

# Output C Code

## Computer Language Processing '16 Final Report

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### 1. Introduction

The first part of the lab was to implement a compiler for Toy Object-Oriented Language (Tool), which is a small object-oriented programming language.

This has led us to conceive a Lexer, a  $LL(1)$  grammar, a Parser, a Type Checking system and to generate binary code for the Java Virtual Machine.

The aim of this project is to replace code generation for the Java Virtual Machine with a pretty printer, which outputs C code.

The difficulty is to make object-oriented code into C code which does not have built in data types to support class, as it is an imperative programming language .

### 2. Examples

The example below presents how a class and the inheritance could be depicted in C programming language.

```
1 class Rectangle{
2     var width: Int;
3     var height: Int;
4
5     def area(): Int = {
6         return width * height;
7     }
8 }
9
10 class Square extends Rectangle{
11     var side: Int;
12 }
```

This Tool code will be pretty-printed in C like this:

```
1 struct Rectangle{
2     int width;
3     int height;
4     int (*area)(struct void*);
5 }
6
7 struct Square{
8     int width;
```

```
9     int height;
10    int side;
11    int (*area)(struct void*)
12 }
13
14 int Rectangle_area(struct Rectangle* this) {
15     return this->width * this->height;
16 }
```

The class are represented in C by a structure. The variables of the class are members of the structure. They are declared in the same fashion.

Contrariwise the method of the class is declared outside of the structure. In C, a structure can't have a function declaration as a member. The function shall be declared outside. But the structure has a pointer to the function. The function is declared with the name of the class as prefix followed by an underscore. Thus the belonging to the "Rectangle" class is suggested.

Therefore this is how the C code mimics the behavior of an object-oriented class.

There exists other dilemma like inheritance, dynamic dispatch,..., which be discussed in the implementation section.

### 3. Implementation

This is a very important section, you explain to us how you made it work.

#### 3.1 Theoretical Background

The only background needed for this extension is knowing the tool's AST and the C language. However since we are trying to emulate an object-oriented language into one that is not, the book "Object-oriented programming in ANSCI-C"<sup>1</sup> by Axel Schreiner has

<sup>1</sup><https://www.cs.rit.edu/~ats/books/ooc.pdf>

been useful for some concepts and it will be referenced throughout this report.

## 3.2 Implementation Details

Two files were created to implement this project.

### 3.2.1 Data Type

The first one is “CDataType.scala”. It contains a class that depicts the C’s structure.

---

```
1  class StructDef(val name: String,  
2    val membersList: ListBuffer[StructMember])
```

---

A trait “StructMember” is extended by two classes to implement the two kinds of structure’s members, which are a variable or a pointer to a function (as explained in section 2. Examples). The pointer to a function holds two fields, one for an internal representation of a C function pointer (the class “FunctionPtr”), and one for the AST version of the method declaration that should be linked to the pointer.

---

```
1  class StructVar(val name: String,  
2    val tpe: CType) extends StructMember {  
3    // some code  
4  }  
5  
6  class StructFunctionPtr(val ptr: FunctionPtr,  
7    var mtDcl: MethodDecl) extends StructMember {  
8    // some code  
9  }  
10  
11 class FunctionPtr(val name: String,  
12   val retType: CType, val args: List[CType]) {  
13   // some code  
14 }
```

---

### 3.2.2 Code Generation

The second file is “COutputGeneration.scala”. Its skeleton and behavior is based on the “CodeGeneration.scala” completed to output binary code for the Java Virtual Machine. The program uses the same architecture of methods like: “cGenMethod”, “cGenStats”, “cGenExpr”. Each of this method returns a “StringBuilder”. The final is a .h and .c, which encloses all the StringBuilders concatenated.

## Inheritance

**Dynamic dispatch** Dynamic dispatch is accomplished during the default construction of a new Instance of a class. In tool, there is only one type of constructor, the default one. One idea we borrowed from our reference book<sup>2</sup> was to have a default method be outputted called “new” which would take care of creating a new Instance of a struct and returning it as a generic pointer “void\*”. *insert example code of new() here*

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<sup>2</sup>[www.cs.rit.edu/~ats/books/ooc.pdf](http://www.cs.rit.edu/~ats/books/ooc.pdf) at page 11, si jamais faudra mettre ca dans la bibliography la fin seuse

**Method chaining** This problem was one, that we had not seen coming.

In Tool, there is the possibility to write multiple call to a method on one line. It works because each method returns an object. We can't directly translate it in C programming language with the model we choosed to make object oriented possible. Our "methods" need to have as a first argument a pointer to the struct calling, so to make a method call on a struct we would need to write : `void * a = new(nA); ((struct A *)a)->foo(a)`. Our variable `a` needs to be referenced two times, first to get the good function pointer and then as the first argument if "foo" need to access fields defined in `A`. Therefore chained method calls need intermediate variables to work correctly. To tackle this problem, we created a simple object: "tmpVarGen".

---

```
1 object tmpVarGen{
2   private var counter = 0
3   def getFreshVar: String = {
4     counter += 1
5     return "tmp"+counter
6   }
7   def getLastVar: String = "tmp"+counter
8 }
```

---

It is used to have a unique variable name. It has two methods. "getLastVar" returns the last created variable name. "getFreshVar" return a new variable name.

Now at each evaluation of an AST element, which is an expression, it is important first to evaluate the expressions and assign to intermediate variables using the object "tmpVarGen". Next the expression is written using the variables.

---

```
1 case Equals(lhs: ExprTree, rhs: ExprTree) =>
2   val lhsString = cGenExpr(lhs)
3   val lhsLastVar = tmpVarGen.getLastVar
4   val rhsString = cGenExpr(rhs)
5   val rhsLastVar = tmpVarGen.getLastVar
6   val andExprResultVar = genTabulation(indentLvl)+
7     CInt.toString()+" "+tmpVarGen.getFreshVar+" =
8     "+
9     lhsLastVar+" == "+rhsLastVar+";\n"
10   return
11     lhsString.append(rhsString).append(andExprResultVar)
```

---

Here it is an example with the evaluation of an expression AST element: Equals. The left-hand side and right-hand side expressions are first evaluated using the "cGenExpr()" method and are stored in intermediate variable using the "tmpVarGen" object. Afterward the

equal expression as known in C: "`lhs == rhs`" is written using the intermediate variable. At the end we append all element together. Thus one Tool line to write an equality is three lines in C programming language.

## 4. Possible Extensions

If you did not finish what you had planned, explain here what's missing.

In any case, describe how you could further extend your compiler in the direction you chose. This section should convince us that you understand the challenges of writing a good compiler for high-level programming languages.