
4.1 Example Android Applica- tion	11
4.2 Performance Comparison	11
5 Demo application	15
5.1 Demo Robot	15
5.1.1 Robot's Hardware	15
5.1.2 Robot's Software	16
5.1.3 Mapping of CAN Mes- sage IDs to ORTE Top- ics	16
5.2 Implementation	17
5.2.1 Java Package Structure ..	18
5.2.2 Acquisition and Pro- cessing of Accelerome- ter data	18
5.2.3 Handling of received Laser Range Finder Data	19
5.3 User Manual	19
5.3.1 Compilation	20
5.3.2 User Instructions	21
6 Conclusion	24
References	25
A Abbreviations	27
B Contents of the Attached CD ..	29

Tables / Figures

2.1. Mapping of ORTE objects to similar objects in the RTPS V2.1.....	5
3.1. Comparison of Wi-Fi ping latencies with and without WifiLock	10
4.1. Performance comparison of native code and Java wrapper .	12
5.1. Mapping of CAN Message IDs to ORTE Topics	16
1.1. Data-Centric Publish-Subscribe application model.....	1
3.1. Picture of mobile robot	6
4.1. Example Java Manager	11
4.2. Example Java Data type.....	12
4.3. Example Java Publisher	13
4.4. Example Java Subscriber	13
4.5. Relative slowdown of implementations.....	14
5.1. IDL code for topic motion-speed.....	17
5.2. IDL code for topic pwr-voltage	17
5.3. IDL code for topic hokuyo-scan	17
5.4. IDL code for topic magnet-cmd	17
5.5. IDL code for topic crane-cmd .	17
5.6. Android Sensor API reference frame	18
5.7. Visualization of LRF Data	19
5.8. RoboDruid's default screen	21
5.9. RoboDruid's menu	21
5.10. RoboDruid's Voltage Monitor .	22
5.11. RoboDruid's Managers Dialog	22

Chapter 1

Introduction

Real-Time applications often need to be distributed over multiple computing nodes. Reasons for that include the distribution of the computing power to the places where it is needed or simplification of the design, management or maintenance of the application. The vital part of all distributed applications is the communication between the application components running on different nodes. In case of real-time applications, the communication is subject to temporal constraints such as deadlines. Applications often need to be fault-tolerant and as such, they must support redundancy in their architecture. Another common requirement is dynamic nature of the application where nodes/components are joined to or removed from the application at run-time. These, often contradicting, requirements make the communication part hard to design and implement. For this reason, people often build their application on top of various communication middleware platforms that handle the communication for them.

Traditional middleware platforms such as CORBA [8] provide transparent access to remote objects by means of remote method calls. When an application invokes a method on a remote object, the middleware automatically serializes the method parameters and sends the request to destination process where the object is located. The computation happens remotely and then the results are sent back. While this simplifies the development of distributed applications a lot, there are many applications that cannot be efficiently implemented on top of this request-response model.

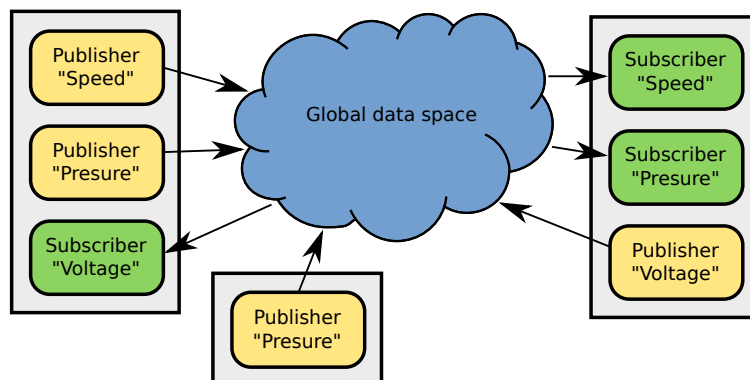


Figure 1.1. Data-Centric Publish-Subscribe application model.

Applications, whose operation is mainly data-driven, meaning that some action/computation is performed when data is ready, would be better served by middleware platforms that seamlessly manage distribution of data from producers to consumers. Such applications are often designed according to Data-Centric Publish-Subscribe (DCPS) model [7], where the middleware creates a notion of a “global data space” that is accessible to all interested applications (see Figure 1.1). Writing application under such a model brings many advantages. The biggest one being perhaps that

the communication requirements are specified by applications in a declarative way and the middleware handles the data exchange automatically based on the declarations.

The aim of this thesis is to port Open Real-Time Ethernet (ORTE) communication middleware to Android Operating System and then use it to develop an application for mobile devices that will be capable of monitoring and controlling a mobile robot. The application will use Java wrapper of the ported ORTE library.

This thesis is structured as follows. Chapter 2 describes the ORTE and the concepts and protocol that it implements. Chapter 3 focuses at the process of porting ORTE to Android. It provides overview of problems faced during the porting. Chapter 4 provides performance analysis of the ported ORTE library as well as an example of use of the Java wrapper of the ported ORTE library. Chapter 5 describes the developed application for controlling a mobile robot. It also provides basic information about the robot in question.

Chapter 2

DDS, RTPS and ORTE

The popularity of DCPS model resulted in several standardization activities. Data Distribution Service (DDS) for Real-time Systems [7] is an Object Management Group (OMG) standard that specifies an API for applications based on the DCPS model. Applications using this API are portable between different middleware platforms offering this API. The interfaces are specified in OMG Interface Definition Language (IDL) [8, Chapter 7]. This means that the API is defined for many commonly used languages such as C, C++, Python and others¹).

The DDS API allows an application to declare that it produces certain data (identified with a so called topic) or that it wants to receive (subscribe to) such a data. The underlying middleware ensures that the stream of data is properly communicated from one or more producers to one or more subscribers. Besides the basic data exchange between publishers and subscribers, the middleware allows the applications to specify many additional Quality-of-Service (QoS) parameters such as deadlines, reliability level, data durability, etc. This not only simplifies the application design but also allows the middleware to optimize the communication in many ways. The DDS standard specifies only the API, not the underlying mechanisms that implement the data exchange.

The communication protocol that can be used to implement the functionality required by the DDS API is called the Real-Time Publish-Subscribe (RTPS) protocol [9]. The primary goal of RTPS is to provide interoperability between different DDS middleware platforms. This is achieved by defining a minimal set of requirements that all implementations have to satisfy. Besides that, the standard defines many optional advanced features as well as a way for implementing vendor specific extensions of the protocol. The standard defines the protocol in a platform (transport) independent way and then it defines the mapping onto the UDP/IP protocol. The protocol takes advantage of multicast communication when available, but works also in environments without multicast support. Implementations can decide about trade-offs in resource needs. Simple implementations can have small memory footprint but will need higher network bandwidth. Other implementation can use abundance of local memory to highly optimize the communication and thus save network bandwidth.

The RTPS protocol has the following features that make it an interesting option for distributed real-time applications.

- **No single point of failure** Every application has a complete model of the whole network. Crash of a single application influences only the applications that need data from it. However this holds only in trusted networks (either local or VPN). On public networks data sent through RTPS could be tampered with. The attacker could pretend to be a legitimate node and inject arbitrary data into the network, that would be delivered to subscribers of specific topic.

¹) See <http://www.omg.org/spec/#Map>

- **Redundancy** Multiple publishers can publish the same “topic”. If one publisher fails, subscribers will be automatically switched to another one. This is illustrated in Figure 1.1 where “Pressure” information is published by two applications.
- **Application discovery** Built-in discovery protocol ensures that applications can discover each other as well as the topics they publish or are subscribed to.

Besides several commercial implementations of the RTPS protocol, at least two open source implementations exist: OpenDDS [10] and ORTE [16]. OpenDDS appears to be more mature. It implements both the DDS API and the underlying RTPS protocol. It is implemented in C++ and provides bindings for Java. OpenDDS is built on top of the ACE¹) abstraction layer to provide platform portability. OpenDDS also leverages capabilities of CORBA implementation called TAO²).

ORTE, another open source RTPS implementation, provides its own API instead of the DDS API. The reason is that ORTE development started before the DDS standard was finished. ORTE is implemented in C and includes a small portability layer that allows it to run on many popular platforms including Linux, Windows, MacOS and FreeBSD. Unfortunately, ORTE implements the RTPS protocol according to the draft of the RTPS specification [14] and it would need some changes (see Section 2.1) in order to be compliant with the current specification. The ORTE library was originally created by Ing. Petr Smolík and Ing. Pavel Píša, Ph.D. [15] and its Java wrapper was originally created by Ing. Lukáš Pokorný [13].

2.1 Compatibility of ORTE with the Latest RTPS standard

ORTE is one of the first implementations of the RTPS protocol. In fact it was a proof of concept implementation intended for testing of completeness and self-consistency of the RTPS specification.

RTPS is standardized by the OMG as the “RTPS Wire Protocol”. ORTE was implemented using [14] (referred to as RTPS V1.0). The RTPS standard was later renamed to “The RTPS Wire Protocol DDS Interoperability Wire Protocol Specification”. Current version of this specification is V2.1 [9] (referred to as RTPS V2.1).

The changes from RTPS V1.0 to V2.1 are the subject of this section. We will demonstrate them on the current state of ORTE implementation. We describe the changes needed for ORTE to be compatible with the RTPS V2.1.

2.1.1 Mapping of objects in ORTE to the RTPS V2.1

Many objects used in ORTE were renamed in the RTPS V2.1. In order to make it easier to track changes in the new standard we make a table (2.1), that maps old names of objects used in ORTE to names of similar objects in RTPS V2.1.

For the purpose of Section 2.1.2 we define a few terms. These definitions reflect the fact that ORTE has its own API instead of the DDS one. By a *Participant* we mean a communication node on a network, that contains *Publishers* and *Subscribers*. This could be any application running on any node in the network. For our needs the word *Publisher* will be equivalent to a *Writer* and *Subscriber* to a *Reader*. *Writers* and *Readers* are collectively called *Endpoints*. For detailed description of RTPS structure see [9, Section 7.4.1].

¹) <http://www.theaceorb.com/product/aboutace.html>

²) <http://www.theaceorb.com/>

Name in ORTE	Name in the RTPS V2.1	Related Sections in the RTPS V2.1
CSTReader	(Stateful)Reader	8.2.8 (description), 8.4.10 (implementation)
CSTRemoteWriter	WriterProxy	8.4.10.4
CSChangeFromWriter	ChangeFromWriter	8.4.10.5 (description), 8.4.12.3 (illustration)
CSChange	CacheChange	8.2.3
CSChangeForReader	ChangeForReader	8.4.7.6 (description), 8.4.9.3 (illustration)
CSTRemoteReader	ReaderProxy	8.4.7.5
CSTWriter	(Stateful)Writer	8.2.7 (description), 8.4.7 (implementation)

Table 2.1. Mapping of ORTE objects to similar objects in the RTPS V2.1 standard.

2.1.2 List of required changes to ORTE

By analyzing the Platform Independent Module [9, Section 8] and by comparing it with the ORTE implementation, we can write a list of changes that need to be done in order for ORTE to be compatible with the RTPS V2.1.

- 1. UDPv6 support** It is referenced to as one of the kinds of transport in `Locator_t` type. For more information see [9, Table 8.2 in Section 8.2.1.2].
- 2. Data with key** RTPS V2.1 introduced a new type of data objects – data with key. This allows to distribute a set of data instances (as opposed to a single data instance) under a single topic. A part of the data instance, called a key, is used to distinguish between different instances. For more information see [9, Table 8.2 in Section 8.2.1.2].
- 3. Stateless Readers and Writers** RTPS V2.1 provides two reference implementations of *Readers* and *Writers*, namely *Stateless* and *Stateful*. They differ by the amount of state they store on matched remote endpoints. For detailed description see [9, Section 8.4.3]. RTPS V1.0 uses only the *Stateful* variant.
- 4. Discovery protocols** RTPS V1.0 uses a special application called *Manager* that runs on every node and manages automatic discovery of applications both on the same node and on remote nodes. The `VAR` submessage is used for exchange of information about QoS parameters, topic’s type and name, etc. For more details see [14, Section 5.1].

RTPS V2.1 replaces this with the *Simple Participant Discovery Protocol* and the *Simple Endpoint Discovery Protocol* that do not need the manager. According to [9, Section 8.5.3.3.1, Section 8.5.3.3.2], the *SPDP* protocol uses *data with key* and the *Stateless* implementation of *Reader* and *Writer*.

- 5. In-line QoS** RTPS V2.1 makes it possible to include QoS parameters directly in each *Data* submessage. As per [9, Section 8.7.1], the in-line QoS is used “in case a Reader does not keep a list of matching remote Writers or the QoS parameters they were configured with”. This is the case for *StatelessReader*.
- 6. Removal of VAR submessage** The `VAR` submessage is removed from the RTPS V2.1 as it is now obsolete due to the introduction of the *SEDP* and in-line QoS.

Chapter 3

Porting to Android

Android is one of the most popular and proliferated mobile operating systems. It is running on wide variety of devices ranging from mobile phones and tablets to home media centers and digital cameras. This makes it interesting for soft real-time application developers.

To develop applications for Android, Google offers Android Software Development Kit (SDK) and Android Native Development Kit (NDK). SDK is used for applications written in Java whereas NDK allows to use native C/C++ code in applications. Android uses Google's implementation of Java Virtual Machine (JVM) called Dalvik VM.

Having an RTPS implementation running on Android brings interesting possibilities of using Android devices to control and/or monitor applications that already use RTPS protocol. This was, in fact, the primary motivation for the porting effort. The Flamingos robotic team has built two mobile robots [17] that use RTPS and a desire to be able to control the robots via a mobile phone was expressed. One such robot is depicted in Figure 3.1.

In this Chapter we look at Android's permission model in Section 3.1. We provide an overview of the porting process in Section 3.2 and describe some technical details of the porting in Section 3.3.



Figure 3.1. Controlling the robot with an Android phone.

3.1 Android Permission Model

In this section we will discuss Android's security basics, that needed to be taken into account during the ORTE porting and later during development of the robot monitoring and control application.

Android uses a permission-based security model. Every application is assigned a unique Linux user ID¹⁾ at the time of installation. During the installation process, the application's manifest is analyzed for permissions that the application declares as required and only these permissions could be utilized by the application in the future.

It is important to say that the permissions are not enforced by the Dalvik VM, but rather they are enforced at the kernel level. This way it is possible to completely sandbox applications on an Android device. For both, the Java and the native code, the same permissions apply. It is therefore irrelevant whether a permission is requested through calling a specific Java function provided by the Android API or through a system call from the native code. Applications using ORTE on Android require permission to create network sockets – *android.permission.INTERNET*.

More detailed description of Android's security model can be found in [3].

3.2 Overview of the porting process

I considered two possible approaches to the porting of ORTE. The first involved writing a pure Java implementation of the RTPS protocol from scratch, the second was to use an already existing Java wrapper, which makes use of the original native ORTE library through the Java Native Interface (JNI) and make it Android-compatible. After thorough consideration I've decided to go the Java wrapper way. Mostly because the C code has been in use for quite some time and could be viewed as stable. On the other hand, if I had chosen to write a new implementation of the protocol, it would require extensive testing and would significantly slow the porting process.

In a nutshell, the process of porting was the following.

- Update Java wrapper that uses Java Native Interface (JNI) and make it Android compatible.
- Fix bugs that have not demonstrated themselves under the Oracle's VM.
- Add support for Android build system.
- Make Java version of ORTE Manager application (see Section 2.1.2 for details about Manager) to overcome problems with execution and termination of native processes.

¹⁾ It is possible for two or more applications from the same developer (i.e. signed with the same private key) to share the same user ID.

3.3 Technical Details

In this section we take a closer look at some problems I faced in the process of porting the ORTE library and their solution.

3.3.1 Class Loading

In order to be able to call Java object's methods or access it's fields from the C code through the JNI, we first need to get the associated *method ID* or *field ID*. These IDs are returned by the JNI functions `GetMethodID` and `GetFieldID`, respectively. These functions need to know the class of the Java object. This is facilitated by the `FindClass` function that accepts a class name as the parameter and invokes the class loader associated with the current native function to load and link the named class [12].

According to the Android Documentation [4, FAQ: Why didn't FindClass find my class?] Android's Dalvik VM uses the loader associated with the method at the top of the interpreted stack, or if there is not one (the thread was just attached to the VM), it uses the "system" class loader, for `FindClass` calls. The "system" class loader does not see ORTE Java classes.

To overcome this, we use the `JNI_OnLoad` function¹). Any `FindClass` calls made from there will happen in the context of the class loader of class that initiated the process of loading the shared library. The `JNI_OnLoad` function is called by the VM during this loading process.

We take the class loader object of class `org.ocera.orte.JOrte` and make it a global reference inside the VM by calling `NewGlobalRef`. Then we store the created reference in a static global variable. This is to make it accessible for later class look-ups.

To perform a class look-up using the stored class loader object, we need to pass the name of the requested class to it's `findClass` method. We do this by means of the JNI function `CallObjectMethod`, which takes as a parameter the *method ID* of the `findClass` method. To speed-up future look-ups, we use the fact that the stored class loader has been turned into a global reference, so we need to get the required *method ID* only once, because it will remain the same. We get the *method ID* inside the `JNI_OnLoad` function and store it in a static global variable. The class loader object stores references to already looked-up classes and requires the user to invoke method `findLoadedClass` during subsequent look-ups of such classes.

To simplify the described class loading process inside the JNI code, I wrote a C function that first invokes the `findLoadedClass` method and if unsuccessful (the requested class was not yet looked-up), invokes the `findClass` method.

3.3.2 Direct ByteBuffer

In this section we first describe the Java `ByteBuffer` class, then we elaborate on why it is used in ORTE. Next we describe how it was previously used in the Java wrapper and what problems that caused. Last, we take a look at adopted solution.

According to [11] `ByteBuffer` provides *get* and *put* methods that read and write values of primitive data types, translating them to and from sequences of bytes in a particular byte order. By default Big-Endian is used. There are two types of `ByteBuffer`s (direct and non-direct) that differ in the way the VM performs I/O operations upon them.

¹) For implementation see:

<http://rttime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/commit/b2b73b5c892eb04fc4822340fe9fef3bb99d4e31>

During the process of sending/receiving new data through ORTE, the data first need to be serialized/deserialized. We use *java.nio.ByteBuffer* to accomplish this in the Java wrapper. Upon new data's arrival a C callback function is called by ORTE. The role of this callback is to hand over the data to Java.

Previously the received data were copied from an internal ORTE buffer to a non-direct `ByteBuffer`, while the byte order of the received data was ignored and was assumed to always be Big-Endian. This caused data received from hosts that use Little-Endian byte order to be unreadable. The sending of data was handled analogously to their reception, so we will not describe it.

Now a direct `ByteBuffer` is used¹). This made it possible to merge the internal ORTE buffer with the `ByteBuffer`. They both now share the same memory region to store elements and it is no more necessary to copy data between the C and Java buffers. This reduced the overhead of sending/receiving data. Further, when new data are received by ORTE and the C callback function is called, a byte order of the used `ByteBuffer` is set in accordance with the received data. For more information about the receive callback function, see Section 4.2.

Though it seems that the direct `ByteBuffer` is an excellent solution to mentioned struggles, there is one limitation. The JNI standard defines that the function needed to access direct `ByteBuffer` is optional to implement (see [12, Function GetDirect-BufferAddress]). Fortunately many major implementations (including Oracle's VM, OpenJDK and Dalvik) choose to implement it, because it is used in cooperation with OpenGL for graphics drawing. However, some exotic implementations need not implement it and the Java wrapper will not work with them.

3.3.3 64-bit Support

In the Java wrapper pointers to C structures are stored in Java fields for later use. For example each publisher is assigned an instance of `ORTEPublication` structure upon its creation for future manipulation, the most important being the possibility to publish new data.

Java specification do not offer a data type specifically intended for storing pointers like the C types `intptr_t`, `ptrdiff_t` or `size_t`, so initially pointers were stored in the Java's `int` type, which is 32-bit wide. This works well on current versions of Android, because most devices use 32-bit ARM based CPU, but does not work if used with Oracle's VM on a 64-bit OS. In order to overcome this, we use²) `long` fields (64-bit) to store pointers instead of `int` fields. This is also the recommended way by Google [4, 64-bit Considerations] to store pointers on Android.

3.3.4 Use of WifiLock and MulticastLock

Android makes extensive use of power-saving features. One of them is the Wi-Fi Power Save Polling (PSP) mode [6]. When this mode is entered, the device asks Wi-Fi Access Point to cache all the downlink frames intended for that device. Cached frames could be delivered during a wake-up mode that is entered either in order to transmit data or to

¹) For implementation, see:

<http://rtime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/commit/5e3acad2883da79c29458d5965d3dad8cbf629f7>,
<http://rtime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/commit/c16934ed44af3add2d33c4630a9a29e0228830fd>,
<http://rtime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/commit/8a64c855d6b39383104939877d3248571d949c71>

²) For implementation, see:

<http://rtime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/commit/b0dec948790009768c3e9fdc7a904f2056c945a9>

retrieve cached data. Wake-up mode could be also entered by sending a PS-Poll frame. After the last cached packet is received, the device enters the PSP mode again. I found out that the PSP mode affects packet delay as well as packet delay variation. This is of particular importance in case of data being sent by ORTE at higher frequencies. Android allows a program to switch to Continuously Aware Mode (CAM) by acquiring `WifiLock` in the `WIFI_MODE_FULL_HIGH_PERF` mode that is available since Android 3.1.x. After an application acquires this lock the Wi-Fi module will be kept in CAM even when the device enters sleep mode.

I measured the ping responses with the `WifiLock` both acquired and released. I used 1,000 packets sent at the interval of 200 milliseconds. The results can be seen in Table 3.1.

WifiLock taken	Yes	No
Packet loss	0.9%	0.2%
Min. RTT [ms]	1.2	1.9
Avg. RTT [ms]	3.3	59.6
Max. RTT [ms]	177.2	351.7

Table 3.1. Comparison of Wi-Fi ping latencies with and without `WifiLock`.

Furthermore the PSP mode could cause issues with some Wi-Fi Access Points that do not support it. According to [5] this could lead to Wi-Fi connection being lost.

ORTE can be configured to use a multicast communication mode. Android, by default, ignores the incoming multicast traffic for power-saving reasons. In order to receive it, the program has to acquire the `MulticastLock`.

Both mentioned locks require specific Android permission (see Section 3.1) to be granted to an application using them. Specifically the `WifiLock` requires the `WAKE_LOCK` permission and the `MulticastLock` requires the `CHANGE_WIFI_MULTICAST_STATE` permission.

■ 3.3.5 Java Manager

A Java version of the native ORTE Manager was created to overcome problems with execution and termination of native processes. For the role of the Manager see Section 2.1.2.

The Java version was created by adding a wrapper around the ORTE functions used by the native Manager. The only functionality required on the Android is the possibility for the Java Manager to see other communication nodes on the network. That is why the only currently implemented feature of the native Manager is the possibility to pass an option specifying IP addresses of nodes to the underlying ORTE functions. However, Manager's wrapper could be easily extended to pass another options to ORTE functions.

Chapter 4

Evaluation

The ported ORTE Java wrapper was evaluated by writing a simple application (Section 4.1) and comparing the performance of the native and Java implementations (Section 4.2).

4.1 Example Android Application

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 show code of a simple publisher and subscriber. First an application creates a `DomainApp` object, then registers the data type (see Figure 4.2) that it uses and finally registers a publisher or subscriber. Publisher can publish new data by calling the `send` method. Subscriber receives data in the `callback` method. In order for applications to find each other a manager application (see Figure 4.1) is needed.

```
import org.ocera.orte.*;

public class ExampleManager {

    public static void main(String[] args) {
        Manager manager = new Manager();

        while(true) {
            try {
                Thread.sleep(1000);
            } catch(Exception e) {
                e.printStackTrace();
            }
        }
    }
}
```

Figure 4.1. Code of a simple Java Manager.

4.2 Performance Comparison

To have a basic understanding about the overhead of the Java wrapper used for writing Android applications, a set of experiments was conducted. I created a publisher and a subscriber as applications in both C (native) and in Java. The publisher tries to publish data as fast as possible. Because both the publisher and the subscriber were configured as “reliable”, ORTE ensures that no publication gets lost and the subscriber receives all the published data. Both the publisher and the subscriber were run on the same device to measure the performance of the middleware itself rather than the

```

import org.ocera.orte.*;
import org.ocera.orte.types.*;

public class ExampleData extends MessageData {
    public short data = 1;

    public ExampleData(DomainApp domainApp, String newTopic) {
        super();
        this.setTopic(newTopic);
        domainApp.regNewDataType("example_type",
            getMaxDataLength());
    }

    @Override
    public void write() {
        buffer.rewind();
        buffer.putShort(this.data);
    }

    @Override
    public void read() {
        buffer.rewind();
        this.data = buffer.getShort();
    }

    @Override
    public int getMaxDataLength() {
        return ORTEConstant.SHORT_FIELD_SIZE;
    }
}

```

Figure 4.2. Code of a simple Java Data type class.

performance of the underlying network. I measured how long does it take to publish ten thousand integer values. The experiments were run on three different devices Sony Ericsson Xperia Ray with Android 4.0.4, Google Nexus 7 with Android 4.3 and a PC with Intel Core i7-3520M CPU running at 2.90 GHz with OpenJDK 7. The results can be seen in Table 4.1.

Pub	→	Sub	Xperia	Nexus 7	PC
C	→	C	2.2 s	2.3 s	0.31 s
Java	→	Java	10.3 s	6.8 s	0.78 s
C	→	Java	10.1 s	6.3 s	0.78 s
Java	→	C	2.6 s	2.5 s	0.31 s

Table 4.1. Performance comparison of native code and Java wrapper. Time needed for publication of 10,000 integer values.

The relative slowdown of the Java implementation compared to the native one is depicted in Figure 4.5. It can be seen that Dalvik VM performance has improved between version 4.0.4 and 4.3 (or that it runs better on Nexus 7 hardware). OpenJDK performs even better than Dalvik VM. There is no slowdown in Java → C case and in both cases with the subscriber in Java, the performance is the same.


```

import org.ocera.orte.*;
import org.ocera.orte.types.*;

public class ExamplePublisher {

    public static void main(String[] args) throws Exception {
        NtpTime persistence = new NtpTime(3);
        int strength = 100;

        DomainApp appDomain = new DomainApp(
            0, DomainProp.defaultPropsCreate(), null, false);
        ExampleData datamsg = new ExampleData(appDomain, "example_topic");
        PublProp publProp = new PublProp("example_topic",
            "example_type", persistence, strength);
        Publication pub = appDomain.createPublication(publProp, datamsg);

        while(true) {
            Thread.sleep(1000);
            pub.send(datamsg);
            datamsg.data++; } } }

```

Figure 4.3. Code of a simple Java Publisher.

```

import org.ocera.orte.*;
import org.ocera.orte.types.*;

public class ExampleSubscriber extends SubscriptionCallback {

    public static void main(String[] args) throws Exception {
        NtpTime deadline = new NtpTime(10);
        NtpTime minSeparation = new NtpTime(0);

        DomainApp appDomain = new DomainApp(
            0, DomainProp.defaultPropsCreate(), null, false);
        ExampleData datamsg = new ExampleData(appDomain, "example_topic");
        SubsProp subProps = new SubsProp(
            "example_topic", "example_type",
            minSeparation, deadline,
            ORTEConstant.IMMEDIATE,
            ORTEConstant.BEST Efforts, 0);
        Subscription sub = appDomain.
            createSubscription(subProps, datamsg, new ExampleSubscriber());

        while(true)
            Thread.sleep(1000); }

    public void callback(RecvInfo info, MessageData msg) {
        if (info.getRecvStatus() == ORTEConstant.NEW_DATA)
            System.out.println(((ExampleData)msg).data); } }

```

Figure 4.4. Code of a simple Java Subscriber.

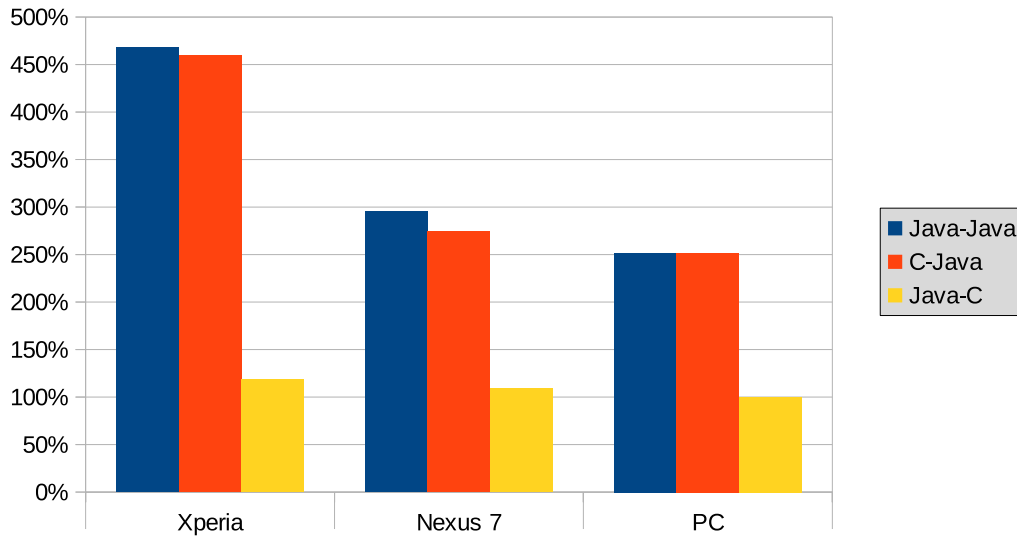


Figure 4.5. Relative slowdown of implementations.

The reason for Java subscriber being slow is mostly because of the way Java receive callback is called from the native code. There is a native receive thread that handles received packets as they arrive. If new data were received, a native callback function is called from within this thread. The callback is passed a buffer containing the received data as well as an instance of `ORTERRecvInfo` structure containing information about the data (e.g. endianness, topic, sequence number). In case of Java subscribers this callback is implemented as a JNI function that first attaches itself to the Java VM to have access to Java classes and existing objects. It then creates a new Java object, that is essentially a Java version of the `ORTERRecvInfo` structure. After this, it sets byte order of Java's direct `ByteBuffer` according to `ORTERRecvInfo` and calls a method of an Java object, which represents the received data, to deserialize the data stored in the `ByteBuffer`. When this is done an application callback function is called with the deserialized Java object as a parameter. After the Java callback returns the native receive thread detaches itself from the Java VM.

As could be seen from the above description the main bottleneck lays in the fact that the native receive thread, from which the Java wrapper's receive callback function is called, has to be attached to the Java VM and has to call many JNI functions that copy a lot of data internally. As could be seen from performed measurements the drop in throughput is significant.

A better way to call Java's receive callback function would be to create a dedicated Java thread reading from a custom message queue to which messages could be written directly from the native receive callback function without the need to attach to the Java VM. This is considered for future development.

Chapter 5

Demo application

In order to demonstrate functionality of the ported ORTE library, I wrote an application in Java for remote control of a small robot. The application is called RoboDruid. It is capable of displaying information received from an on-board Laser Range Finder, monitoring battery voltage and controlling robot's motion. Robot's hardware and software is described in Section 5.1.

Robot's motion is controlled by an accelerometer embedded in the Android device. To suppress the noise, accelerometer output is filtered by a low-pass filter. We use standard sensor API of Android in order to interface with the accelerometer. Section 5.2 expands on the implementation of the demo application. Section 5.3 provides a user manual for the developed application.

5.1 Demo Robot

This section introduces basics of ORTE's use in the robot. Detailed description of the robot's hardware and software can be found in [17] and in the diploma thesis of Ing. Michal Vokáč [19]. Here we will only describe parts of the robot, that are vital for understanding how the different components of robot are connected together. This information was used during the development of the demo application for Android.

The mobile robot being used was previously developed by the Flamingos robotic team at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the Czech Technical University in Prague. The robot was constructed in order to take part in Eurobot 2007 and similar indoor robotic contests.

Later a decision was made to construct a new robot for competitions and use the former for demonstration purposes. It is being used mainly at events like Doors Open Days or various exhibitions. I have made no changes to it's hardware or software design.

5.1.1 Robot's Hardware

The centerpiece of the Demo Robot is Main Controller Board (MCB) equipped with MIDAM Shark microprocessing unit powered by Freescale MPC5200 CPU. The board features CAN bus, 10/100T Ethernet, USB host bus. Detailed description of the board can be found in [19, Section 4.5].

The robot is equipped with Hokuyo URG-04LX-UG01 Laser Range Finder that is capable of measuring distance from objects in front of the robot in polar coordinates. Detailed sensor parameters can be found in [19, page 26]. The LRF sensor is connected to USB bus on the Main Controller Board.

Power to the robot is supplied by so called "PWR board". This board includes three independent switching power supplies delivering voltages 3.3 V, 5 V and 8 V. The board continuously measures voltage levels on all three branches. Details of the board can be found in [19, Section 4.3].

The robot is geared by two BLDC motors controlled by so called “Driver board”. The motors are driven by a PWM signal generated by the board. Detailed description of the board can be found on pages 22–23 in [19].

For demo purposes, the robot was equipped with a small crane manipulator arm and an electromagnet. The small crane arm is driven by a servomotor. Both the servomotor and the electromagnet are controlled by so called “EB board”. Details about this board can be found on pages 18–20 in [19]. Description of the robot’s manipulator design is on pages 12–13 in [19].

The three previously mentioned boards (“PWR board”, “Driver board”, “EB board”) are connected through CAN bus to the Main Controller Board.

The robot is equipped with a Wi-Fi router that is connected through Ethernet to the Main Controller Board. We use this Wi-Fi interface to connect to the robot from an Android device. Details about the router can be found in [19].

■ 5.1.2 Robot’s Software

The robot’s Main Controller Board is powered by a Linux-based Operating System (custom Linux flavor; includes only basic tools like BusyBox and Dropbear SSH server; for more information see [19, Section 5.1]). There are few programs running on this board that we will shortly describe:

- **cand** application is used to send data between the Main Controller Board and other boards connected to it through the CAN bus. This application receives CAN messages with specific IDs and publishes them as ORTE issues. The cand also works in the opposite direction. It subscribes to certain ORTE topics and assembles CAN frames from them. In other words, it serves as a bridge between ORTE and CAN.
- **hokuyod** acquires data from LRF and publishes them on ORTE.
- **ortemanager** maintains record of ORTE participants across the network.

■ 5.1.3 Mapping of CAN Message IDs to ORTE Topics

In this section we take a look at various ORTE Topics used in the robot that are of importance for the development of RoboDruid. We also map ORTE Topics to corresponding CAN Message IDs in Figure 5.1. The description of ORTE Topics uses ORTE IDL language. It’s syntax is similar to that of the C language.

ORTE Topic	CAN Message alias	CAN Message ID
<code>motion_speed</code>	<code>CAN_MOTION_CMD</code>	0x21
<code>pwr_voltage</code>	<code>CAN_PWR_ADC1</code> , <code>CAN_PWR_ADC1</code>	0x41, 0x42
<code>crane_cmd</code>	<code>CAN_CRANE_CMD</code>	0x34
<code>magnet_cmd</code>	<code>CAN_MAGNET_CMD</code>	0x35

Table 5.1. Mapping of CAN Message IDs to ORTE Topics.

```
struct motion_speed {
    short left;
    short right;
};
```

Figure 5.1. IDL code for topic motion_speed.

```
struct pwr_voltage {
    double voltage33;
    double voltage50;
    double voltage80;
    double voltageBAT;
};
```

Figure 5.2. IDL code for topic pwr_voltage.

```
struct hokuyo_scan {
    unsigned short data[681];
};
```

Figure 5.3. IDL code for topic hokuyo_scan.

```
struct magnet_cmd {
    unsigned short on;
};
```

Figure 5.4. IDL code for topic magnet_cmd.

```
struct crane_cmd {
    unsigned short req_pos;
    unsigned short speed;
};
```

Figure 5.5. IDL code for topic crane_cmd.

5.2 Implementation

In this section we describe some important aspects of implementation¹⁾ of the Robo-Druid. Section 5.2.1 gives a basic overview of the application's package structure. In Section 5.2.2 we describe how the data from accelerometer are acquired and used for robot's motion control. In Section 5.2.3 we look on how the data received from robot's Laser Range Finder are processed and drawn.

¹⁾ For complete source code of the application, see:
http://rttime.felk.cvut.cz/gitweb/orte.git/tree/HEAD:/orte/contrib/Robot_Demo

■ 5.2.1 Java Package Structure

The application is structured into four separate Java packages. The first one is called `GUI` and consists of classes dealing with the main Activity's¹⁾ creation and custom `View`²⁾ that handles the drawing of actual speed vector of the robot and visualization of received data from the Laser Range Finder onboard the robot. The second one, called `DataTypes`, includes classes extending `MessageData` that describe the data types for given topics sent through ORTE. The third, called `Publishers`, and fourth, called `Subscribers`, define publishers and subscribers of different topics used in the application.

■ 5.2.2 Acquisition and Processing of Accelerometer data

Many today's Android devices are equipped with a 3-axis accelerometer that is used mainly in games and for changing screen orientation based on current direction of the acceleration vector.

We use the accelerometer in order to control the angular and linear velocity of a mobile robot. First, we will briefly look at Android's `SensorManager` [2] and `SensorEvent` [1] API.

Access to built-in sensors is mediated by `android.hardware.SensorManager` class. This manager allows a user to request data from a certain kind of sensor. The `SensorManager` then allows to register a callback listener class that will process the received data. This class contains a function `onSensorChanged(SensorEvent event)`, that is used for processing of new data received from the sensor and `onAccuracyChanged(Sensor sensor, int accuracy)`, used for notification of change in sensor's accuracy.

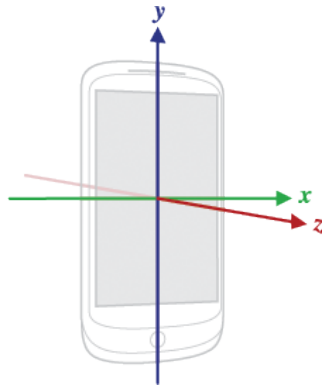


Figure 5.6. Android `SensorEvent` API reference frame (*Source: [1]*)

The data from sensor is delivered to the listener inside a `SensorEvent` object. Figure 5.6 shows coordinate system used by Android's `SensorEvent` API.

The accelerometer measures the proper acceleration (i.e. relative to a free-fall in the device's reference frame) experienced by the device. For robot's motion control, we only need the x-axis and y-axis component of the acceleration vector.

The data produced by the sensor is susceptible to high frequency noise caused by numerous factors. Perhaps the most important being the shaking of hands and deliberate attempt to "overload" the robot's motors by tilting the device from side to side.

¹⁾ <http://developer.android.com/guide/components/activities.html>

²⁾ <http://developer.android.com/training/custom-views/index.html>

In order to reduce the high frequency component we use a simple filter, that takes the previous value of acceleration $y[n - 1]$, the current measured value $u[n]$ and calculates new value of acceleration $y[n]$.

Eq. 5.1.

$$y[n] = \alpha y[n - 1] + (1 - \alpha)u[n] ,$$

where $\alpha = 0.75$.

We apply this formula to both the x-axis and y-axis component of the acceleration vector. This filter is mentioned in the documentation of the `SensorEvent` API [1]. This filtered acceleration vector is then used to calculate the required speeds of the left and right motor of the robot.

5.2.3 Handling of received Laser Range Finder Data

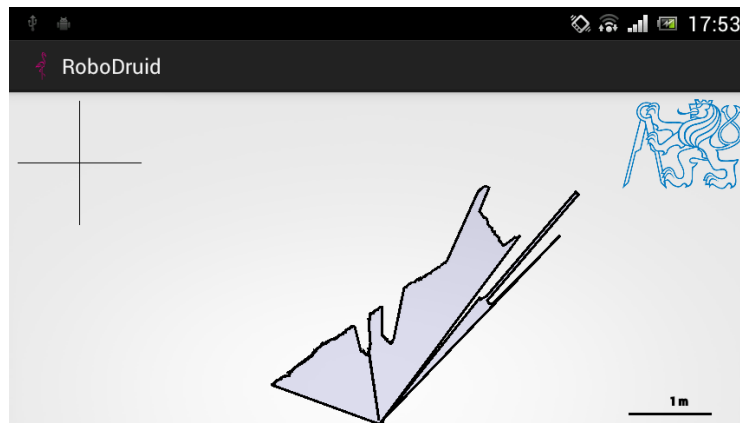


Figure 5.7. Visualization of Data published by the LRF.

The Laser Range Finder produces data in polar coordinates. The space around the LRF is partitioned into equally sized circular sectors. There are 681 values published through the `hokuyo_scan` topic. Each value contains distance to the nearest obstacle [in millimeters] in a specific circular sector.

This data is easily transformed to a Cartesian coordinate system that is used by Android's painting methods. Example of the visualized LRF data in the RoboDruid is on Figure 5.7.

5.3 User Manual

Since the RoboDruid is intended for demonstration purposes, we present a thorough step-by-step guide for RoboDruid's compilation (Section 5.3.1) on Debian-like OS's as well as RoboDruid's user manual (Section 5.3.2).

5.3.1 Compilation

In order to compile RoboDruid on Debian-based systems the following packages must be installed:

- make (version 3.81 or higher)
- ant
- git
- oracle-java7-installer¹⁾

As a next step, download Android NDK²⁾ and SDK³⁾. After extracting these you need to launch shell and add few directories to the PATH environment variable:

```
$ export PATH=$PATH:<path-to-NDK>
$ export PATH=$PATH:<path-to-SDK>/platform-tools:<path-to-SDK>/tools
```

Next it is necessary to obtain “SDK Platform for Android 4.0.3”. To do this execute command:

```
$ android update sdk --no-ui --all --filter android-15
```

During the installation user has to accept the “Android Software Development Kit License Agreement”.

In the next step source code of ORTE and RoboDruid will be fetched. There are many ways to accomplish that. I suggest cloning the GIT repository. You do this by issuing:

```
$ git clone git://rtime.felk.cvut.cz/orte
$ cd orte
```

In the next step a local properties file will be created for both the Android library and the RoboDruid application:

```
$ android update project -p orte/libaorte
$ android update project -p orte/contrib/Robot_Demo
```

To build the native code you have to issue the following commands:

```
$ cd orte/libaorte
$ ndk-build
```

Now, it is possible to build the Java code and sign the application package with a debug key:

```
$ cd ../contrib/Robot_Demo
$ ant debug
```

At this point user should have successfully build a package ready for deploying onto an Android device. One possibility to install the application directly onto the device is to connect the device to PC’s USB port and use the ADB application from the SDK to do the installation:

```
$ adb install bin/RoboDruid-debug.apk
```

After the installation begins, it is necessary to confirm application’s permissions on the Android device’s screen.

¹⁾ Available from webupd8team/java ppa repository; could be added to local repositories by issuing command `$ sudo add-apt-repository ppa:webupd8team/java`

²⁾ Available from <http://developer.android.com/tools/sdk/ndk/index.html>

³⁾ Available from <http://developer.android.com/sdk/index.html>

5.3.2 User Instructions

Power-up the robot by flipping the power button and wait for it to finish initialization (indicators of function of individual components on the robot’s display will turn green).

In order to connect to the robot’s Wi-Fi interface, you have to first setup a connection profile for the robot’s Access Point. Open Settings dialog on the Android device, tap on Wi-Fi and select “CTU_demo” AP and enter “demorobot” as a passphrase, then save the profile and connect to it.

When the connection is established you can start RoboDruid. To do that, tap on it’s icon in the device’s menu. After the application’s start-up, the screen on Figure 5.8 will appear.

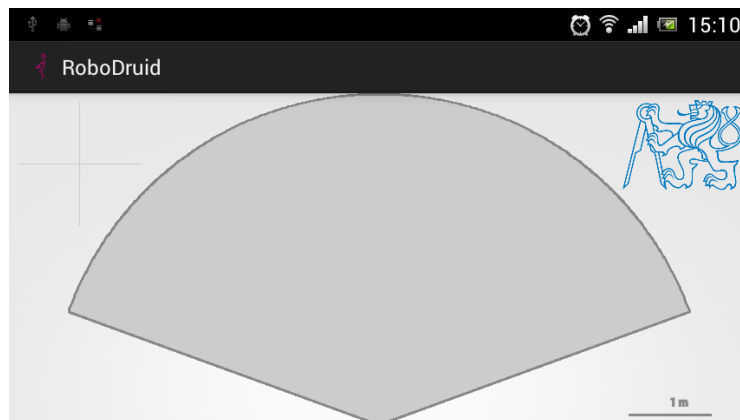


Figure 5.8. RoboDruid’s default screen.

To start receiving data (subscribe to ORTE topic `hokuyo_scan`) from robot’s onboard Laser Range Finder, you need to tap on the gray circular sector located in the middle of the screen. Successful subscription creation will be announced by text “Hokuyo LRF: ON”. To unsubscribe tap again in the same region. Successful subscription cancellation will be announced by text “Hokuyo LRF: OFF”.

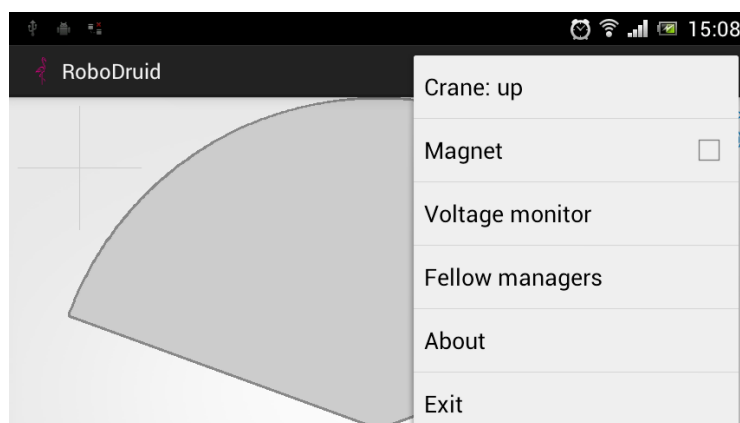


Figure 5.9. RoboDruid’s menu.

To control robot’s motion (publish topic `motion_speed`), push in the top left corner of the screen and hold until text “Motion Control: ON” appears at the bottom of the screen.

In order to monitor current speed of the robot, single tap in the top left corner of the screen. A text “Speed Monitor: ON” confirming successful subscription to ORTE topic `motion_speed` should appear. The orientation of the axis is analogous to that in Figure 5.6. The vertical axis of the displayed cross represents angular velocity of the robot. The horizontal axis represents linear velocity of the robot. To unsubscribe tap again in the same region. Successful subscription cancellation will be announced by text “Speed Monitor: OFF”.

To change position of the robot’s crane, press the Menu button and select Crane (see Figure 5.9). The current position of the crane is written next to it in the menu. The default assumed position at RoboDruid’s start is “up”.

To activate the electromagnet, that is located at the end of the crane’s arm, press the Magnet (see Figure 5.9) button in the menu. Current status of magnet is represented by a check-box next to it’s entry in the menu. If the magnet is enabled, the box will be checked and vice versa.

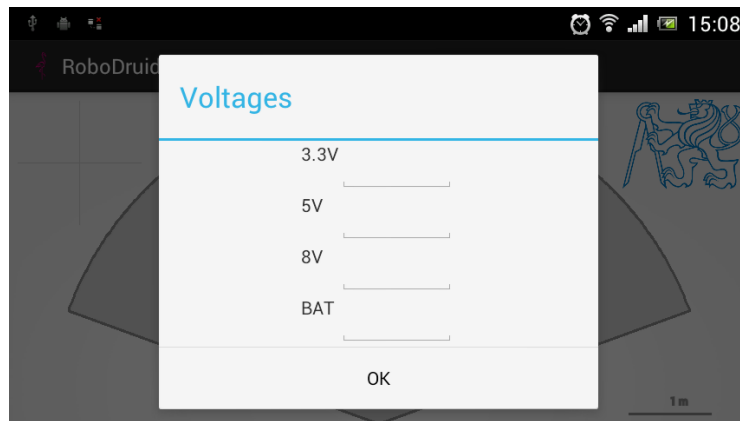


Figure 5.10. RoboDruid’s Voltage Monitor.

It is possible to monitor current voltage on different branches used inside the robot as well as it’s battery voltage. To do that, tap on “Voltage monitor” in the menu, a dialog showing the voltages will pop-up (see Figure 5.10). The displayed values are continuously updated.

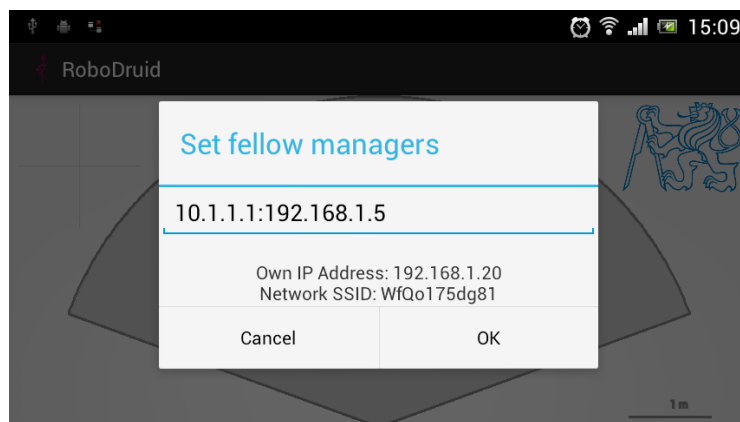


Figure 5.11. RoboDruid’s Managers Dialog

It is possible to enter IP addresses of other computers connected to the robot's Wi-Fi AP. This could be useful for example to receive current speed of robot, that is being controlled by an application launched on the computer, on the Android device. To do this select the "Fellow managers" option in menu. Next, a dialog will pop-up (see Figure 5.11). IP addresses of neighboring computers could be entered into the text box and separated by a colon. By default, only the IP address of the Main Controller Board (10.1.1.1) is entered. The dialog also displays current IP address associated with the Wi-Fi interface as well as the name (SSID) of the Wi-Fi network that the device is currently connected to. After entering IP addresses of neighboring computers in the box, confirm new settings by tapping OK. After this a new manager domain will be created. It will take approximately one minute for applications running on nodes across the network to find each other through the newly created manager domain. If you do not want to wait, just restart RoboDruid. It will remember the list of neighboring computers across restarts.

As this application is intended for demonstration purposes, unexpected situations can occur, such that could lead to robot's damage or cause an injury to someone. In case of such an event, pressing the Home or Power button will stop robot's movement.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

In this work an application to monitor and control mobile robots using an Android-based mobile device was developed. This application can be used on occasions like Doors Open Days. In order to develop the application, we first had to port the ORTE library to Android.

We successfully ported the ORTE library and its Java wrapper to Android. As a result many bugfixes and changes were made to the Java wrapper, the most important being:

- Creation of Java variant of the ORTE Manager.
- Ability to receive and publish data in both Little-Endian and Big-Endian byte orders.
- Reduction of overhead during data's publication/reception achieved by eliminating excessive copying of elements between internal ORTE buffers and Java wrapper buffers.

We assessed performance of the ported Java wrapper and compared it with that of native ORTE. The ported wrapper as well as the developed mobile application were thoroughly tested. We have also analyzed differences between current state of the ORTE implementation and the changes necessary for it to be compatible with the RTPS V2.1 standard.

Shorter version of this thesis was published at the Real-Time Linux Workshop [18].

References

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Appendix A

Abbreviations

ACE	Adaptive Communication Environment
ADB	Android Debug Bridge
ADT	Android Development Tools
AP	Access Point
API	Application Programming Interface
BLDC	Brushless Direct Current electric motor
CAM	Continuously Aware Mode, sometimes also called Constantly Awake Mode
CAN	Controller Area Network
CORBA	Common Object Request Broker Architecture
CPU	Central Processing Unit
DCPS	Data-centric publish-subscribe
DDS	Data Distribution Service
GUI	Graphical User Interface
IDL	Interface Description Language
IP	Internet Protocol
JNI	Java Native Interface
JVM	Java Virtual Machine
LRF	Laser Range Finder
MCB	Main Controller Board
NDK	Native Development Kit
OMG	Object Management Group
ORTE	Open Real-Time Ethernet
OS	Operating System
PC	Personal Computer
PSP	Power Save Polling
PWM	Pulse-width Modulation
QoS	Quality of Service
RTPS	Real-Time Publish-Subscribe
SDK	Software Development Kit
SEDP	Simple Endpoint Discovery Protocol
SPDP	Simple Participant Discovery Protocol
SSH	Secure Shell

SSID	Service Set Identifier
TAO	The ACE ORB
UDP	User Datagram Protocol
USB	Universal Serial Bus
VM	Virtual Machine



Appendix **B**

Contents of the Attached CD

- **doc**
 - **thesis.pdf** – electronic version of this thesis
- **application**
 - **RoboDruid.apk** – installation package of the developed RoboDruid application