

Applying Genetic Programming to Bytecode and Assembly

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Outline

- 1 Evolutionary Computation
- 2 Why Evolve Bytecode and Assembly?
- 3 Java bytecode and the JVM
- 4 FINCH:Evolving Java Bytecode
- 5 Using Instruction-level Code to Automate Bug Repair
- 6 Conclusions

Outline

1 Evolutionary Computation

- What is it?
- How does it work?
- Genetic Programming

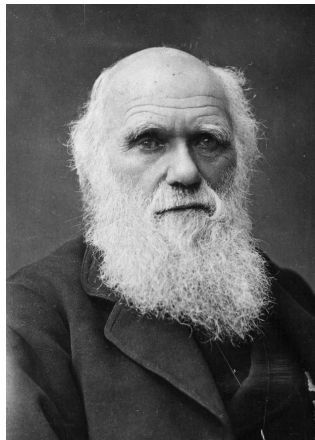
2 Why Evolve Bytecode and Assembly?

3 Java bytecode and the JVM

4 FINCH:Evolving Java Bytecode

What is Evolutionary Computation?

- Evolutionary Computation (EC) is a technique that is used to automate computer problem solving.
- Loosely emulates evolutionary biology

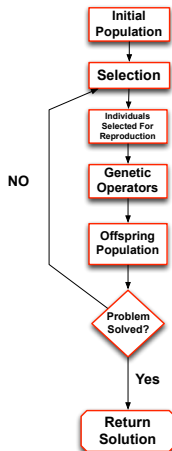


Charles Darwin

<http://tinyurl.com/lqwj3wt>

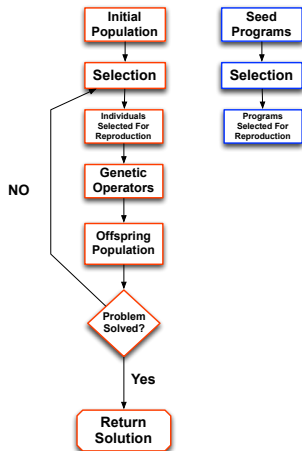
How does it work?

- Continuous optimization
- Selection is driven by the *fitness* of individuals
- Genetic operators mimic sexual reproduction and mutation



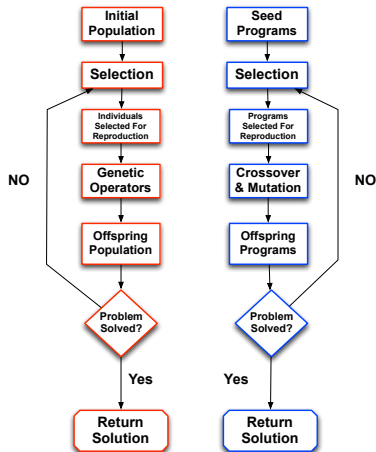
Genetic Programming

- Genetic programming (GP) uses the EC process to evolve **programs**
- This done by using an Evolutionary Algorithm (EA)

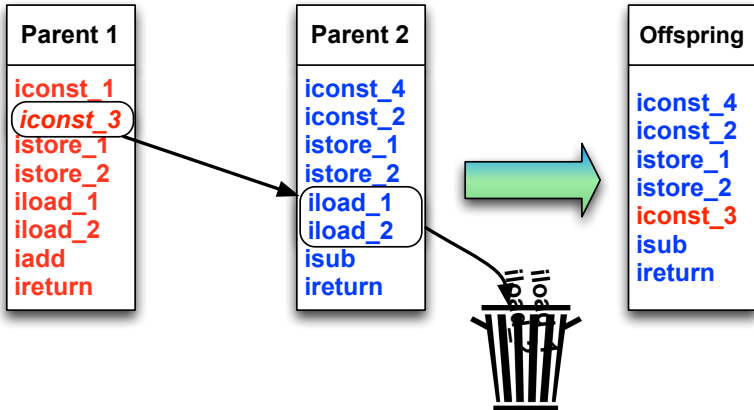


Genetic Programming

Two genetic operators used in GP are *crossover* and *mutation*

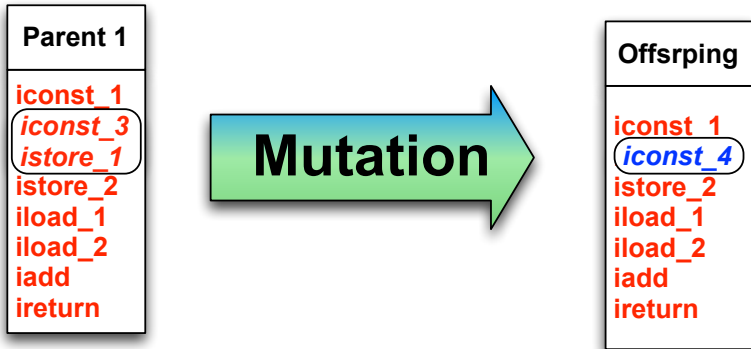


Crossover



Crossover with Java Bytecode

Mutation



Crossover with Java Bytecode

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- 1 Evolutionary Computation
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 - Difficulties With Source Code
 - Instruction-Level Code
- 3 Java bytecode and the JVM
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Source Code Semantic Constraints

- It is difficult to apply evolution to an entire program in source code
 - Source code is made to simplify reading and writing programs
 - Source code does not represent the semantic constraints of the program.

Syntax vs Semantics

- Syntax represents structure
- Semantics represent meaning

Semantically Wrong: The sun rises in the West.

Semantically Correct: The sun rises in the East.

Syntax vs Semantics

Both (a) and (b) are valid syntactically. However, (b) is invalid semantically.

```
float x; int y = 7;
if(y >= 0){
    x = y;
}else{
    x = -y;
}
System.out.println(x);
```

(a)

```
float y; int x = 7;
if(y >= 0){
    y = x;
    x = y;
}
System.out.println(z);
```

(b)

Instruction-Level Code Constraints

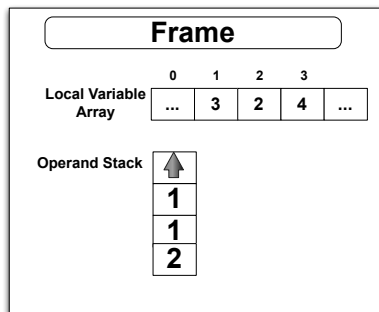
- Consists of smaller alphabets
- Simpler syntactically
- Fewer semantic constraints to violate

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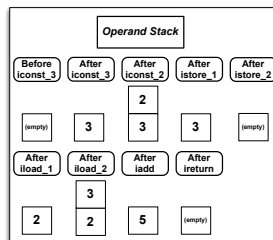
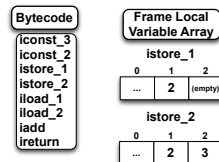
Java Virtual Machine

- A frame stores data and partial results as well as return values for methods
- Each method call has a frame



Java bytecode and Frames

- Opcodes
- The prefix indicates type



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 - How it Works
 - The Array Sum Problem
- 5 Using Instruction-level Code to Automate Bug Repair

What is FINCH?

- FINCH is an EA developed by Orlov and Sipper
- It evolves Java bytecode
- It deals with semantic constraints

Dealing With Semantic Constraints

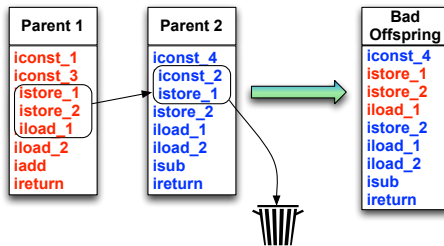
The semantic constraints that are checked for are

- Stack and Frame Depth
- Variable Types
- Control Flow

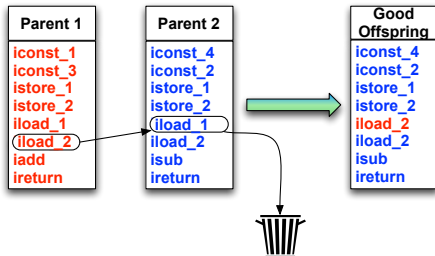
Dealing With Semantic Constraints

- 1 Apply crossover to two parents
- 2 Check if they comply to semantic constraints
- 3 If the program passes the constraint test then it proceeds to offspring generation
- 4 If it fails the constraint check then another attempt is made with the same parents

Bad Crossover



Good Crossover



Array Sum

- The array sum problem
 - Started with a zero fitness seed program
 - Counted function calls to check for a non-halting state

```
int sumlistrec(List list) {  
    int sum = 0;  
    if(list.isEmpty())  
        sum *= sumlistrec(list);  
    else  
        sum += list.get(0)/2 + sumlistrec(  
            list.subList(1, list.size()));  
  
    return sum;  
}
```


Array Sum

Decompiled Solution

```
int sumlistrec(List list) {  
    int sum = 0;  
    if(list.isEmpty())  
        sum = sum;  
    else  
        sum += ((Integer) list.get(0)).intValue() +  
               sumlistrec(list.subList(1,list.size()));  
  
    return sum;  
}
```

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 - How it Works
 - Results

Automating Bug Repair

- Schulte et al., automated bug repair by evolving Java bytecode and x86 assembly
- Fixed bugs in real code
- Does not check for semantic constraints

Tests and Fitness

- Fitness was determined by tests
- Test consisted of one *negative* test and multiple *positive* tests
- The negative test was used to check if the bug was fixed

Weighted Path

- Programs at times consist of thousands of lines of code
- Uses a weighted path due to size of programs
- The weighted path was determined by the instructions that were executed by the tests

Instruction Weight

- Each instruction executed by only by the failing test: weight = 1.0
- Executed by the negative test and one positive: weight = 0.1
- Not executed by the negative test case: weight = 0

What was debugged?

Schulte et al., were able to debug:

- Infinite loops
- Buffer overflows
- Incorrect type declarations

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Conclusions

- It is difficult to evolve entire programs in source code due to semantic constraints
- It is easier to deal with semantic constraints with instruction-level code
- It is feasible to not deal with semantic constraints in some situations

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Questions?

References



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