

Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1. Stages of Compilation	1
1.2. The rush Programming Language	3
1.2.1. Features	3
2. Analyzing the Source	6
2.1. Lexical and Syntactical Analysis	6
2.1.1. Formal Syntactical Definition by a Grammar	6
2.1.2. Grouping Characters Into Tokens	6
2.1.3. Constructing a Tree	8
Operator Precedence	9
Pratt Parsing	10
Parser Generators	13
2.2. Semantic Analysis	13
2.2.1. Defining the Semantics of a Programming Language	13
2.2.2. The Semantic Analyzer	13
Implementation	14
Early Optimizations	20
3. Interpreting the Program	22
3.1. Tree-Walking Interpreters	22
3.1.1. Implementation	23
3.1.2. How the Interpreter Executes a Program	23
3.1.3. Supporting Pointers	25
3.2. Using a Virtual Machine	26
3.2.1. Defining a Virtual Machine	26
3.2.2. Register-Based and Stack-Based Machines	27
3.2.3. The rush Virtual Machine	27
3.2.4. How the Virtual Machine Executes a rush Program	29
3.2.5. Fetch-Decode-Execute Cycle of the VM	31
3.2.6. Comparing the VM to the Tree-Walking Interpreter	33
4. Compiling to High-Level Targets	35
4.1. How a Compiler Translates the AST	35
4.2. The Compiler Targeting the rush VM	36
4.3. Compilation to WebAssembly	40
4.3.1. WebAssembly Modules	40
4.3.2. The WebAssembly System Interface	42
4.3.3. Implementation	43
Function Calls	44
Logical Operators	44
4.3.4. Considering an Example rush Program	45
4.4. Using LLVM for Code Generation	47
4.4.1. The Role of LLVM in a Compiler	47

4.4.2. The LLVM Intermediate Representation	47
Structure of a Compiled rush Program	48
4.4.3. The rush Compiler Using LLVM	50
4.4.4. Final Code Generation: The Linker	55
4.4.5. Conclusions	56
4.5. Transpilers	57
5. Compiling to Low-Level Targets	58
5.1. Low-Level Programming Concepts	58
5.1.1. Sections of an ELF File	58
5.1.2. Assemblers and Assembly Language	58
5.1.3. Registers	59
5.1.4. Using Memory: The Stack	61
Alignment	61
5.1.5. Calling Conventions	62
5.1.6. Referencing Variables Using Pointers	63
5.2. RISC-V: Compiling to a RISC Architecture	65
5.2.1. Register Layout	65
5.2.2. Memory Access Through the Stack	66
5.2.3. Calling Convention	66
5.2.4. The Core Library	67
5.2.5. RISC-V Assembly	68
5.2.6. Supporting Pointers	70
5.2.7. Implementation	70
Struct Fields	70
Data Flow and Register Allocation	72
Functions	76
Let Statements	77
Function Calls and Returns	78
Loops	81
5.3. x86_64: Compiling to a CISC Architecture	83
5.3.1. x64 Assembly	83
5.3.2. Registers	84
5.3.3. Stack Layout and Calling Convention	86
5.3.4. Implementation	86
Struct Fields	87
Memory Management	88
Register Allocation	88
Functions	89
Function Calls	90
Control Flow	90
Integer Division and Float Comparisons	92
Pointers	94
5.4. Conclusion: RISC vs. CISC Architectures	95
6. Final Thoughts and Conclusions	96
List of Figures	98
List of Tables	98

List of Listings	100
Bibliography	103

List of Figures

1.1. Steps of compilation.	2
1.2. Steps of compilation. (altered)	2
2.1. Abstract syntax tree for ‘1+2**3’.	8
2.2. Abstract syntax tree for ‘1+2**3’ using Pratt parsing.	10
2.3. Token precedences for the input ‘(1+2*3)/4**5’.	12
2.4. How semantic analysis affects the abstract syntax tree.	21
3.1. Call stack at the point of processing the ‘return’ statement.	23
3.2. Linear memory of the rush VM.	28
3.3. Example call stack of the rush VM.	30
3.4. AST and VM instructions of the recursive rush program in Listing 3.9.	33
4.1. Abstract syntax tree for ‘1 + 2 < 4’.	35
4.2. Steps of compilation when using LLVM.	47
4.3. The linking process.	55
5.1. Level of abstraction provided by assembly.	59
5.2. Relationship between registers, memory, and the CPU.	60
5.3. Examples of memory alignment.	61
5.4. Stack layout of the RISC-V architecture.	66
5.5. Simplified integer register pool of the RISC-V rush compiler.	73
5.6. Stack layout of the x64 architecture.	86
5.7. Structure of if-expressions in assembly.	90

List of Tables

1.1. Lines of code of the project’s components in commit ‘f8b9b9a’.	4
1.2. Most important features of the rush programming language.	5
1.3. Data types in the rush programming language.	5
2.1. Advancing window of a lexer.	7
2.2. Mapping from EBNF grammar to Rust type definitions.	9
5.1. Registers of the RISC-V architecture.	65
5.2. General purpose registers of the x64 architecture.	85

List of Listings

1.1. Generating Fibonacci numbers using rush.	3
2.1. Grammar for basic arithmetic in EBNF notation.	6
2.2. The rush ‘Lexer’ struct definition.	7
2.3. Simplified ‘Token’ struct definition.	8
2.4. Example language a traditional LL(1) parser cannot parse.	9
2.5. Pratt-parser: Implementation for token precedences.	11
2.6. Pratt-parser: Implementation for expressions.	11
2.7. Pratt-parser: Implementation for grouped expressions.	12
2.8. Pratt-parser: Implementation for infix-expressions.	12
2.9. A rush program which adds two integers.	14
2.10. Fields of the ‘Analyzer’ struct.	15
2.11. Output when compiling an invalid rush program.	15
2.12. Analyzer: Validation of the ‘main’ function’s signature.	16
2.13. Analyzer: The ‘let_stmt’ method.	17
2.14. Analyzer: Analysis of expressions during semantic analysis.	18
2.15. Analyzer: Obtaining the type of expressions.	18
2.16. Analyzer: Validation of argument type compatibility.	19
2.17. Analyzer: Determining whether an expression is constant.	20
2.18. Redundant ‘while’ loop inside a rush program.	20
2.19. Analyzer: Loop optimization.	21
3.1. Tree-walking interpreter: Type definitions.	22
3.2. Tree-walking interpreter: ‘Value’ and ‘InterruptKind’ definitions.	23
3.3. Tree-walking interpreter: Beginning of execution.	24
3.4. Tree-walking interpreter: Calling of functions.	24
3.5. Example rush program.	25
3.6. Struct definition of the VM.	27
3.7. Minimal pointer example in rush.	28
3.8. VM instructions for the minimal pointer example.	29
3.9. A recursive rush program.	29
3.10. Struct definition of a ‘CallFrame’.	29
3.11. VM instructions matching the AST in Figure 3.4.	30
3.12. The ‘run’ method of the rush VM.	31
3.13. Parts of the ‘run_instruction’ method of the rush VM.	32

1. Introduction

See Chapter 2, Section 2.1, Section 2.1.1, Figure 2.1, Table 1.3, and Listing 1.1.

1.1. Stages of Compilation

a

Figure 1.1: Steps of compilation.

a

Figure 1.2: Steps of compilation. (altered)

1.2. The rush Programming Language

```
fn fib(n: int) -> int {}
```

Listing 1.1: Generating Fibonacci numbers using rush.

1.2.1. Features

Table 1.1: Lines of code of the project’s components in commit ‘f8b9b9a’.

Table 1.2: Most important features of the rush programming language.

Table 1.3: Data types in the rush programming language.

2. Analyzing the Source

2.1. Lexical and Syntactical Analysis

2.1.1. Formal Syntactical Definition by a Grammar

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.1: Grammar for basic arithmetic in EBNF notation.

2.1.2. Grouping Characters Into Tokens

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.2: The rush ‘Lexer’ struct definition.

Table 2.1: Advancing window of a lexer.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.3: Simplified ‘Token’ struct definition.

2.1.3. Constructing a Tree

a

Figure 2.1: Abstract syntax tree for ‘1+2**3’.

Table 2.2: Mapping from EBNF grammar to Rust type definitions.

Operator Precedence

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.4: Example language a traditional LL(1) parser cannot parse.

Pratt Parsing

a

Figure 2.2: Abstract syntax tree for ‘1+2**3’ using Pratt parsing.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.5: Pratt-parser: Implementation for token precedences.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.6: Pratt-parser: Implementation for expressions.


```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.7: Pratt-parser: Implementation for grouped expressions.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.8: Pratt-parser: Implementation for infix-expressions.

a

Figure 2.3: Token precedences for the input `'(1+2*3)/4**5'`.

Parser Generators

2.2. Semantic Analysis

2.2.1. Defining the Semantics of a Programming Language

2.2.2. The Semantic Analyzer

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.9: A rush program which adds two integers.

Implementation

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.10: Fields of the ‘Analyzer’ struct.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.11: Output when compiling an invalid rush program.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.12: Analyzer: Validation of the ‘main’ function’s signature.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.13: Analyzer: The ‘let_stmt’ method.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.14: Analyzer: Analysis of expressions during semantic analysis.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.15: Analyzer: Obtaining the type of expressions.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.16: Analyzer: Validation of argument type compatibility.


```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.17: Analyzer: Determining whether an expression is constant.

Early Optimizations

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.18: Redundant ‘while’ loop inside a rush program.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 2.19: Analyzer: Loop optimization.

a

Figure 2.4: How semantic analysis affects the abstract syntax tree.

3. Interpreting the Program

3.1. Tree-Walking Interpreters

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.1: Tree-walking interpreter: Type definitions.

3.1.1. Implementation

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.2: Tree-walking interpreter: ‘Value’ and ‘InterruptKind’ definitions.

3.1.2. How the Interpreter Executes a Program

a

Figure 3.1: Call stack at the point of processing the ‘return’ statement.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.3: Tree-walking interpreter: Beginning of execution.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.4: Tree-walking interpreter: Calling of functions.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.5: Example rush program.

3.1.3. Supporting Pointers

3.2. Using a Virtual Machine

3.2.1. Defining a Virtual Machine

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.6: Struct definition of the VM.

3.2.2. Register-Based and Stack-Based Machines

3.2.3. The rush Virtual Machine


```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.7: Minimal pointer example in rush.

a

Figure 3.2: Linear memory of the rush VM.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.8: VM instructions for the minimal pointer example.

3.2.4. How the Virtual Machine Executes a rush Program

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.9: A recursive rush program.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.10: Struct definition of a ‘CallFrame’.

a

Figure 3.3: Example call stack of the rush VM.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.11: VM instructions matching the AST in Figure 3.4.

3.2.5. Fetch-Decode-Execute Cycle of the VM

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.12: The ‘run’ method of the rush VM.

```
fn main() {}
```

Listing 3.13: Parts of the ‘run_instruction’ method of the rush VM.

3.2.6. Comparing the VM to the Tree-Walking Interpreter

a

Figure 3.4: AST and VM instructions of the recursive rush program in Listing 3.9.

4. Compiling to High-Level Targets

4.1. How a Compiler Translates the AST

a

Figure 4.1: Abstract syntax tree for '1 + 2 < 4'.

4.2. The Compiler Targeting the rush VM

4.3. Compilation to WebAssembly

4.3.1. WebAssembly Modules

4.3.2. The WebAssembly System Interface

4.3.3. Implementation

Function Calls

Logical Operators

4.3.4. Considering an Example rush Program

4.4. Using LLVM for Code Generation

4.4.1. The Role of LLVM in a Compiler

a

Figure 4.2: Steps of compilation when using LLVM.

4.4.2. The LLVM Intermediate Representation

Structure of a Compiled rush Program

4.4.3. The rush Compiler Using LLVM

4.4.4. Final Code Generation: The Linker

a

Figure 4.3: The linking process.

4.4.5. Conclusions

4.5. Transpilers

5. Compiling to Low-Level Targets

5.1. Low-Level Programming Concepts

5.1.1. Sections of an ELF File

5.1.2. Assemblers and Assembly Language

a

Figure 5.1: Level of abstraction provided by assembly.

5.1.3. Registers

a

Figure 5.2: Relationship between registers, memory, and the CPU.

5.1.4. Using Memory: The Stack

Alignment

a

Figure 5.3: Examples of memory alignment.

5.1.5. Calling Conventions

5.1.6. Referencing Variables Using Pointers

5.2. RISC-V: Compiling to a RISC Architecture

Table 5.1: Registers of the RISC-V architecture.

5.2.1. Register Layout

5.2.2. Memory Access Through the Stack

a

Figure 5.4: Stack layout of the RISC-V architecture.

5.2.3. Calling Convention

5.2.4. The Core Library

5.2.5. RISC-V Assembly

5.2.6. Supporting Pointers

5.2.7. Implementation

Struct Fields

Data Flow and Register Allocation

a

Figure 5.5: Simplified integer register pool of the RISC-V rush compiler.

Functions

Let Statements

Function Calls and Returns

Loops

5.3. x86_64: Compiling to a CISC Architecture

5.3.1. x64 Assembly

5.3.2. Registers

Table 5.2: General purpose registers of the x64 architecture.

5.3.3. Stack Layout and Calling Convention

a

Figure 5.6: Stack layout of the x64 architecture.

5.3.4. Implementation

Struct Fields

Memory Management

Register Allocation

Functions

Function Calls

Control Flow

a

Figure 5.7: Structure of if-expressions in assembly.

Integer Division and Float Comparisons

Pointers

5.4. Conclusion: RISC vs. CISC Architectures

6. Final Thoughts and Conclusions

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Listings

Bibliography