Design of YASS

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1 Deviations from the R^{7}RS-small Standard

- In section 4.1, inclusion is removed as a primitive expression type.
- Macros are Common-Lisp-style.
- In section 5.3, variable definitions are constrained to the first form.
- In section 6.2, YASS implements only operations on signed 61-bit integers and 64-bit floating point numbers, and conversions between them. Numeric operations are not polymorphic.
- Datum labels are removed.
- Libraries are removed.
- Begin is no longer used for splicing definitions into a context, except at the top-level.

2 Core Grammar

This section describes the core grammar of the language implemented by YASS.

$\langle program \rangle$ ::= $\langle definition \rangle$ $\langle program \rangle$
  | empty

$\langle definition \rangle$ ::= (define $\langle identifier \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$)
  | (define-syntax $\langle identifier \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$)

$\langle expr \rangle$ ::= $\langle identifier \rangle$
  | (quote $\langle datum \rangle$)
  | (if $\langle expr \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$)
  | (if $\langle expr \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$)
  | (lambda $\langle formals \rangle$ $\langle expr \rangle$)
  | $\langle application \rangle$

$\langle application \rangle$ ::= ($\langle expr \rangle$)
  | $\langle expr \rangle$ :: $\langle application \rangle$

$\langle formals \rangle ::= \langle identifier \rangle$
$\quad | \quad ()$
$\quad | \quad \langle identifier \rangle :: \langle formals \rangle$

3 Pass Organization

YASS is a micropass compiler with a similar structure to SML/NJ. Its hierarchy of IRs include:

Source language Scheme with deviations from the standard described in section 1.

Primitives ** after macro expansion. Contains variable references, quotes, applications, abstractions, and conditionals.

AST ** in AST form so that calls to primitives generated in later passes would not shadow user program variables.

Unique-names ** where local names are unique.

CPS CPS with added primitives.

Known-adic ** where variadic functions are eliminated. This is done by converting functions so that they take a single list as an argument and deconstruct the list in the function body. `Vector`, `vector->list`, and `vector-ref` are added as primitives.

ClosurePS ** where functions are closed. YASS uses flat closures. `Make-closure`, `call-closure`, and `closure-ref` are added as primitives.

VM ** where names are replaced with indexed accesses. `Argument-ref` is added as a primitive.

Registered ** where the number of arguments of functions are bounded.

Machine language Machine language. This is a very small subset of the target.

4 Runtime Specifics

The runtime runs on top of the C runtime. This enables YASS programs to call the operating system or to use C libraries through a C FFI, and the runtime to be portable.

Garbage collection is done by checking for a GC cycle before each CPSed function.

Tag bits	Meaning
000	61-bit signed integer
001	character
010	symbol
011	special values (null, boolean, errors, etc.)
100	pointer to heap
101	unused
110	unused
111	unused

Table 1: Meanings of tag bits

Value	Meaning
0	false
1	true
2	null

Table 2: Special values

5   Datum Representation

Data in YASS are represented as 64-bit tagged pointers, with the 3 LSBs for the tag. The meanings of the tag bits are shown in table 1.

Objects on the heap are aligned to the 64-bit barrier and the formats for storing them are as follows:

Pair A pointer with tag 0 at position 0 and value 0 and car and cdr follow.

Port A pointer with tag 1 and value the `FILE *` at position 0.

Procedure A pointer with tag 0 and value 1 at position 0 and a pointer to machine code and vector to enclosed values follows.

String A pointer with tag 3 and value the length of the string at position 0 and elements follow.

Vector Similar to strings but with a tag of 4.

Floating point number A pointer with tag 0 at position 0 and value 2 and the floating point number representation follows.

Reference cell A pointer with tag 0 at position 0 and value 3 and the boxed pointer follows.

Tombstone A pointer with tag 0 at position 0 and value 4, and the forward pointer follows.