

# CS342 - Spring 2019

## Project #1

### A Simple Shell Program

Document Version 1.0

Assigned: **Feb 15, 2019.**

Due date: **March 2, 2019, 23:55.**

*This project will be done individually. You will use C and Linux.*

In this project you will develop a simple shell program, a command line interpreter, called `bilshell`. It will work in two modes: interactive mode and batch mode. In *interactive mode* your shell will provide a prompt string, like **Enter command:**, to the user where the user will type a command name, i.e., a program name, with zero or more parameter strings and your shell will execute the command. In *batch* mode your shell will read the commands from a file and will execute them one after another. Your shell will be invoked as follows:

**bilshell** *N inputfilename*

The *inputfilename* parameter is the name of an ascii text file containing commands. There is one command per line. The *inputfilename* parameter is optional. If omitted, the shell will run in interactive mode; if specified it will run in batch mode. The parameter *N* is the number of characters to receive in each read operation and will be used for compound command execution that will be explained later. An example invocation of the program can be:

```
bilshell 1 infile.txt
```

A command to execute will include a command name, i.e., a program name, and zero or more parameters. An example command can be “cp file1.txt file2.txt”.

When such a command is entered by a user or read as a line from an input file, your shell will divide it into arguments, i.e., strings, where argument 0 is the command name, argument 1, if any of course, is the first parameter to the command, argument 2 is the second parameter to the command, and so on.

When started, your shell will run as a process, i.e., main process or parent process, and will wait for an input command line. When user gives an input line, the line will be separated into arguments and a child process will be created to execute

the command. For this the main process will use the `fork()` system call. In the child process, `exec()` system call will be used to finally execute the program. There are various `exec` related library functions. You can use `execve()` for example. It takes the pathname of a program to execute and an array of argument strings. Please read the man page of `exec` system call. After creating the child process, the parent process will wait. When command is executed and child process terminates, the parent process will return from waiting and will provide another prompt string to the user so that the user can type another command line.

Your shell will also support composition of two commands where the output of one command will be given to another command as input. For example, there is “ps aux” program in Linux that is listing the current processes, and there is “sort” program in Linux that is sorting a text file. When we write “ps aux | sort” in Linux shell, it prints to the screen the sorted list of processes. Similarly, when we would write such a command line in your shell, it should also print a listing of processes in sorted order. Such a command line consist of two commands, with possible parameters, separated with | symbol. The symbol | is called the pipe symbol. Your shell will support use of only *one* pipe symbol in a command line, hence the compound execution of *two* commands in a command line.

When such command line is entered in your shell or read from the input file, the main shell process will create two child processes with the `fork` system call. Two `fork` calls are needed to do this. In each child we need to use the `exec` system call to execute the respective command. In this way, two child processes will execute the two programs whose names are specified at the command line. The output of one program, that would normally go to screen, i.e., to standard output, will now go as input to the second program, which would normally receive the input from a user or from a file. This requires communication (IPC) between these processes.

Your shell will provide communication between two child processes executing two programs by use of Linux *unnamed pipes*. But unlike a normal Linux shell program that creates a single pipe between two child processes directly so that the output of one is fed directly as input to the other, your shell will use *two* pipes. For this, your main process will create two pipes that can be called as `pipe1` and `pipe2`, for example. The output of the first child process will be directed to the first pipe, from where your main process will read the incoming stream of characters. Your main process will write those characters to the second pipe from where the second child process will take the input. This is illustrated in Figure 1. Your main process will read from `pipe1` and write to `pipe2` *N* characters at a time using the `read` and `write` system calls. *N* is the value that is given as an argument to your shell when it is started. *N* can be between 1 and 4096.

Main process will create the pipes using the `pipe()` system call. Main process will then create the child processes using the `fork` system call. Then `exec` system call will be called in each child to run the respective program. Before calling `exec`, in each child, I/O redirection will be done by the main process to direct the output or input. For the first child, the output will not go to standard output anymore

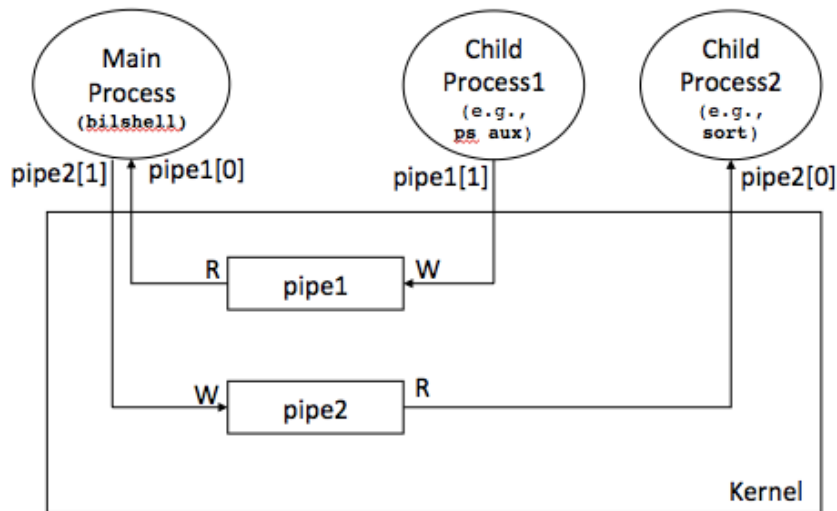


Figure 1: Compound command execution and communication of child processes through the parent.

but will be redirected to pipe1. For the second child, the input will not come from standard input anymore but will be directed from the second pipe. This can be done by use of the `dup2()` system call. It is used to duplicate a file descriptor. For the first child, the write end of the pipe1 will be duplicated to be 1. Integer 1 is always the file descriptor corresponding to standard output. This can be done by the statement: `dup2(pipe1[1], 1)`. For the second child, the read end of pipe2 will be duplicated to be 0. Integer 0 is always the file descriptor corresponding to standard input. This can be done by the statement: `dup2(pipe2[0], 0)`. The main process will read from pipe1 and will write into pipe2. Do not forget to close the unused ends of the pipes at the main process. When a child terminates, the ends of the pipes that are used by the child are closed automatically as well.

For compound command execution, since the main process is on the data flow path from one child process to the other, it can keep some statistics about the transferred data. Count the number of bytes transferred through the pipes for compound commands. Count also the number of read/write operations performed from and to pipes. Print the count to screen after compound command execution has finished. The output format should be as in the following example:

```

character-count: 15000
read-call-count: 15000

```

## Experiments

Now do the following simple experiment. Assume we are wondering about the effect of  $N$  on the performance of a compound command execution. Write two simple

programs “producer  $M$ ” and “consumer  $M$ ” as commands to be compounded. When separately executed, the producer will just print  $M$  random alphanumeric characters to screen one by one or  $N$  characters at a time. You can do this again using the write system call where file descriptor is standard out, i.e., 1. And consumer will just read  $M$  characters from standard input. Now run these programs in a compound fashion in your shell and measure the time it takes. That means execute the following command, for example, from an input file in your shell: “producer 100000 | consumer 100000”. Using the `time` command, measure the running time of your shell executing just this compound command from a file. Repeat this for various values of  $N$  and for a big enough  $M$ . Report the results in a `report.pdf` file and try to comment on them.

## Submission

Submit a pdf file as your report discussing your experiments. Your report will include the results, your interpretations and conclusions, and also the code of the simple programs that you have written. Put your `report.pdf` file and all other files (`bilshell.c` and a `Makefile` and a `README.txt` file) into a directory named with your ID. Then tar and gzip the directory. For example a student with ID 21404312 will create a directory named “21404312” and will put the files there. Then he will tar the directory (package the directory) as follows:

```
tar cvf 21404312.tar 21404312
```

Then he will gzip the tar file as follows:

```
gzip 21404312.tar
```

In this way he will obtain a file called `21404312.tar.gz`. Then he will upload this file in Moodle.

Late submission will not be accepted (no exception). A late submission will get 0 automatically (you will not be able to argue it). Make sure you make a submission one day before the deadline. You can then overwrite it.

## Tips and Clarification

- Will be posted to course website and can be sent via piazza as well.