Native code generation

JOOS programs are compiled into bytecode.

This bytecode can be executed thanks to either:

- an interpreter;
- an Ahead-Of-Time (AOT) compiler; or
- a Just-In-Time (JIT) compiler.

Regardless, bytecode must be implicitly or explicitly translated into native code suitable for the host architecture before execution.

Interpreters:

- are easier to implement;
- can be very portable; but
- suffer an inherent inefficiency:

```
pc = code.start;
while(true)
  {  npc = pc + instruction_length(code[pc]);
     switch (opcode(code[pc]))
       {  case ILOAD_1: push(local[1]);
                        break;
          case ILOAD:   push(local[code[pc+1]]);
                        break;
          case ISTORE:  t = pop();
                        local[code[pc+1]] = t;
                        break;
          case IADD:    t1 = pop();  t2 = pop();
                        push(t1 + t2);
                        break;
          case IFEQ:    t = pop();
                        if (t == 0) npc = code[pc+1];
                        break;
          ...
       }
     pc = npc;
  }
```

Ahead-of-Time compilers:

- translate the low-level intermediate form into native code;
- create all object files, which are then linked, and finally executed.

This is not so useful for Java and JOOS:

- method code is fetched as it is needed;
- from across the internet; and
- from multiple hosts with different native code sets.

Just-in-Time compilers:

- merge interpreting with traditional compilation;
- have the overall structure of an interpreter; but
- method code is handled differently.

When a method is invoked for the first time:

- the bytecode is fetched;
- it is translated into native code; and
- control is given to the newly generated native code.

When a method is invoked subsequently:

- control is simply given to the previously generated native code.

Features of a JIT compiler:

- it must be *fast*, because the compilation occurs at run-time (Just-In-Time is really Just-Too-Late);
- it does not generate optimized code;
- it does not compile every instruction into native code, but relies on the runtime library for complex instructions;
- it need not compile every method; and
- it may concurrently interpret and compile a method (Better-Late-Than-Never).

Problems in generating native code:

- *instruction selection*:
  choose the correct instructions based on the native code instruction set;
- *memory modelling*:
  decide where to store variables and how to allocate registers;
- *method calling*:
  determine calling conventions; and
- *branch handling*:
  allocate branch targets.

Compiling JVM bytecode into VirtualRISC:

- map the Java local stack into registers and memory;
- do instruction selection on the fly;
- allocate registers on the fly; and
- allocate branch targets on the fly.

This is successfully done in the Kaffe system.

The general algorithm:

- determine number of slots in frame:
  locals limit + stack limit + #temps;
- find starts of basic blocks;
- find local stack height for each bytecode;
- emit prologue;
- emit native code for each bytecode; and
- fix up branches.

NaÏve approach:

- each local and stack location is mapped to an offset in the native frame;
- each bytecode is translated into a series of native instructions, which
- constantly move locations between memory and registers.

This is similar to the native code generated by a non-optimizing compiler.

Example:

```
public void foo() {
  int a,b,c;

  a = 1;
  b = 13;
  c = a + b;
}
```

Generated bytecode:

```
.method public foo()V
  .limit locals 4
  .limit stack 2
  iconst_1         ; 1
  istore_1         ; 0
  ldc 13           ; 1
  istore_2         ; 0
  iload_1          ; 1
  iload_2          ; 2
  iadd             ; 1
  istore_3         ; 0
  return           ; 0
```

- compute frame size $= 4 + 2 + 0 = 6$;
- find stack height for each bytecode;
- emit prologue; and
- emit native code for each bytecode.

Assignment of frame slots:

name	offset	location
a	1	[fp-32]
b	2	[fp-36]
c	3	[fp-40]
stack	0	[fp-44]
stack	1	[fp-48]

Native code generation:

```
                                save sp,-136,sp
a = 1;          iconst_1        mov 1,R1
                                st R1,[fp-44]
                istore_1        ld [fp-44],R1
                                st R1,[fp-32]
b = 13;         ldc 13          mov 13, R1
                                st R1,[fp-44]
                istore_2        ld [fp-44], R1
                                st R1,[fp-36]
c = a + b;      iload_1         ld [fp-32],R1
                                st R1,[fp-44]
                iload_2         ld [fp-36],R1
                                st R1,[fp-48]
                iadd            ld [fp-48],R1
                                ld [fp-44],R2
                                add R2,R1,R1
                                st R1,[fp-44]
                istore_3        ld [fp-44],R1
                                st R1,[fp-40]
                return          restore
                                ret
```

The naïve code is very slow:

- many unnecessary loads and stores, which
- are the *most* expensive operations.

We wish to replace loads and stores:

```
c = a + b;   iload_1    ld [fp-32],R1
                        st R1,[fp-44]
             iload_2    ld [fp-36],R1
                        st R1,[fp-48]
             iadd       ld [fp-48],R1
                        ld [fp-44],R2
                        add R2,R1,R1
                        st R1,[fp-44]
             istore_3   ld [fp-44],R1
                        st R1,[fp-40]
```

by registers operations:

```
c = a + b;   iload_1    ld [fp-32],R1
             iload_2    ld [fp-36],R2
             iadd       add R1,R2,R1
             istore_3   st R1,[fp-40]
```

where `R1` and `R2` represent the stack.

The *fixed* register allocation scheme:

- assign m registers to the first m locals;
- assign n registers to the first n stack locations;
- assign k scratch registers; and
- spill remaining locals and locations into memory.

Example for 6 registers ($m = n = k = 2$):

name	offset	location	register
a	1		R1
b	2		R2
c	3	[fp-40]	
stack	0		R3
stack	1		R4
scratch	0		R5
scratch	1		R6

Improved native code generation:

```
                           save sp,-136,sp
a = 1;        iconst_1     mov 1,R3
              istore_1     mov R3,R1
b = 13;       ldc 13       mov 13,R3
              istore_2     mov R3,R2
c = a + b;    iload_1      mov R1,R3
              iload_2      mov R2,R4
              iadd         add R3,R4,R3
              istore_3     st R3,[fp-40]
              return       restore
                           ret
```

This works quite well if:

- the architecture has a large register set;
- the stack is small most of the time; and
- the first locals are used most frequently.

Summary of fixed register allocation scheme:

- registers are allocated once; and
- the allocation does not change within a method.

Advantages:

- it's simple to do the allocation; and
- no problems with different control flow paths.

Disadvantages:

- assumes the first locals and stack locations are most important; and
- may waste registers within a region of a method.

The *basic block* register allocation scheme:

- assign frame slots to registers on demand within a basic block; and
- update *descriptors* at each bytecode.

The descriptor maps a slot to an element of the set {⊥, `mem`, `R`i, `mem&R`i}:

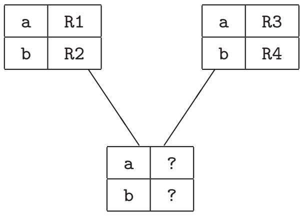
a	R2
b	mem
c	mem&R4
s_0	R1
s_1	⊥

We also maintain the inverse register map:

R1	s_0
R2	a
R3	⊥
R4	c
R5	⊥

At the beginning of a basic block, all slots are in memory.

Basic blocks are merged by control paths:

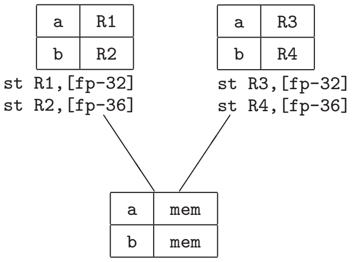


a	R1
b	R2

a	R3
b	R4

a	?
b	?

Registers must be spilled after basic blocks:



a	R1
b	R2

```
st R1,[fp-32]
st R2,[fp-36]
```

a	R3
b	R4

```
st R3,[fp-32]
st R4,[fp-36]
```

a	mem
b	mem

	`save sp,-136,sp`	R1 ⊥ R2 ⊥ R3 ⊥ R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a mem b mem c mem s_0 ⊥ s_1 ⊥
`iconst_1`	`mov 1,R1`	R1 s_0 R2 ⊥ R3 ⊥ R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a mem b mem c mem s_0 R1 s_1 ⊥
`istore_1`	`mov R1,R2`	R1 ⊥ R2 a R3 ⊥ R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a R2 b mem c mem s_0 ⊥ s_1 ⊥
`ldc 13`	`mov 13,R1`	R1 s_0 R2 a R3 ⊥ R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a R2 b mem c mem s_0 R1 s_1 ⊥
`istore_2`	`mov R1,R3`	R1 ⊥ R2 a R3 b R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a R2 b R3 c mem s_0 ⊥ s_1 ⊥

`iload_1`	`mov R2,R1`	R1 s_0 R2 a R3 b R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a R2 b R3 c mem s_0 R1 s_1 ⊥
`iload_2`	`mov R3,R4`	R1 s_0 R2 a R3 b R4 s_1 R5 ⊥	a R2 b R3 c mem s_0 R1 s_1 R4
`iadd`	`add R1,R4,R1`	R1 s_0 R2 a R3 b R4 ⊥ R5 ⊥	a R2 b R3 c mem s_0 R1 s_1 ⊥
`istore_3`	`st R1,R4`	R1 ⊥ R2 a R3 b R4 c R5 ⊥	a R2 b R3 c R4 s_0 ⊥ s_1 ⊥

	`st R2,[fp-32]`
	`st R3,[fp-36]`
	`st R4,[fp-40]`
		R1 ⊥
		R2 ⊥
		R3 ⊥
		R4 ⊥
		R5 ⊥
			a mem
			b mem
			c mem
			s_0 ⊥
			s_1 ⊥

`return`	`restore` `ret`		

So far, this is actually no better than the fixed scheme.

But if we add the statement:

```
c = c * c + c;
```

then the fixed scheme and basic block scheme generate:

```
                 Fixed              Basic block

iload_3     ld [fp-40],R3        mv R4, R1
dup         ld [fp-40],R4        mv R4, R5
imul        mul R3,R4,R3         mul R1, R5, R1
iload_3     ld [fp-40],R4        mv R4, R5
iadd        add R3,R4,R3         add R1, R5, R1
istore_3    st R3,[fp-40]        mv R1, R4
```

Summary of basic block register allocation scheme:

- registers are allocated on demand; and
- slots are kept in registers within a basic block.

Advantages:

- registers are not wasted on unused slots; and
- less spill code within a basic block.

Disadvantages:

- much more complex than the fixed register allocation scheme;
- registers must be spilled at the end of a basic block; and
- we may spill locals that are never needed.

We can optimize further:

```
save sp,-136,sp      save sp,-136,sp

mov 1,R1             mov 1,R2
mov R1,R2

mov 13,R1            mov 13,R3
mov R1,R3

mov R2,R1
mov R3,R4
add R1,R4,R1         add R2,R3,R1
st R1,[fp-40]        st R1,[fp-40]

restore              restore
ret                  ret
```

by not explicitly modelling the stack.

Unfortunately, this cannot be done safely on the fly by a peephole optimizer.

The optimization:

```
mov 1,R3      ⟹    mov 1,R1
mov R3,R1
```

is unsound if `R3` is used in a later instruction:

```
mov 1,R3      ⟹    mov 1,R1
mov R3,R1
⋮                  ⋮
mov R3,R4          mov R3,R4
```

Such optimizations require dataflow analysis.

Invoking methods in bytecode:

- evaluate each argument leaving results on the stack; and
- emit `invokevirtual` instruction.

Invoking methods in native code:

- call library routine `soft_get_method_code` to perform the method lookup;
- generate code to load arguments into registers; and
- branch to the resolved address.

Consider a method invocation:

```
c = t.foo(a,b);
```

where the memory map is:

name	offset	location	register
a	1	[fp-60]	R3
b	2	[fp-56]	R4
c	3	[fp-52]	
t	4	[fp-48]	R2
stack	0	[fp-36]	R1
stack	1	[fp-40]	R5
stack	2	[fp-44]	R6
scratch	0	[fp-32]	R7
scratch	1	[fp-28]	R8

Generating native code:

```
aload_4                mov R2,R1
iload_1                mov R3,R5
iload_2                mov R4,R6
invokevirtual foo      // soft call to get address
                       ld R7,[R2+4]
                       ld R8,[R7+52]
                       // spill all registers
                       st R3,[fp-60]
                       st R4,[fp-56]
                       st R2,[fp-48]
                       st R6,[fp-44]
                       st R5,[fp-40]
                       st R1,[fp-36]
                       st R7,[fp-32]
                       st R8,[fp-28]
                       // make call
                       mov R8,R0
                       call soft_get_method_code
                       // result is in R0
                       // put args in R2, R1, and R0
                       ld R2,[fp-44] // R2 := stack_2
                       ld R1,[fp-40] // R1 := stack_1
                       st R0,[fp-32] // spill result
                       ld R0,[fp-36] // R0 := stack_0
                       ld R4,[fp-32] // reload result
                       jmp [R4] // call method
```

- this is long and costly; and
- the lack of dataflow analysis causes massive spills within basic blocks.

Handling branches:

- the only problem is that the target address is not known;
- assemblers normally handle this; but
- the JIT compiler produces binary code directly in memory.

Generating native code:

```
if (a < b)   iload_1        ld R1,[fp-44]
             iload_2        ld R2,[fp-48]
             if_icmpge 17   sub R1,R2,R3
                            bge ??
```

How to compute the branch targets:

- previously encountered branch targets are already known;
- keep unresolved branches in a table; and
- patch targets when the bytecode is eventually reached.