CSE 501: Implementation of Programming Languages

Main focus: **program analysis and transformation**
- how to represent programs?
- how to analyze programs? what to analyze?
- how to transform programs? what transformations to apply?

Study imperative, functional, and object-oriented languages

Prerequisites:
- CSE 401 **or equivalent**
- CSE 505 **or equivalent**

Reading:
Appel's "Modern Compiler Implementation"
+ ~20 papers from literature
- "Compilers: Principles, Techniques, & Tools", a.k.a. the Dragon Book, as a reference

Coursework:
- periodic homework assignments
- major course project
- midterm + final

Course outline

Models of compilation/analysis

Standard optimizing transformations

Basic representations and analyses
Fancier representations and analyses

Interprocedural representations, analyses, and transformations
- for imperative, functional, and OO languages

Compiler back-end issues
- register allocation
- instruction scheduling

Run-time system issues
- garbage collection
- compiling dynamic dispatch, first-class functions, ...

Dynamic (JIT) compilation

Why study compilers?

Meeting area of programming languages, architectures
- capabilities of compilers greatly influences design of these others

Program representation, analysis, and transformation is widely useful beyond this "traditional" task
- software engineering tools
- DB query optimizers
- programmable graphics renderers
- safety checking of code, e.g. in programmable/extensible systems, networks, databases

Cool theoretical aspects, too
- lattice domains, graph algorithms, computability/complexity

Goals for language implementation

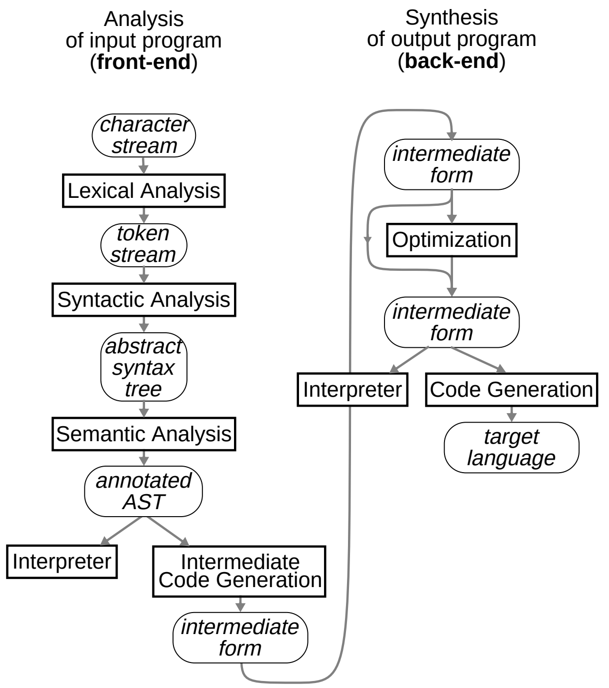
Correctness

Efficiency
- of: time, data space, code space
- at: compile-time, run-time

Support expressive, safe language features
- first-class, higher-order functions
- method dispatching
- exceptions, continuations
- reflection, dynamic code loading
- bounds-checked arrays, ...
- garbage collection
- ...

Support desirable programming environment features
- fast turnaround
- separate compilation, shared libraries
- source-level debugging
- profiling
- ...

Standard compiler organization



Idea: compile to a portable intermediate language

Define “portable” intermediate language
(e.g. Java bytecode, MSIL, SUIF, WIL, C, ...)

Compile multiple languages into it
- each such compiler may not be much more than a front-end

Compile to multiple targets from it
- may not be much more than back-end

Maybe interpret/execute directly

Advantages:
- reuse of front-ends and back-ends
- portable “compiled” code

BUT: design of portable intermediate language is **hard**
- how universal?
  across input language models? target machine models?
- fast interpretation and simple compilation at odds

Key questions

How are programs represented in the compiler?

How are analyses organized/structured?
Over what region of the program are analyses performed?
What analysis algorithms are used?

What kinds of optimizations can be performed?
Which are profitable in practice?
How should analyses/optimizations be sequenced/combined?

How best to compile in face of:
- pointers, arrays
- first-class functions
- inheritance & message passing
- parallel target machines

Other issues:
- speeding compilation
- making compilers portable, table-driven
- supporting tools like debuggers, profilers, garbage collect’rs

Overview of optimizations

First **analyze** program to learn things about it
Then **transform** the program based on info
Repeat...

Requirement: don’t change the semantics!
- transform input program into
  semantically equivalent but better output program

Analysis determines when transformations are:
- legal
- profitable

Caveat: “optimize” a misnomer
- result is almost never optimal
- sometimes slow down some programs on some inputs
  (although hope to speed up most programs on most inputs)

Semantics

Exactly what are the semantics that are to be preserved?

Subtleties:

- evaluation order
- arithmetic properties like associativity, commutativity
- behavior in “error” cases

Some languages very precise

- programmers always know what they’re getting

Others weaker

- allow better performance (but how much?)

Semantics selected by compiler option?

Scope of analysis

Peephole: across a small number of “adjacent” instructions
[adjacent in space or time]

- trivial analysis

Local: within a **basic block**

- simple, fast analysis

Intraprocedural (a.k.a. **global**):
across basic blocks, within a procedure

- analysis more complex:
  branches, merges, loops

Interprocedural:
across procedures, within a whole program

- analysis even more complex:
  calls, returns
- sometimes useful
  - more useful for higher-level languages
- hard with separate compilation

Whole-program:
analysis examines whole program in order to prove safety

A tour of common optimizations/transformations

arithmetic simplifications:

- constant folding

```
x := 3 + 4  ⇒  x := 7
```

- strength reduction

```
x := y * 4  ⇒  x := y << 2
```

constant propagation

```
x := 5      ⇒  x := 5      ⇒  x := 5
y := x + 2     y := 5 + 2     y := 7
```

integer range analysis

- fold comparisons based on range analysis
- eliminate unreachable code

```
for(index = 0; index < 10; index ++) {
  if index >= 10 goto _error
  a[index] := 0
}
```

- more generally, symbolic assertion analysis

copy propagation

```
x := y      ⇒  x := y
w := w + x     w := w + y
```

common subexpression elimination (CSE)

```
x := a + b  ⇒  x := a + b
...            ...
y := a + b     y := x
```

- can also eliminate redundant memory references,
  branch tests

partial redundancy elimination (PRE)

- like CSE, but with earlier expression only available along
  subset of possible paths

```
if ... then ⇒ if ... then
  ...            ...
  x := a + b     t := a + b; x := t
end            else t := a + b end
...            ...
y := a + b     y := t
```

pointer/alias analysis

```
p  := &x    ⇒   p  := &x     ⇒   p  := &x
*p := 5         *p := 5          *p := 5
y  := x + 1     y  := 5 + 1      y  := 6
```

```
x  := 5
*p := 3
y  := x + 1 ⇒   ???
```


dead (unused) assignment elimination

```
x := y ** z
... // no use of x
x := 6
```

- a common clean-up after other optimizations:

```
x := y      ⇒  x := y      ⇒  x := y
w := w + x     w := w + y  ⇒  w := w + y
... // no use of x
```

partial dead assignment elimination

- like DAE, except assignment only used on some later paths

dead (unreachable) code elimination

```
  if false goto _else
  ...
  goto _done
_else:
  ...
_done:
```

- another common clean-up after other optimizations

loop-invariant code motion

```
for j := 1 to 10       ⇒  for j := 1 to 10
  for i := 1 to 10           t := b[j]
    a[i] := a[i] + b[j]      for i := 1 to 10
                               a[i] := a[i] + t
```

induction variable elimination

```
for i := 1 to 10   ⇒  for p := &a[1] to &a[10]
  a[i] := a[i] + 1       *p := *p + 1
```

- `a[i]` is several instructions, `*p` is one

loop unrolling

```
for i := 1 to N     ⇒  for i := 1 to N by 4
  a[i] := a[i] + 1        a[i]   := a[i]   + 1
                          a[i+1] := a[i+1] + 1
                          a[i+2] := a[i+2] + 1
                          a[i+3] := a[i+3] + 1
```


parallelization

```
for i := 1 to 1000  ⇒  forall i := 1 to 1000
  a[i] := a[i] + 1       a[i] := a[i] + 1
```

loop interchange, skewing, reversal, ...

blocking/tiling

- restructuring loops for better data cache locality inlining

```
l := ...        ⇒  l := ...    ⇒  l := ...
w := 4             w := 4         w := 4
a := area(l,w)     a := l * w     a := l << 2
```

- lots of “silly” optimizations become important after inlining

interprocedural constant propagation, alias analysis, etc.

static binding of dynamic calls

- in imperative languages, for call of a function pointer:
  if can compute unique target of pointer,
  can replace with direct call
- in functional languages, for call of a computed function:
  if can compute unique value of function expression,
  can replace with direct call
- in OO languages, for dynamically dispatched message:
  if can deduce class of receiver,
  can replace with direct call
- other possible optimizations even if several possible targets

procedure specialization

register allocation

instruction selection

```
p1 := p + 4    ⇒    ld %g3, [%g1 + 4]
x := *p1
```

- particularly important on CISCs

instruction scheduling

```
ld  %g2, [%g1 + 0]  ⇒   ld  %g2, [%g1 + 0]
add %g3, %g2, 1         ld  %g5, [%g1 + 4]
ld  %g2, [%g1 + 4]      add %g3, %g2, 1
add %g4, %g2, 1         add %g4, %g5, 1
```

- particularly important with instructions that have delayed results, and on wide-issue machines
- vs. dynamically scheduled machines?

Optimization themes

Don’t compute it if you don’t have to

- dead assignment elimination

Compute it at compile-time if you can

- constant folding, loop unrolling, inlining

Compute it as few times as possible

- CSE, PRE, PDE, loop-invariant code motion

Compute it as cheaply as possible

- strength reduction, induction var. elimination,
  parallelization, register allocation, scheduling

Enable other optimizations

- constant & copy propagation, pointer analysis

Compute it with as little code space as possible

- dead code elimination

The phase ordering problem

Typically, want to perform a number of optimizations;
in what order should the transformations be performed?

some optimizations create opportunities for other optimizations
⇒ order optimizations using this dependence

- some optimizations simplified
  if can assume another opt will run later & “clean up”

but what about cyclic dependences?

- e.g. constant folding ⇔ constant propagation

what about adverse interactions?

- e.g.
  common subexpression elimination ⇔ register allocation
- e.g.
  register allocation ⇔ instruction scheduling

Compilation models

Separate compilation
- compile source files independently
- trivial link, load, run stages

+ quick recompilation after program changes

– poor interprocedural optimization

Link-time compilation
- delay bulk of compilation until link-time
- then perform whole-program optimizations

+ allow interprocedural & whole-program optimizations

– quick recompilation? shared precompiled libraries?

Examples: Vortex, some research optimizers/parallelizers, ...

Run-time compilation (a.k.a. dynamic, just-in-time compilation)
- delay bulk of compilation until run-time
- can perform whole-program optimizations + optimizations based on run-time program state, execution environment

+ best optimization potential

+ can handle run-time changes/extensions to the program

– severe pressure to limit run-time compilation overhead

Examples: Java JITs, Dynamo, FX-32, Transmeta

Selective run-time compilation
- choose what part of compilation to delay to run-time

+ can balance compile-time/benefit trade-offs

Example: DyC

Hybrids of all the above
- spread compilation arbitrarily across stages

+ all the advantages, and none of the disadvantages!!

Example: Whirlwind

Engineering

Building a compiler is an engineering activity
- balance
  complexity of implementation,
  speed-up of “typical” programs,
  compilation speed,
  ...

Near infinite number of special cases for optimization can be identified
- can’t implement them all

Good compiler design, like good language design, seeks small set of powerful, general analyses and transformations, to minimize implementation complexity while maximizing effectiveness
- reality isn’t always this pure...