Kempe Compiler & Language Manual

Vanessa McHale

Contents

Introduction

Kempe is a stack-based language, and `kc` is a toy compiler for x86_64.

Installing kc

First, install cabal and GHC. Then:

```
cabal install kempe
```

This provides `kc`, the Kempe compiler.

Editor Integration

A vim plugin is available.

To install with vim-plug:

```
Plug 'vmchale/kempe' , { 'rtp' : 'vim' }
```

Kempe Language

Types

Kempe has a stack-based type system. So if you see a type signature:

```
next : Word -- Word Word
```

that means that the stack must have a `Word` on it for `next` to be invoked, and that it will have two `Word`s on the stack after it is invoked.

Polymorphism

Kempe allows polymorphic functions. So we can define:

```
id : a -- a
   =: [ ]
```

The Kempe typechecker basically works though it is slow.

Literals

Integer literals have type `-- Int`.

Positive literals followed by a `u` have type `-- Word`, e.g. `1u`.

Builtins

The Kempe compiler has a few builtin functions that you can use for arithmetic and for shuffling data around. Many of them are familiar to stack-based programmers:

- `dup : a -- a a`
- `swap : a b -- b a`

There is one higher-order construct, `dip`, which we illustrate by example:

```
nip : a b -- b
    =: [ dip(drop) ]
```

Sum Types

Kempe supports sum types, for instance:

```
type Either a b { Left a | Right b }
```

Pattern Matching

Sum types are taken apart with pattern matching, viz.

```
isRight : ((Either a) b) -- Bool
        =: [
    { case
        | Right -> drop True
        | Left  -> drop False
    }
]
```

Recursion

`kc` optimizes tail recursion.

Non-Features

Kempe is missing a good many features, among them:

- Floats
- Strings
- Recursive data types

Programming in Kempe

Invoking the Compiler

`kc` cannot be used to produce executables. Rather, the Kempe compiler will produce `.o` files which contain functions.

Kempe functions can be exported with a C ABI:

```
fac : Int -- Int
    =: [ dup 0 =
         if( drop 1
           , dup 1 - fac * )
       ]

%foreign cabi fac
```

This would be called with a C wrapper like so:

```
#include <stdio.h>

extern int fac(int);

int main(int argc, char *argv[]) {
    printf("%d", fac(3));
}
```

Unlike the frontend and type checker, the backend is incomplete.

Internals

Kempe maintains its own stack and stores the pointer in `rbp`.

Kempe procedures do not require any registers to be preserved across function calls.

C Calls

When exporting to C, `kc` generates code that initializes the Kempe data pointer (`rbp`). Thus, one should avoid calling into Kempe code too often!

Note that the Kempe data pointer is static, so calling different Kempe functions in different threads will fail unpredictably.

Examples

Splitmix Pseudorandom Number Generator

The generator in question comes from a recent paper.

Implementation turns out to be quite nice thanks to Kempe's multiple return values:

```
; given a seed, return a random value and the new seed
next : Word -- Word Word
     =: [ 0x9e3779b97f4a7c15u +~ dup
          dup 30i8 >>~ xoru 0xbf58476d1ce4e5b9u *~
          dup 27i8 >>~ xoru 0x94d049bb133111ebu *~
          dup 31i8 >>~ xoru
        ]

%foreign kabi next
```

Compare the C implementation:

```c
#include <stdint.h>

// modified to have ""multiple return"" since C doesn't really have that
uint64_t next(uint64_t x, uint64_t* y) {
    uint64_t z = (x += 0x9e3779b97f4a7c15);
    z = (z ^ (z >> 30)) * 0xbf58476d1ce4e5b9;
    z = (z ^ (z >> 27)) * 0x94d049bb133111eb;
    *y = x;
    return z ^ (z >> 31);
}
```

GCD

```
gcd : Int Int -- Int
    =: [ dup 0 =
         if( drop
           , dup dip(%) swap gcd )
       ]
```