

# Machine Problem 4

CS 426 — Compiler Construction  
Fall Semester 2014

**Handed out: October 15, 2014. Due: November 18, 2014, 10 PM**

In this assignment, you will complete the intermediate code generation phase of your compiler begun in MP3. You will now add full support for classes and implement all the missing features of COOL, including the builtin IO class and the rest of the run-time library. *Some of the information from the MP3 handout is repeated here for completeness, with changes where necessary. Be sure to read this handout through completely.*

Your code generator should produce LLVM assembly code that faithfully implements *any* correct Cool program, and detects run-time semantic errors. There is no need for error detection in code generation—all erroneous Cool programs that can be detected at compile-time have been detected by the front-end phases of the compiler.

This assignment gives you some flexibility in how exactly you generate LLVM code for individual Cool constructs. You are responsible for most key design choices, including how to organize the virtual function tables of each class, the individual objects of each class, how to perform dynamic dispatch, and how to implement the basic built-in classes except IO (i.e., `Int`, `Bool`, `String`). The I/O routines in class IO are given to you, and an implementation of `case`. Note that there are many key design goals to meet, and there are standard design approaches compilers use to meet these goals. We will discuss these approaches in this handout.

This assignment is conceptually more difficult in terms of COOL implementation than MP3, but should have a much smaller learning curve. Nevertheless, we suggest you get started on it right away.

## 1 Changes to Code from Phase 1

Your job in this MP is to complete the source code so that when you type `make cgen-2` in directory `mp3_4/src`, you will build a complete code generator for Cool. Much of the code you write will implement completely new features of Cool that were not addressed in Phase 1. However, some of the code involves “turning off” parts of the Phase 1 implementation and replacing it with a different implementation. This section enumerates those changes.

1. MP4 is enabled when you build `cgen-2`. Look for the hint “ADD CODE HERE” in the true branch of `#ifdef MP4`. Conversely, some of your code from MP3 will now be disabled. This is mainly the code that initiates compilation of `Main::main()`.
2. Function `code_main` now needs two changes:
  - (a) The LLVM function for method `Main::main()` is no longer stored in class `CgenNode`. Instead, this method binding should be looked up where you have stored it, just like any other method-to-LLVM-function binding.
  - (b) The return value of method `Main::main()` should be ignored. The call to `printf` is no longer needed. All exchange of values with the external system is now via the IO class.

3. Finally, you will need to change the handling of primitive values to use boxing/unboxing as appropriate. This is detailed in various places below.

## 2 Using ValuePrinter

The ValuePrinter class provides some printing methods that support useful operations for MP4. For example, you can use ValuePrinter methods for the following:

- Type definitions for objects and vtables. For example:

```
%Int = type {
    %Int_vtable*,
    i32
}
```

- Constant object declarations. For example:

```
@String.2 = constant %String {
    %String_vtable* @String_vtable_prototype,
    i8* getelementptr ([14 x i8]* @str.2, i32 0, i32 0)
}
```

## 3 Cool Runtime

MP4 uses the following files, which implement the Cool runtime. After code generation, you must link against these files to produce a functioning Cool program (the Makefile is set up to do this).

### 1. coolrt.c:

This is the source code for the Cool runtime. We have given you C implementations of the four methods of class that do actual IO, plus two methods of class Object that are used by these IO methods. You are responsible for adding:

- definitions for the vtables of the builtin classes;
- definitions for default value objects; and
- C functions for all the missing methods of the builtin classes.

When you run **make** in the test directory, this file will be compiled to native code by GCC, and linked into the program built from each test file. *In its current state, this file will not compile.* You will first need to define the object and vtable layouts in *coolrt.h*.

*Suggestion:* To work incrementally, start with Ints and a trivial object layout with no vtable, and add a few methods for class Int. That should allow you to use `IO::out_int` and `IO::in_int` quickly. Then expand the object layout and add the vtable as you add more features to your compiler.

### 2. coolrt.h:

The header for the Cool runtime. It contains only a few function declarations and skeleton type declarations. You are responsible for adding:

- Type definitions for the vtables of the builtin classes;
- Type definitions for the objects of builtin classes; and
- Function declarations for functions defined in `coolrt.c`.

## 4 Testing the Code Generator

For convenience, we have created a directory `mp3_4/test-2` that you can use to test your code generator. This directory contains one trivial example to demonstrate the test framework. You may want to use the COOL examples from the Exercise 1, but they are too large to be useful for initial testing so, once again, *you should write your own test cases to test your compiler*. Use separate simple tests initially, e.g., a single constant and simple arithmetic with two constants, and then work your way up to more complex expressions. A few days before the due date, we'll provide a subset of our own extra tests.

The `test-2` directory contains its own Makefile. Some of the targets it provides are:

- `make file.ast`: compile the Cool program `file.cl` to an AST.
- `make file.ll`: compile the Cool program AST to LLVM assembly
- `make file.bc`: create an LLVM bytecode file from `file.ll`
- `make file.exe`: create a linked executable from `file.bc`, linking in the COOL runtime (`coolrt`).
- `make file.out`: execute `file.exe` and put the output in `file.out`.
- `make file.verify`: verify your LLVM code obeys LLVM language rules.
- `make file-opt.bc`: create an optimized LLVM bytecode file from `file.bc`. This is just so you can see whether your code can be optimized effectively by available techniques in LLVM.

Outside the makefile, there is a shell script `checkref.sh` which will compare `file.out` with `file.refout` if either exists, so you can provide and test against expected results.

To be sure that you generate correct LLVM code, you should call the LLVM verification path with every program that you generate. You can do this by saying `make file.verify` as described above. See the target `%.verify` in `mp2/Makefile.common` for the command used.

As with Phase 1, you should generate the LLVM `main()` function explicitly using LLVM IR features. See the information above about how the the function `CgenClassTable::code_main()` needs to change for Phase 2 compared with Phase 1.

Note that your code generation phase executable `cgen-2` takes a `-c` flag to generate debugging information. This is set whenever you define `debug` true in your Makefile (the default). Using this flag merely causes `cgen_debug` (a global variable) to be set. Adding the actual code to produce useful debugging information is up to you. See the project *README* for details.

*It is critical that you use a debugger regularly for testing your compiler. Use `printfs` for debugging only where that is the best way to track progress (e.g., not for debugging a segfault).*

## 5 Designing the Code Generator

*The following sections describe the complete work of MP3 and MP4, including features implemented in Phase 1 and Phase 2. Some of it is repeated from MP3 but with boxing and unboxing even the handling of Int is different, so make sure to read this through completely.*

There are many possible ways to write the code generator, even assuming a standard “*bottom-up*” strategy. One reasonable strategy is to perform code generation in two passes; this is the strategy used by our solution and by the skeleton code. The first pass decides the object layout for each class, i.e. which LLVM data types to create for each class, and generates LLVM constants for all constants appearing in the program. Using this information, the second pass recursively walks each feature and generates LLVM code for each expression.

There are a number of things you must keep in mind while designing your code generator:

- You should have a clear picture of the runtime semantics of Cool programs. The semantics are described informally in the first part of the *CoolAid*, and a precise description of how Cool programs should behave is given in Section 12 of the manual.
- You should have a clear picture of LLVM instructions, types, and declarations.
- Think carefully about how and where objects, let-variables, and temporaries (intermediate values of expressions) are allocated in memory. The next section discusses this issue in some detail.
- You should generate unoptimized LLVM code, using a simple tree-walk similar to the one we discussed in class. Focus on generating reasonably efficient local code for each tree node, e.g., wherever possible, avoid extra casts, use `getelementptr` to index into objects (i.e., to compute the addresses of a structure field), use appropriate aggregate types, etc.
- Ignore the garbage collection requirement of Cool. You don’t have to implement it. Just insert `malloc` instructions to allocate heap objects whenever needed, and never free these objects.

## 6 Representing Objects and Values in COOL

A major part of your compiler design is to develop the correct representation and memory allocation policies for objects and values in COOL, including explicit variables, heap objects, and temporaries. In MP 4, you need to support all kinds of COOL objects, including primitive values.

Here are the guidelines you should follow:

- All values in Cool are objects, including literals. For primitive values, however, you should box/unbox them to/from Cool objects only when needed. When you are finished with your compiler, the result of every one of your primitive-type expressions should be a virtual register and not an object. If you implemented Int or Bool constants as globals in MP3, you should change that so they are used directly as immediate operands in instructions.
- Think of let-variables as names for locations holding values, i.e., pointers to COOL objects: this is the correct interpretation for COOL (and other imperative languages) because the same variable

can be assigned different values (and so must point to different heap objects) at different places within its let-block.

Since a let-variable has a local scope, we can allocate it in the current stack frame using the `alloca` instruction.

- A superclass object should appear as a nested struct within a subclass object, and in a specific position that you should think about.
- There should be only a single vtable pointer in each object.
- In your generated code for method dispatch or for accessing data fields, you should try to avoid the LLVM ‘bitcast’ instruction. It is possible to arrange your object representation so a `bitcast` is only needed when retrieving the vtable pointer from an object.<sup>1</sup>
- You will need to include support for run-time type checks (for `case` in particular). Some code is provided and described in the next section, but you will have to accommodate it in your object representation.

## 7 How to attack this project

Since writing a code generator is a fairly big task, we suggest that you go for the following steps in order to build your compiler. *These steps have been tailored for MP4* Again, make sure to test each portion of code as you complete it!

1. Think about how to represent a Cool object and the vtable for each class in LLVM. How do you deal with inherited classes and their attributes? You can ignore the run-time support for type checking (`case`) at this point.
2. Once you have decided on a class layout, modify *coolrt.h* and *coolrt.c* accordingly to implement some of the built-in classes and their methods, e.g., enough to support `Int` operations including I/O. (Do the rest at any time – we don’t spell that out.)

You can even write simple C programs to call these methods directly and test them.

3. Implement *CgenNode::layout\_features()*. This will involve visiting each feature of a class and doing some kind of setup. For example, laying out a method might involve creating the corresponding LLVM function (with correct type and formal parameters but empty body) and assigning it a slot in the vtable for the class. You will also need to record the binding of COOL methods to LLVM functions. Similarly, you will have to assign LLVM types for attributes, and a slot in the object layout.

Now that the features have been laid out, you can create the LLVM **Type** for each class and for its vtable. Exactly how this is done will depend on how you decided to layout the classes in the runtime. Your code generator needs to match that layout.

Now you can create the actual vtable for each class. This is the global constant that contains the information and function pointers for the class. At this point, your output code should have:

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<sup>1</sup>Explicit type conversions in the COOL program obviously need casts. These include *upcasts* (using a subclass object within an expression of superclass type) and *downcasts* (using a superclass object as a subclass, which can only be done using a `case` statement in COOL).

- A type for the objects of each COOL class.
  - A type for the vtable of each COOL class.
  - Empty methods for the methods of all COOL classes.
  - The vtable of each COOL class.
4. It is time now to promote string constants into real honest-to-goodness objects. You can use the *code\_string\_table* and *code\_def* methods in *cgen.cc* to create a single definition for each unique constant, all of which conveniently appear in the string tables.
  5. Generate code for static dispatch. Remember that a Cool method may return `SELF_TYPE`, which you must handle as a special case. Once you get this far, you can construct constant objects and use the runtime's `IO` methods to get some real output from your generated programs.
  6. Next, implement dynamic dispatch. Since you've already created your vtables, this is only a minor change from static dispatch (and the two should share most of the implementation in your compiler).
  7. You can now modify some of the expression types that you implemented previously in Phase 1; often, few changes should be needed:
    - Arithmetic expressions. Remember that operations on `Int` and `Bool` expect and return values directly in LLVM virtual registers.
    - `let`. By now, you can compile and run simple programs comparable to Phase 1 (without control flow) but with real primitive objects. Let variables for `Int` and `Bool` should be primitive values on the stack, rather than pointers to the heap.
    - `loop` and `if-then-else`. These are now supposed to be using the typing rules for the full language.
    - Assignment. One key change from Phase 1 is that the value being assigned may have a static type that is different from the LHS variable type. For example, when assigning a `String` to an `Object` variable. This is one of the times where you will have to use a `cast` instruction to keep LLVM happy.  
 Also, this is the point where you will implement boxing. If an `Int` or `Bool` is being converted to `Object`, you will need to allocate an object record on the heap.  
 To support the provided code for `case` and for modularity, this conversion should be implemented in the `conform` method in *cgen.cc*
  8. Implement code generation for `new` and `init`. Make sure that the new object's attributes are initialized in the correct order and that the correct vtable pointer is stored. One other thing to watch out for is `new SELF_TYPE`. Since `SELF_TYPE` is dynamically bound, you won't know at compile time which class to instantiate. One solution to this problem is to use dynamic dispatch for `new`.  
 This little step gets you the ability to compile vastly more COOL programs, in fact, any correct program that does not use `case`!
  9. Implement `case`.

We provide code to support one solution.

Each class is given an integer tag according to a walk over the inheritance tree. This way all the subclasses of any given class have consecutive tags. Testing whether a class is a descendant of another can be done by testing whether its tag is in the range of tags of the descendants of the other.

For the code

```
class A {};
class B inherits A {};
class C inherits A {};
class D {};
```

we might assign the following tags and ranges

Class	Tag	Range
A	1	1-3
B	2	2-2
C	3	3-3
D	4	4-4

An object of dynamic type B can be recognized as a descendant of A by checking that its tag of 2 is in the range 1-3. An object of dynamic type D can be rejected as a descendant of A by checking that its tag of 4 does not fall into A's range.

The supplied `typcase_class::code` and `branch_class::code` methods generate code according to this strategy.

Half of the information necessary for generating the code is the range for a class. The supplied code finds the ranges in the `tag` and `max_child` fields of `CgenNode`. These fields are set by `CgenClassTable::setup_classes`.

The other necessary information is the class tag corresponding to the dynamic type of the object being examined by the `case`.

You must figure out where to store the tags in your object or vtable representation, and implement the method `get_class_tag` which emits code to retrieve it. The `CgenNode` argument is for the *static* type of the reference, so you cannot just return the tag of that node.

10. The final step. Implement runtime error handling, if you haven't already. There are only a few cases you need to check, and they're listed in the back of the Cool manual.

Now you should thoroughly test your compiler. You can use the Cool files in the *examples* directory, but you should also make your own tests to stress individual cases.

## 8 What and how to hand in

You have to hand in all files that you modify in this MP. That will include

- *cgen.cc*
- *cgen.h*
- *coolrt.c*
- *coolrt.h*

You may also wish to modify

- *cool-tree-handcode.h*
- *operand.h*
- *operand.cc*
- *value\_printer.h*
- *value\_printer.cc*

**Don't copy and modify any part of the support code!** The provided files are the ones that will be used in the grading process.

The details on the handin procedure are posted on the course webpage.