Today’s objectives
- Administrative details
- Define compilers and why we study them
- Define the high-level structure of compilers
- Associate specific tasks, theories, and technologies with achieving the different structural elements of a compiler
  - And build some initial intuition about why these are needed

Administrative Details
- Course Web: [http://www.cs.washington.edu/401](http://www.cs.washington.edu/401)
- Grading
  - Homeworks ~20%
  - Project ~40%
  - Midterm ~15%
  - Final ~25%

Examples
- Source languages
  - Java
  - C
  - C++
  - LISP
  - ML
  - COBOL
- Target architectures
  - MIPS
  - x86
  - SPARC
  - Alpha

What is a compiler?
- A software tool that translates
  - a program in source code form to
  - an equivalent program in an executable (target) form
- Converts from a form good for people to a form good for computers

Why study compilers?
CSE401’s project-oriented approach

- Start with a compiler for PL/0, written in C++
- We define additional language features
  - Such as comments, arrays, call-by-reference parameters, result-returning procedures, for loops, etc.
- You modify the compiler to translate the extended PL/0 language
  - Project completed in well-defined stages

More on the project

- Strongly recommended that you work in two-person teams for the quarter
- Grading based on
  - correctness
  - clarity of design and implementation
  - quality of testing
- Provides experience with object-oriented design and with C++
- Provides experience with working in a team

What’s hard about compiling

- I will present a small program to you, character by character
- Identify problems that you can see that you will encounter in compiling this program
- Here’s an example problem
  - When we see a character ‘1’ followed by a character ‘7’, we have to convert it to the integer 17.

Example

```
1. i 11. i
2. n 12. 7 22. *
3. t 13. . 23. i
4. ; 14. ; 24. +
5. i 15. p 25. 2
6. ; 16. r 26. )
7. ; 17. i 27. ;
8. i 18. n
9. : 19. t
10. = 20. ;

• is the space character
• This is not a PL/0 program!
```

Structure of compilers

- A common compiler structure has been defined
  - Years and years of deep, difficult research intermixed with building of thousands of compilers
- Actual compilers often differ from this prototype
  - Primary differences are the ordering and clarity with which the pieces are actually separated
  - But the model is still extremely useful
- You will see the structure — to a large degree — in the PL/0 compiler

Prototype compiler structure
These parts are often lumped into two categories

- The front-end
  - Focuses on (repeated) analysis
  - Determines what the program is

- The back-end
  - Focuses on synthesis
  - Produces target program equivalent to source program

Read in characters and clump them into tokens
- Also strip out white space and comments
- Specify tokens with regular expressions
- Use finite state machines to scan
- Remember the connection between regular expressions and finite state machines

- Turn token stream into tree based on the program’s syntactic structure
- Define syntax using context free grammar (CFG)

- EBNF is a common notation for defining concrete syntax
  - Carries about semi-colons, parens, and such
- Parser usually constructs AST representing abstract syntax
  - Carries about statement structures, precedence and such

Given AST
- figure out what declaration each name refers to
- perform static consistency checks

- Key data structure: symbol table
  - maps names to information about name derived from declaration

- Semantic analysis steps
  - Process each scope, top down
  - Process declarations in each scope into symbol table for scope
  - Process body of each scope in context of symbol table
Semantic analysis example

```c
int x;
int y(void);
int main(void) {
    double x,y;
    x = x + 5;
    printf("x is %d",x);
    x = y();
    return 1/2 ;
}
```

- Which var with which decl?
- What type?
- Operators legal on those types?
- Coercion?
- Function arg & return types too?
- Overloading?
- Goto/case labels unique?

Storage layout

- Given symbol table, determine how and where variables will be stored at runtime
- What representation is used for each kind of data?
- How much space does each variable require?
- In what kind of memory should it be placed?
  - static, global memory
  - stack memory
  - heap memory
- Where in memory should it be placed?
  - e.g., what stack offset?

Storage layout example

```c
int x;
int y(void);
int main(void) {
    double x,y;
    x = x + 5;
    printf("x is %d",x);
    x = y();
    return 1/2 ;
}
```

- Outer x: 4 bytes, static
- Inner x,y: 8 bytes each on stack
- What address?
- How does printf find its parameters?
- How does main return a value?

Code generation

- Given annotated AST and symbol table, produce target code
- Often done as three steps
  - Produce machine-independent low-level representation of the program (intermediate representation or IR)
  - Perform machine-independent optimizations (optional)
  - Translate IR into machine-specific target instructions
    - Instruction selection
    - Register allocation

Codegen example

```
x = x + y:  
t42 x lw $2, 48(8p)
t43 y lw $3, 50(8p)
t44 t42 + t43 add $2, $2, $3
x lw $2, 48(9p)
x = x * 2:  
t45 x lw $2, 48(9p)
t46 t45 * t46 muls $2, $2, $3
x lw $2, 48(9p)
x += y:   
t48 x lw $2, 48(9p)
t49 y lw $3, 52(9p)
t50 t48 + t49 add $2, $2, $3
x lw $2, 48(9p)
```

Does this structure work well?

- FORTRAN I Compiler (circa 1954-56)
  - 18 person years

- PL/0 Compiler
  - By the end of the quarter, you’ll have a working compiler that’s way better than FORTRAN I in most respects
    (key exception: optimization)
Compilers vs. interpreters
- Compilers implement languages by translation
- Interpreters implement languages directly
- Note: the line is not always crystal-clear
- Compilers and interpreters have tradeoffs
  - Execution speed of program
  - Start-up overhead, turn-around time
  - Ease of implementation
  - Programming environment facilities
  - Conceptual clarity

Compiler engineering issues
- Portability
  - Ideal is multiple front-ends and multiple back-ends with a shared intermediate language
- Sequencing phases of compilation
  - Stream-based vs. syntax-directed
- Multiple, separate passes vs. fewer, integrated passes
- How to avoid compiler bugs?

Objectives: next lecture
- Define overall theory and practical structure of lexical analysis
- Briefly recap regular expressions, finite state machines, and their relationship
  - Even briefer recap of the language hierarchy
- Show how to define tokens with regular expressions
- Show how to leverage this style of token definition in implementing a lexer