Compiling Techniques

Lecture 12: Towards SSA Form
So far we have focused on checking the input program for *syntactic* and *semantic* errors.

Now we start looking towards generating (efficient) code that is executable on hardware.
Program representation for the Frontend: AST

For the analysis of the Frontend, we worked with Abstract Syntax Trees (ASTs). ASTs are a natural representation of the structured program text. They are easy to work with by writing passes as recursive functions.

But they are inconvenient for control-flow and data-flow analysis, which are the basis for many compiler optimizations.
Overview: Control-flow and Data-flow Analysis

*Control-flow / data-flow* analysis aim to understand the program’s behaviour without executing it by analysing the possible different branches a program can take and where variables are accessed.

Crucial for these analyses are the two data structures:

- a *def-use chain* provides, for a single variable, the set of all its uses.
- a *use-def chain* provides, for a use of a variable, the set of its definitions.

Here, *definitions* means writing to a variable, and *uses* means reading from it.
Def-use and use-def chains in the AST

**Example Program**

```
x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1
```

**Example AST in xDSL**

```
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "x"]
    literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
}
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "y"]
    binary_expr() ["op" = "+"]
        id_expr() ["id" = "x"]
        literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
}
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "x"]
    literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
}
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "z"]
    binary_expr() ["op" = "+"]
        id_expr() ["id" = "x"]
        literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
}
Def-use and use-def chains in the AST

Example Program

\[
\begin{align*}
x &= 1 \\
y &= x + 1 \\
x &= 2 \\
z &= x + 1
\end{align*}
\]

Example AST in xDSL

```xDSL
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "x"] {
        literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32] }
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "y"] {
        binary_expr() ["op" = "+"] {
            id_expr() ["id" = "x"] {
                literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32] }
        }
    }
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "x"] {
        literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32] }
assign() {
    id_expr() ["id" = "z"] {
        binary_expr() ["op" = "+"] {
            id_expr() ["id" = "x"] {
                literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32] }
        }
    }
}
```
Idea: Change Representation that makes def-use chains explicit

As a first step, we translate the nested AST representation into a graph representation:

```
assign() {
  id_expr() ["id" = "x"] { 
    literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]  }
}
assign() {
  id_expr() ["id" = "y"] { 
    binary_expr() ["op" = "+"] {
      id_expr() ["id" = "x"] { 
      literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]  }
    }
}
assign() {
  id_expr() ["id" = "x"] { 
    literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]  }
}
assign() {
  id_expr() ["id" = "z"] { 
    binary_expr() ["op" = "+"] {
      id_expr() ["id" = "x"] { 
      literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]  }
    }
}
```
How is this a Graph?

```%
%l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l0 : !int)

%l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l1 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)

%l2 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l2 : !int)

%l3 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l3 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
```
How is this a Graph?

```plaintext
%l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l0 : !int)

%l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l1 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)

%l2 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l2 : !int)

%l3 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l3 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
```
How is this a Graph?

%l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l0 : !int)
%l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l1 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
%l2 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l2 : !int)
%l3 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l3 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
How is this a Graph?

def-use chains are made explicit!
Reminder: How did we represent ASTs in xDSL?

For implementing the AST we have used the xDSL framework. Reminder:

```python
@irdl_op_definition
class BinOp(Operation):
    name = "BinOp"
    op = AttributeDef(StringAttr)
    lhs = SingleBlockRegionDef()
    rhs = SingleBlockRegionDef()

@irdl_op_definition
class IntLiteral(Operation):
    name = "IntLiteral"
    value = AttributeDef(IntegerAttr)
```

- **Operation** is the superclass of all AST nodes

- Each Operation has a **name**

- Metadata is represented by **attributes**

- A **region** represents nested structure, such as the children of a node in the AST

- A **macro** generates helpful boilerplate code to make printing, testing, etc. easy
How do we represent this graph IR in xDSL?

Let us refine our understanding of xDSL concepts:

```python
@irdl_op_definition
class BinOp(Operation):
    name = "BinOp"
    op:  OpAttr[StringAttr]
    lhs: Annotated[Operand, Attribute]
    rhs: Annotated[Operand, Attribute]
    result: OpResult
```

- **Operation** is the superclass of all IR nodes
- **Metadata** is represented by **attributes**
- **Operands** represent inputs to operations, such as the left- and right-hand-side of an addition. We used **regions** with a single operation in it before.
- **Operations** can produce **results**, allowing other operations to refer to the computed result of an operation.
ChocoPy IR in xDSL – Regions only for nesting

We use Regions to represent nesting. In the AST, everything was nested. In the IR, we use Operands for inputs, but we still use regions to represent nesting in the input program, e.g. for the then- and else-blocks of an If.

```
%l4 = Literal() ["value" = 4 : !i32]  IR
%l5 = Literal() ["value" = 5 : !i32]
%res = BinaryExpr(%l4, %l5) ["op" = "+"]

%t = Literal() ["value" = !bool<True>]  IR
If(%t) {
  %l4 = Literal() ["value" = 4 : !i32]
  %l8 = Literal() ["value" = 8 : !i32]
} {
  %l15 = Literal() ["value" = 15 : !i32]
  %l16 = Literal() ["value" = 16 : !i32]
}
```

```
BinaryExpr() ["op" = "+"] {
  Literal() ["value" = 4 : !i32]
} {
  Literal() ["value" = 5 : !i32] }

If() {
  Literal() ["value" = !bool<True>] 
} {
  Literal() ["value" = 4 : !i32]
  Literal() ["value" = 8 : !i32]
} {
  Literal() ["value" = 15 : !i32]
  Literal() ["value" = 16 : !i32]
}
ChocoPy IR in xDSL – Operands and Results

Operands and Results of Operations are written with a percent sign before a name or number: %x or %23

Each of these Names represents a value of a certain type.

Operations expect their operands to be of a certain type (similar to function argument).

In xDSL all types start with an exclamation mark: !int

```plaintext
%l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l0 : !int)
%l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l1 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
%l2 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
assign(%x : !int, %l2 : !int)
%l3 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
%t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l3 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
```
Optimizing the IR

**Example Program**

x: int = 0
y: int = 0
z: int = 0

x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1

How can we optimize the IR?

---

Example Program in IR

```plaintext
module() {
  %l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %x : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "x"]
  %l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %y : !int = var_def(%l1 : !int) ["var_name" = "y"]
  %l4 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %z : !int = var_def(%l4 : !int) ["var_name" = "z"]
  %l6 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l6 : !int)
  %l7 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  %t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l7 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
  %l8 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l8 : !int)
  %l10 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  %t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l10 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
}
```
Optimizing the IR

Example Program

Example Program in IR

module() {
  %l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %x : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "x"]
  %l1 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %y : !int = var_def(%l1 : !int) ["var_name" = "y"]
  %l4 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %z : !int = var_def(%l4 : !int) ["var_name" = "z"]
  %l6 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l6 : !int)
  %l7 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  %t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l7 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
  %l8 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l8 : !int)
  %l10 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  %t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l10 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
}

How can we optimize the IR?

Remove duplicated operations

Example Program

x: int = 0
y: int = 0
z: int = 0

x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1
Removed duplicate literals

**Example Program**

```plaintext
x: int = 0
y: int = 0
z: int = 0

x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1
```

Can we remove more duplicates?

**Example Program in IR**

```plaintext
module() {
  %l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %x : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "x"]

  %y : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "y"]

  %z : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "z"]
  %l6 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l6 : !int)

  %t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l6 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
  %l8 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l8 : !int)

  %t1 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l6 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%z : !int, %t1 : !int)
}
```
Can we remove more duplicates?
Remove duplicate addition
Remove duplicate additions

**Example Program**

```
x: int = 0
y: int = 0
z: int = 0

x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1
```

Can we remove more duplicates?
Remove duplicate **addition**

**Example Program in IR**
```
module() {
  %l0 : !int = literal() ["value" = 0 : !i32]
  %x : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "x"]
  %y : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "y"]
  %z : !int = var_def(%l0 : !int) ["var_name" = "z"]
  %l6 : !int = literal() ["value" = 1 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l6 : !int)
  %t0 : !int = binary_expr(%x : !int, %l6 : !int) ["op" = "+"]
  assign(%y : !int, %t0 : !int)
  %l8 : !int = literal() ["value" = 2 : !i32]
  assign(%x : !int, %l8 : !int)
  assign(%z : !int, %t0 : !int)
}
```

This is wrong! x is mutated before the second addition.
Mutations are problematic ⇒ Remove them!

As we just saw, mutating variables is problematic when optimizing our IR

Idea: disallow mutations of variables!

Variables are initialized when they are declared and can not be modified after.

Introduce new variables instead of mutating the old one.
Mutations are problematic ⇒ Remove them!

As we just saw, mutating variables is problematic when optimizing our IR

**Idea**: disallow mutations of variables!

Variables are initialized when they are declared and can not be modified after.

Introduce new variables instead of mutating the old one.

*Program with mutation*

```
x = 1
y = x + 1
x = 2
z = x + 1
```

*Program without mutation*

```
x1 = 1
y = x1 + 1
x2 = 2
z = x2 + 1
```
Single Static Assignment (SSA) Form

“A program is defined to be in Single Static Assignment (SSA) form if each variable is a target of exactly one assignment statement in the program text.”

An important property from this definition is referential transparency:

“An expression is called referentially transparent if it can be replaced with its corresponding value (and vice-versa) without changing the program's behaviour”.

When our program is in SSA form, we can’t make the mistake we did before!