Types
Roadmap

Back from LR Parsing Detour

Name analysis
  – Static vs dynamic
  – Scope

Today
  – Type checking
Lecture Outline

Type Safari
- Type system concepts
- Type system vocab

Harambe
- Type rules
- How to apply type rules

Data representation
- Moving towards actual code generation
- Brief comments about types in memory
Say, What *is* a Type?

Short for “data type”

– Classification identifying kinds of data
– A set of possible values which a variable can possess
– Operations that can be done on member values
– A representation (perhaps in memory)
Type Intuition

You can’t do this:

```c
int a = 0;
int * pointer = &a;
float fraction = 1.2;
a = pointer + fraction;
```

... or can you?
Components of a type system

Primitive types + operators for building more complex types
  – int, bool, void, class, function, struct

Means of determining if types are compatible
  – Can disparate types be combined? How?

Rules for inferring type of an expression
Type Rules

For every operator (including assignment)
– What types can the operand have?
– What type is the result?

Examples

double a;
int b;
a = b;  Legal in Java, C++
b = a;  Legal in C++, not in Java
Type Coercion

Implicit cast from one data type to another
  – Float to int

Narrow form: type promotion
  • When the destination type can represent the source type
  • float to double
Types of Typing I: **When** do we check?

Static typing

– Type checks are made before execution of the program (compile-time)

Dynamic typing

– Type checks are made during execution (runtime)

Combination of the two

– Java (downcasting vs cross-casting)
Example: Casting

Cross-casting (static check)
Apple a = new Apple();
Orange o = (Orange)a;

Downcasting (dynamic check)
Fruit f = new Apple();
if ( ... ) {
    f = new Orange();
}
Apple two = (Apple)f;
Static vs Dynamic Tradeoffs

Statically typed
– Compile-time optimization
– Compile-time error checking

Dynamically typed
– Avoid dealing with errors that don’t matter
– Some added flexibility
– Runtime failures
Duck Typing

Type is defined by the methods and properties

```python
class bird:
    def quack(): print(“quack!”)
class mechaBird:
    def quack(): print(“101011…”)
```

How do we check?

– Runtime modifications to allow duck typing (Duck punching)
Types of Typing II: *What* do we check?

Strong vs weak typing

– Degree to which type checks are performed
– Degree to which type errors are allowed to happen at runtime
– Continuum without precise definitions
No universal definitions but...

- Statically typed is often considered stronger (fewer type errors possible)
- The more implicit casts allowed the weaker the type system
- The fewer checks performed at runtime the weaker
Strong v Weak Example

C (weaker)

```c
union either{
    int i;
    float f;
} u;

u.i = 12;
float val = u.f;
```

StandardML (stronger)

```python
real(2) + 2.0
```
Fancier types

**Dependent types** can be used to reason about computation

- Reverse takes a list of int of length n and returns a list of length n

**Resource types** can be used to reason about program complexity

- The program only type-checks if it runs in poly time

Very hard to reason about, but strong guarantees
Type Safety

Type safety

– All successful operations must be allowed by the type system
– Java was explicitly designed to be type safe
  • If you have a variable with some type, it is guaranteed to be of that type
– C is not
– C++ is a little better

Computer scientist Ross Tate working to tame Java 'wildcards'

*By Bill Steele*

A Cornell computer scientist has just discovered that the Java computer language, designed to be safe, is not so safe after all, and now he is working to find a solution.
Type Safety Violations

C

– Format specifier
  printf(“%s”, 1);

– Memory safety
  struct big{
    int a[100000];
  };
  struct big * b = malloc(1);

C++

– Unchecked casts
  class T1{ char a};
  class T2{ int b; };
  int main{
    T1 * myT1 = new T1();
    T2 * myT2 = new T2();
    myT1 = (T1*)myT2;
  }
Type System of Harambe

Harambe
Harambe’s type system

Primitive types
  – int, bool, string, void

Type constructors
  – struct

Coercion
  – bool cannot be used as an int in our language (nor vice-versa)
Harambe Type Errors I

Arithmetic operators must have `int` operands

Equality operators `==` and `!=`
  – Operands must have same type
  – Can’t be applied to
    • Functions (but CAN be applied to function results)
    • struct name
    • struct variables

Other relational operators must have `int` operands

Logical operators must have `bool` operands
Harambe Type Errors II

Assignment operator
- Must have operands of the same type
- Can’t be applied to
  • Functions (but CAN be applied to function results)
  • struct name
  • struct variables

For `cin >> x;`
- x cannot be function struct name, struct variable

For `cout << x;`
- x cannot be function struct name, struct variable

Condition of if, while must be boolean
Harambe Type Errors III

Invoking (aka calling) something that’s not a function

Invoking a function with

– Wrong number of args
– Wrong types of args
  • Also will not allow struct or functions as args

Returning a value from a void function

Not returning a value in a non-void function

Returning wrong type of value in a non-void function
Type Checking

Structurally similar to nameAnalysis

– Historically, intermingled with nameAnalysis and done as part of attribute “decoration”

Add a typeCheck method to AST nodes

– Recursively walk the AST checking types of sub-expressions

– Let’s look at a couple of examples
Type Checking: Binary Operator

• Get the type of the LHS
• Get the type of the RHS
• Check that the types are compatible for the operator
• Set the kind of the node be a value
• Set the type of the node to be the type of the operation’s result
Type “Checking”: Literal

Cannot be wrong

– Just pass the type of the literal up the tree
Type Checking: IdNode

Look up the type of the declaration

– There should be a symbol “linked” to the node

Pass symbol type up the tree

IdNode

(type: int)

mySymbol
Type Checking: Others

Other node types follow these same principles

– Function calls
  • Get type of each actual argument
  • Match against the formal argument (check symbol)
  • Send the return type up the tree

– Statement
  • No type
Type Checking: Errors

We’d like all *distinct* errors at the same time

– Don’t give up at the first error
– Don’t report the same error multiple times

Introduce an internal **error** type

– When type incompatibility is discovered
  • Report the error
  • Pass **error** up the tree

– When you get error as an operand
  • Don’t (re)report an error
  • Again, pass **error** up the tree
int a;
bool b;
a = true + 1 + 2 + b;
b = 2;
Looking Towards Next Lecture

Look at data (and therefore types) is represented in the machine.

Start very abstract, won’t talk about an actual architecture for awhile.

Assembly has no intrinsic notion of types. We’ll have to add code for type checking ourselves.