Creation of the Potato Language

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# Main Features

## Story Telling

Potato code is designed to look a lot like normal text, so you can literally tell the program what to do in relatively normal English. It works with capital letters for names and dots at the end of each line to simulate the feeling of writing normal text instead of code even more. For example a declaration is constructed with ‘suppose’ and a variable name and a task (function) is declared as ‘Task’ , then the variables it takes in correct comma and ‘and’ usage and then what it gives back.

## Comments

Of course, you can also create comments in Potato code. This comments are completely ignored by the compiler, but can be useful to explain what you code is supposed to do at a certain point. A comment is started with the keyword ‘btw’ and is ended with a dot. Quite a nice feature about these comments are that they can be put anywhere in the code. So for example you can put a comment after each argument of a task that explains what that argument should represent.

## Tasks

Potato works with tasks (procedures) so that you can work more efficiently because you do not have to duplicate any code if you want to reuse it. This way less lines are required for a more majestic piece of code. You can even define tasks in your tasks. Taskception!

## Arrays

In Potato, you can use arrays to store a list of values so you do not need to a separate variable for every value. You can use the elements of an array just like any other variable. This way you can for example loop over an array to check if each value in that array is greater than a certain number, which could be useful for checking test results.

## Increment

Potato also supports task increment. This task, of course, increments the given variable. Increment takes only a variable because incrementing an integer wouldn’t be saved anywhere. The Increment task can be very useful in a ‘while’ loop, for example to iterate over a list or to count something.

## Reusable variable names

In Potato you are able to re-declare variables if that variable is not yet declared in that scope. This way you won’t run out of variable names as fast. Of course you can’t re declare variable names in the same scope.

## Errors

The Potato compiler is able to give you several errors at once when you accidentally made a mistake in your code. It will try to compile as much as it can and then print a list of errors if there are any. This list is clearly ordered with the sentence number in front of each error so it is clear where and what went wrong.

# Problems and Solution

Problem: Defining the AST; we defined the AST just as a node which can have an Alphabet and a list of sub-AST’s. This seemed fine at first also because we did not really think ahead with this. Also, we completely forgot that that was not even the way to make a decent AST as we learned it. A bit later we discovered this, but by then it was already too late to change as we didn’t have enough time anymore.

Solution: As you might be able to tell, we were not really able to fix this, we just put it in the report as a sign that we know how it is supposed to be. We should have made a separate type of AST for each non-terminal and extra nodes if a non-terminal can have different kinds/amounts of sub AST’s.

Problem: Giving line numbers with the errors so you can see where the error is located. This was took more effort than we expected because we did everything in Haskell so we used an AST tree that did have any line numbers in it so if we found an error we would know what node it is at, but not what line that node corresponds to.

Solution: Define a function that calculates the line number. The function first calculates a list of integers that represent the path to the node that you want the line number of. Then it starts at the root of the AST and walks the path calculated before. For each step down, it calculates the amount of lines that correspond to each sub-AST left to the sub-AST you go to, until it gets to the node it wanted the line number of.

Problem: Too ambitious. We tried to add too many extra features for bonus points right at the start. This became a problem at the end because by then we had a bit of everything, but none of the objectives completely.

Solution: When we noticed this we just dropped a few objectives and focused on the others so we might be able to get some of the bonus points. We put functions and arrays as our main goals and dropped characters and with that, strings.

Problem: Function calls & Recursion. Our language and code generation has built in support for recursion, but a few bugs keep it from being fully functional. Firstly, expressions do not handle function calls the way they should (e.g. Fib(n-1)+Fib(n-2)). We believe this is due to the fact that the result of a function call is stored in a register, and then overwritten by the second function call in the expression. In other words our language is not guaranteed to work if the second argument of an expression (the ‘x’ in the following expression: Fib(n-1)+x) is a function call. Due to time constraints we haven’t had the time to evaluate if this is the actual problem, so in order to be save we discourage the use of function calls in expressions. Secondly, there might still be a couple of bugs in recursion. Our implementation of Fibonacci worked up to Fib(4) but started to exhibit weird behavior at 5. We are not entirely sure what causes this and therefore do not have a solution. Due to this bug in recursion we cannot say whether the problem we found in expressions and function calls is the only one.

Solution: A possible solution for function calls in expressions is to simply avoid them by declaring variables for the function calls, and putting these variables in the expression instead.

Problem: Array comparison code generation

Problem: inequality operator

# Detailed language description

## General

A few things that should be thought of in general; A line, that is a declaration or an assignment of any sort (so the normal lines) always end with a dot, otherwise a parse error will be thrown. Besides that, tabs are taboo, the compiler can’t and won’t handle them correctly, not even a decent error.

## Program

At the beginning of every program you have to start it by defining that it is a program and giving the name. Usage is very easy:

1. program ExampleProgram:
2. \*1337 lines of code here\*
3. stop.

As you can see, you start the program with the line ‘program \*name\*:’ and end it with the line ‘stop.’ Between these lines you can put your code. The program name has to start with a capital, just as is usual with names.

No code is generated for this feature.

## Declaration

To declare a new variable you can use the keyword ‘suppose’. An example for declaring the integer x would be:

1. suppose integer x.

You can also declare a variable and immediately assign it to a value or even an expression as seen in the following example:

1. suppose integer x is 5.
2. suppose boolean y is x equals 5.

Variable names should always start with a lower case character, in contrary to program- and task names. Also, a variable can only be declared if it is not yet declared in the same scope. It can be re-declared if it is in a lower scope than the declaration before it. You can declare integers, Booleans and arrays. Declarations of arrays are a little different as will be shown in this example:

1. suppose [integer] l of length 3.
2. suppose [boolean] l is [true,true,false].

If you declare a variable, but do not assign it, it is automatically initialized with 0 for integer and false for boolean.

The generation of the SPRIL-code for this function works as follows: first the assignment part of the declaration is evaluated, this stores the result in the specified register. Then a new address in local memory is allocated for the variable and the result of the expression is stored at this address. In practice this looks as follows:

1. //Potato-code:
2. suppose integer integer x is 5 plus 3.
3. //SPRIL-code:
4. [Const 5 RegA, Const 3 RegB, Compute Add RegA RegB RegA, Store RegA (Addr 0)]

## Assignment

Assigning a variable is rather easy. You just state the variable name, then what it is should be with the keyword ‘is’ in between as seen in the following example:

1. suppose integer x.
2. x is 5.
3. x is 5 times 2.
4. x is x minus 7.

Assignment of arrays is pretty much the same and with arrays you can also assign a value on a certain position in that array. So in the following example line 2 shows assignment of a complete array and line 4 and 5 assignment of a certain index of an array:

1. suppose [integer] list of length 5.
2. list = [1,2,3,4,5].
3. suppose integer i is 2.
4. list[i+1] is 12.
5. list[2] is list[1].

Of course, you can assign only the appropriate type to a certain variable e.g. integer to an integer, boolean to a boolean etc. and you can only use variables that are already declared.

Assignment code generation is almost exactly the same as declaration, except that it allocate a new memory address. Instead it looks up the address of variable in a list and stores it at that address. Overwriting the previous value:

1. //Potato-code:
2. k is 5 plus 3.
3. //SPRIL-code:
4. [Const 5 RegA, Const 3 RegB, Compute Add RegA RegB RegA, Store RegA (Addr 0)]

## Comment

A comment is a piece of code that is completely ignored by the compiler. It is started with the keyword ‘btw’ and is ended with a dot. This comment can be placed anywhere in the code. Of course it may not split words in half. Example:

1. suppose btw this is a comment. integer a.
2. a is 5. Btw this is also a comment.

Comments are deleted by the tokenizer and thus never reach code generation.

## Expression

An expression is basically anything that has a value. It can contain a value (integer, boolean or array), a variable, a task call and any combination of those with operators. Of course, everything you use should be declared in the lines above it, including tasks you call. In the following example all the operators are shown. It is supposedly pretty clear what they do as that is what this language intended.

1. suppose integer a is 5.
2. suppose integer b is 2.
3. suppose boolean x is true.
4. suppose boolean y is false.
5. a is a plus b. btw takes 2 integers, gives 1 integer.
6. a is a minus b. btw takes 2 integers, gives 1 integer.
7. a is a times b. btw takes 2 integers, gives 1 integer.
8. a is a divided by b. btw takes 2 integers, gives 1 integer.
9. x is x and y. btw takes 2 booleans, gives 1 boolean.
10. x is x or y. btw takes 2 booleans, gives 1 boolean.
11. x is a equals b. btw takes 2 integers or booleans, gives 1 boolean.
12. x is a is greater than b. btw takes 2 integers, gives 1 boolean.
13. x is a is greater than or equal to b. btw same as above.
14. x is a is smaller than b. btw same as above.
15. x is a is smaller than or equal to b. btw same as above.

Not giving or taking the right type to an operator will result in a type error. And of course you can use brackets while combining these operators.

So now a few examples of what an expression could be:

1. ((a plus b) is smaller than or equal to b) or (x equals y)
2. a plus b plus a plus a times 5
3. TestingTaskZero(a,b). btw this is a task call.

Note that these are no legit Potato code lines, expressions should be used to assign a variable or give to a function.

The code generated for expressions works as follows: an expression either exists of (left-side, right-side and operator) or just one of the following [Integer, Boolean, Identifier or Function call]. In the first case, the left-side and right- side are expressions, so recursion is used to generate the code for these two, each expression storing to a different register. Then the operator is determined and the operator is applied to the registers, storing it in the predetermined register. This looks as follows:

1. //Potato-code:
2. (3 times 4) plus 5
3. //SPRIL-code:
4. Const 3 RegA, Const 4 RegB, Compute Mul RegA RegB RegA, Const 5 RegB,
5. Compute Add RegA RegB RegA

## When

A when-statement can have 2 bodies and must at least have 1. It uses a boolean expression to see which of the 2 bodies it should execute. If the expression is true, it will do the first one, if it is false it will do the second one. If the second body is not present it will do nothing. A when-statement is defined by the keyword ‘when’, then a boolean expression and then the keyword ‘do:’ to start the first body. Then you can type as many lines of code as you want and to stop the body use the keyword ‘stop.’. If you want to use a second body you can add the keywords ‘otherwise do:’, then type some lines of code and end the body again with the keyword ‘stop.’. A few examples of a when statement are:

1. suppose boolean b is true.
2. when b do:
3. b is false.
4. stop.
6. suppose integer x is 0.
7. when x is smaller than or equal to 5 do:
8. x is x plus 5.
9. stop.
10. otherwise do:
11. x is 2.
12. stop.

To generate code for the ‘when’, the expression is evaluated first. The result gets XOR’d with 1 and is stored in a register (if the expression is true, the XOR returns false and the other way around). This is done for readability of the SPRIL code (e.g. the body of the when comes before the otherwise). Next a calculation of where to branch to in order to skip the when/start the otherwise is made and the body of the when is generated followed by a calculation of where to jump to in order to skip the otherwise. Lastly the body of the otherwise is generated.

1. //Potato-code:
2. when true do:
3. b is false.
4. Stop
5. //SPRILL-code
6. Const 1 RegA, Const 1 RegB, Compute Xor RegA RegB RegA,
7. Const (bodySize+4) RegB, Compute Add RegB PC RegB, Branch RegA (Ind RegB),
8. //BODY
9. Jump (Rel otherwiseSize+1)
10. //OTHERWISE

## While

A while-statement is created pretty much the same as a when-statement. It is started with the keyword ‘while’, then a boolean expression followed by the keyword ‘do:’ to start the body. Unlike a when-statement, a while-statement only has 1 body. It will check if the expression is true, then execute the body. Then it will repeat itself so it will keep looping over the body until the expression is not true anymore. An example of a while-statement is:

1. suppose boolean tooSmall is true.
2. suppose integer x is 0.
3. while tooSmall do:
4. x is x plus 1.
5. tooSmall is x is smaller than or equal to 5.
6. stop.

The while code generation works in a similar manner as the when: the very first step is to push the PC to the stack, then the expression is evaluated, XOR’d and branched and then the body is generated. After the body generation the PC is popped from the stack and a jump to that instruction is made. This means that after one iteration of the while, a jump is made back to the very first step: pushing the PC to the stack.

1. //Potato-code:
2. while b do:
3. b is false.
4. Stop
5. //SPRILL-code b@ Addr 0
6. Calculate PC Zero RegA, Push RegA,
7. Load (Addr 0) RegA, Const 1 RegB, Compute Xor RegA RegB RegA,
8. Const (bodySize+4) RegB, Compute Add RegB PC RegB, Branch RegA (Ind RegB),
9. //BODY
10. Pop RegA, Jump (Ind RegA)
11. //OTHERWISE

## Increment

The increment statement is a very simple statement. It is basically a function that just adds 1 to the given variable and then returns it. Usage is very simple also:

1. suppose integer x is 0.
2. increment x.
3. btw x is now 1.

The code generation is fairly straightforward: the identifier is loaded in a register, 1 is loaded in a different register, the two get added and stored to the address belonging to the identifier:

1. //Potato-code:
2. Increment a.
3. //SPRILL-code a@ Addr0
4. Load (Addr 0) RegA, Const 1 RegB, Compute Add RegA RegB RegA,
5. Store RegA (Addr0)

## Task

A task is a piece of code with a name, a few arguments and it will give you a value back. With this you can easily reuse code. A task can return a variable which then of course has a type, or it can return nothing, in which case you can’t assign it to a variable either.

To create a task use the keyword ‘task’, then the task name which should start with a capital letter, followed by the keyword ‘takes’ and the arguments it will take followed by the keyword ‘gives’ and the type of value it will give back. Then the keyword ‘after:’ to start the body. To stop the body use the keyword ‘give’ and the variable that should be returned or ‘stop.’ to return a ‘nothing’ type. Also, you have to define a variable **in** the task in order to be able to ‘give’ it. It is probably easiest to just show how it works so here is an example:

1. task ExampleTask takes integer a, integer b and integer c and gives integer after:
2. suppose integer d.
3. d is a plus b plus c.
4. give d.
6. task ExampleTask2 takes integer a and gives nothing after:
7. btw do something with variables from a higher scope here.
8. stop.

You can also assign tasks in tasks and even deeper, but keep in mind that in order to be able to call a task, it has to be defined in the same scope, before you call it.

The code generation works as follows: firstly two calculations are made to determine where to jump in order to start the task and where to jump in order to skip the task. The start is stored in memory and a jump to the instruction after the task is made. Secondly the arguments get popped of the stack. Thirdly the body is generated and finally the return address is popped, if the function is supposed to return something, the return value is pushed and a jump to the return address is made. This looks as follows:

1. //Potato-code
2. task ExampleTask takes integer b and integer c and gives integer after:
3. //Body
4. give c.
5. //SPRILL-code
6. Const 3 RegA, Compute Add RegA PC RegA, Store RegA (Addr 0),
7. Jump (Rel bodySize), Pop RegA, Store RegA (Addr 1),
8. Pop RegA, Store RegA (Addr 2)
9. //BODY
10. Pop RegB, Load (Addr 2) RegA, Push RegA, Jump (Ind RegB)

## Function Call

A function call is actually an expression but since the code generation of a function call is rather different the decision was made to give it its own heading. The syntax is fairly straightforward:

1. funcName(arg,arg,…arg)
2. Fib(5)

As mentioned, it is an expression type and can thus be used the same way as Booleans/integers depending on the type of the function. This feature will execute a specified set of statements defined in its body and possibly return something.

Code generation for function calls works as follows: First all the known address are pushed to the stack, then the return address is calculated and pushed followed by pushing all the arguments. Then the instruction of the start of the function is located and a jump is made. In case the function returns something, the return value is popped to a register, followed by the popping and storing of all the known addresses using a different register.

1. //Potato-code
2. Fib(3)
3. //SPRILL-code
4. Load (Addr 0) RegA, Push RegA, //push all other known addresses
5. Const 6 RegA, Compute Add RegA PC RegA, Push RegA
6. Const 3 RegA, Push RegA, Load (Addr 0) RegA, Jump (Ind RegA)

# Description of the software

## DatatypesEtc

The file DataTypesEtc contains all the data types of our project. We put these in one file so that we could make the project more modular. This way all other files can just import DataTypesEtc and then they have all the data types they need. Otherwise imports would have to loop back and forward and Haskell doesn’t accept that.

## Grammar

The file Grammar contains only the grammar we used.

## Parse

The file Parse contains the tokenizer, the parser, a function to make an AST from the tree you get from the parser and a function Parse0 which is the main function of the file. It takes a string and returns the AST it would correspond to, given that there are nog errors of course.

The tokenizer first adds spaces around dots, comma’s, parenthesis, etc. so that they can be recognized as separate tokens. Then the comments are filtered out, that is a function takes elements from a list, then if it sees the word ‘btw’ it stops taking tokens but continues looking until it sees the keyword ‘.’. Then for the rest of the words it is determined what they are. First is checked if it starts with a capital letter, then it would be a function name. Then it is compared to true and false. After that we check if it may be an integer or a character (we don’t use those anymore tough). At last we check if it can be a token from the list of tokens we defined (which are the keywords) and if all else fails it is an identifier (var name).

The resulting token list is put in the parser we got from Jan Kuuper. This parser builds us a tree using the grammar, which we then convert to an AST so the checker can use it.

## Checker

The Checker file contains the part where the AST is checked for type errors and scope errors. In this file, the error printing is also included. The main function is check, which takes an AST and checks it for type and scope errors. If it finds any, it will print them and throw a Haskell error so the compiling stops.

The function that checks the errors works with pattern matching so it is basically a node visitor, besides that is the function recursive so it is a synthesised attribute. The checker just runs over a list of nodes, then checks its sub trees, adds those errors to the error list, then checks the rest of its ‘brothers’ and add that to the error list too. Because the variables list is passed on in the recursion too, every time you go down a node, it is basically a new scope. Just in some cases such as program, task, when and while a special tuple is added to be able to see when the new scope starts for later checking if a variable may be re-declared.

In a declaration and task node, new variables are defined so then the function to make a new tuple for the variable list is called and the tuple is added to the variable list.

There is also a function that checks an expression and then returns the type the expression would result in. We couldn’t build this in the main checker function because this wouldn’t work with the return types. The main checker now just lets a separate function evaluate the expression so it just has to check if the types match.

## Main

The main file is actually very simple. This is the only impure file we have. Its main function is compile, which puts the whole project together. It takes a string that represents a file path, this should be a .txt. compile reads the complete file as a string and puts it in the parse0 function from the file Parse, which gives back an AST. Then compile puts that AST into the checker and if that doesn’t throw an error it will continue with the code generation. At the end it will print the sprockel code.

In this file there is also a function that works the same with the file reading and then creates an AST from that string. Then instead of checking and generating code, it will show the tree using the ‘standard webpage 2’ from the colleges.

## TreeWalker

The TreeWalker file is the file in which all the SPRIL-code generation takes place. The writeToFile function adds a bunch of strings together which are necessary to create a file which can be run by the Sprockell. It also calls the most important function of the file: walkTree. This function is a tree visitor, it visits each node in the AST tree and generates code for it. All of the other functions in the file merely exist to avoid repetition of code, massive lines of pattern matching or exist to make our job easier. The only other notable function is evalExpr, which is used to evaluate all expression nodes in the tree.

The walkTree function visits a node and uses pattern matching to determine which course of action to take. For each node it creates one or more lists of instructions and concats all of them together to form a single large list of SPRIL instructions which can be written to a file. Most of how each node is handled can be found in the previous chapter ‘Detailed language description’.

The result of this file can be written to a file directly, which in turn can be executed on the Sprockell.

# Test plan and results

# Conclusions

## Tim

About the project: In total I am pretty satisfied with the programming language we made. At least the idea of it (text based, as natural as we could make it). The execution was not as good as we were over ambitious and couldn’t finish everything we wanted. This was mainly because we were actually very excited about the project because it sounded (and was) very interesting and fun to make. We definitely learned how much work goes into making even such a simple programming language. I think it would be a great project to do along the whole line of the module so that instead of doing countless of roughly the same exercises we can do it as a part of the project. This way it is more motivating to do the exercises and you can make the project a bigger thing, implement more features in the language.

About the module: Overall I found the module quite interesting. And in general it was organized pretty well. There are some things that didn’t go very well tough. For one, as you probably already know, CC took way too much time. (Also) because presence was mandatory, this pushed aside the other lines of the modules. Mainly CP because this wasn’t mandatory. Also, CP was in my opinion pretty interesting, but the problem was the way it was given. I know the way the tutorials work are a pretty good way to learn the matter, but for me, it is highly demotivating to go when I have to do the homework before the tutorial and then ‘present’ my try. Especially when I am this busy with CC.

Another point is the fact that we had several occasions that we had a deadline and a few days (project) or even hours (CC HW 2) before the deadline the assignment was (minimally) changed. Even though there were no major changes, this is very annoying and can for some people be a source of a lot of stress.

FP I found very interesting and I have absolutely no complaints about how this was given. (Might be why we did the full project in Haskell).

# Appendices

## Appendix A – Grammar specification:

1. grammar nt = case nt of
2. Program -> [[prog, FuncName, ProgBody]]
4. ProgBody -> [[semi, Rep0 [Line], stop, dot]]
6. Line -> [[Decl]
7. ,[Assign]
8. ,[FuncCall]
9. ,[Incr]
10. ,[When]
11. ,[While]
12. ,[Task]]
13. Decl -> [[suppose, Opt [global], Type, Idf, Alt [ofK, lengthK, Expr] [Opt [is, Expr]], dot]]
15. Assign -> [[Idf, is, Expr, dot]]
17. FuncCall -> [[FuncName, lPar, Rep0 [Expr, Opt [comma]], rPar, Opt [dot]]
18. ,[FuncName, lPar, Rep0 [Expr, Opt [comma]], rPar]]
20. Incr -> [[inc, Idf, dot]]
22. When -> [[when, Expr, doK, Body, Opt [otherwiseK, doK, Body]]]
24. While -> [[while, Expr, doK, Body]]
26. Task -> [[task, FuncName, takes, Args, gives, Type, after, Body]]
28. Args -> [[Rep0[Arg]]]
30. Arg -> [[Type, Idf, Alt [comma] [andK]]]
32. Body -> [[semi, Rep0 [Line], Alt [stop, dot] [give, VIA, dot]]]
34. Expr -> [[VIA, Op, Expr]
35. ,[lPar, Expr, rPar, Op, Expr]
36. ,[lPar, Expr, rPar]
37. ,[VIA]]
39. VIA -> [[Value]
40. ,[FuncCall]
41. ,[Idf]
42. ,[Array]]
44. Op -> [[plus]
45. ,[minus]
46. ,[times]
47. ,[DividedBy]
48. ,[equals]
49. ,[is]
50. ,[GreaterThan]
51. ,[GreaterThanEq]
52. ,[SmallerThan]
53. ,[SmallerThanEq]
54. ,[andK]
55. ,[orK]]
57. DividedBy -> [[divided, by]]
58. GreaterThan -> [[is, greater, than]]
59. GreaterThanEq -> [[is, greater, than, orK, equal, to]]
60. SmallerThan -> [[is, smaller, than]]
61. SmallerThanEq -> [[is, smaller, than, orK, equal, to]]
63. FuncName -> [[funcName]]
65. Type -> [[TypeBool]
66. ,[TypeInt]
67. ,[TypeChar]
68. ,[TypeArray]
69. ,[TypeNothing]]
71. Idf -> [[idf, Opt [lBracket, Expr, rBracket]]]
73. Value -> [[Boolean]
74. ,[Integer]
75. ,[Character]]
77. Array -> [[lBracket, Rep0 [ArrayVal], rBracket]]
78. ArrayVal -> [[VIA, Opt [comma]]]
79. TypeArray -> [[lBracket, Type, rBracket]]
81. Boolean -> [[Alt [TrueK] [FalseK]]]
82. TrueK -> [[trueK]]
83. FalseK -> [[falseK]]
84. TypeBool -> [[typeBool]]
86. Integer -> [[int]]
87. TypeInt -> [[typeInt]]
89. Character -> [[char]]
90. TypeChar -> [[typeChar]]
92. TypeNothing -> [[nothing]]

## Appendix B – Extended test program