

Pinocchio

Problems with VMs

closed-box VM

VMs not adaptable

can't anticipate all needs

not open for extension

need to change and extend VMs

eg supporting tail call elimination for Lisp

eg supporting become: for Smalltalk

boundary between language and VM

forces specialized VM implementation

host-language lock-in

VMs not reusable

eg invokedynamic only available to Java 7

metaprogramming restrictions

extension points must be hardwired into the VM

eg using objects as methods in Pharo

need two-way interface between languages

Nutshell

The Message is the Medium

runtime, not VM

self-supporting

available at runtime

not just compiled away

in Squeak and PyPy, you have no access to runtime

only hardwires message sending

Message Sending

runtime library

invocation convention

prefilled monomorphic inline caches

caches prefilled at compile time

metalevel is Smalltalk code

ie message sending

so compiler builds MOP for you

compiles to machine code

unify language metalevel with user code

freely move between levels

Implementation

Object headers

Object = data plus pointer to behaviour

Message sending

runtime library

invocation conventions (interface)

native call to meta-level implementation

lookup & apply

meta-level invoke function performs lookup and apply

invoke can be applied to any object

looks up selector and performs found behaviour

prefilled inline caches

formal binding stays at runtime

actual binding at compile time

can be overridden at runtime

solves the bootstrapping problem

avoid meta-regression

type hints

avoid static compilation of metalevel

avoid need for statically typed language

tells runtime where to find compiled method if type matches

Native compilation

Conventional architecture

Bootstrapping

compiler cross-compiled from Pharo

Performance

3 benchmarks

Applications

Replacing a MethodObject

foobar example :-)

DoesNotUnderstand

example of runtime extension to support new feature

Extending behaviour

eg prototype-based lookup

Object Flow Analysis

does not currently run in Pinocchio yet

either AST interpreter approach or full compiler approach

two-way communication with C

profiler

counting msg sends