Arithmetic Expressions

In Text: Chapter 6

Outline

- What is a type?
- Primitives
- Strings
- Ordinals
- Arrays
- Records
- Sets
- Pointers

Arithmetic Expressions

- Their evaluation was one of the motivations for the development of the first programming languages
- Arithmetic expressions consist of operators, operands, parentheses, and function calls
- Design issues for arithmetic expressions:
- What are the operator precedence rules?
- What are the operator associativity rules?
- What is the order of operand evaluation?
- Are there restrictions on operand evaluation side effects?
- Does the language allow user-defined operator overloading?
- What mode mixing is allowed in expressions?

Operators

- A unary operator has one operand
- A binary operator has two operands
- A ternary operator has three operands

- Operator precedence and operator associativity are important considerations

Operator Precedence

- The operator precedence rules for expression evaluation define the order in which “adjacent” operators of different precedence levels are evaluated (“adjacent” means they are separated by at most one operand)
- Typical precedence levels
  1. parentheses
  2. unary operators
  3. ** (if the language supports it)
  4. *, /
  5. +, -
- Can be overridden with parentheses

Operator Associativity

- The operator associativity rules for expression evaluation define the order in which adjacent operators with the same precedence level are evaluated
- Typical associativity rules:
  - Left to right, except **, which is right to left
  - Sometimes unary operators associate right to left (e.g., FORTRAN)
- APL is different; all operators have equal precedence and all operators associate right to left
- Can be overridden with parentheses

Operand Evaluation Order

- The process:
  1. Variables: just fetch the value
  2. Constants: sometimes a fetch from memory; sometimes the constant is in the machine language instruction
  3. Parenthesized expressions: evaluate all operands and operators first
  4. Function references: The case of most interest!
- Order of evaluation is crucial

Side Effects

- Functional side effects - when a function changes a two-way parameter or a non-local variable
- The problem with functional side effects:
  - When a function referenced in an expression alters another operand of the expression
- Example, for a parameter change:

```
     a = 10;
     b = a + fun(&a);
/* Assume that fun changes its param */
```

Solutions for Side Effects

- Two Possible Solutions to the Problem:

1. Write the language definition to disallow functional side effects
   - No two-way parameters in functions
   - No non-local references in functions
   - Advantage: it works!
   - Disadvantage: Programmers want the flexibility of two-way parameters (what about C?) and non-local references
2. Write the language definition to demand that operand evaluation order be fixed
   - Disadvantage: limits some compiler optimizations

Conditional Expressions

- C, C++, and Java (?:)

```
average = (count == 0) ? 0 : sum / count;
```

Operator Overloading

- Some is common (e.g., + for int and float)
- Some is potential trouble (e.g., * in C and C++)
- Loss of compiler error detection (omission of an operand should be a detectable error)
- Can be avoided by introduction of new symbols (e.g., Pascal’s div)
- C++ and Ada allow user-defined overloaded operators
- Potential problems:
  - Users can define nonsense operations
  - Readability may suffer

Implicit Type Conversions

- A narrowing conversion is one that converts an object to a type that cannot include all of the values of the original type
- A widening conversion is one in which an object is converted to a type that can include at least approximations to all of the values of the original type
- A mixed-mode expression is one that has operands of different types
- A coercion is an implicit type conversion

Disadvantages of Coercions

- They decrease the type error detection ability of the compiler
- In most languages, all numeric types are coerced in expressions, using widening conversions
- In Modula-2 and Ada, there are virtually no coercions in expressions

Explicit Type Conversions

- Often called casts
- Ada example:

```
FLOAT(INDEX)   -- INDEX is INTEGER type
```

- C example:

```
(int) speed    /* speed is float type */
```

Errors in Expressions

- Caused by:
  - Inherent limitations of arithmetic (e.g. division by zero)
  - Limitations of computer arithmetic (e.g., overflow)
- Such errors are often ignored by the run-time system

Relational Expressions

- Use relational operators and operands of various types
- Evaluate to some boolean representation
- Operator symbols used vary somewhat among languages (!=, /=, .NE., <>, #)

Boolean Expressions

- Operands are boolean and the result is boolean
- Operators:

FORTRAN 77	FORTRAN 90	C	Ada
.AND.	and	&&	and
.OR.	or	||	or
.NOT.	not	!	not
			xor

- C has no boolean type—it uses int, where 0 is false and nonzero is true
- One odd characteristic of C's expressions: a < b < c is legal, but the result is not what you might expect

Precedence of All Operators

- Pascal: not, unary -
  *, /, div, mod, and
  +, -, or
  relops
- Ada: **
  *, /, mod, rem
  unary -, not
  +, -, &
  relops
  and, or, xor
- C, C++, and Java have > 50 operators and 17 different precedence levels

Short Circuit Evaluation

- Stop evaluating operands of logical operators once result is known
- Pascal: does not use short-circuit evaluation
- Problem:

```
index := 1;
while (index <= length) and
     (LIST[index] <> value) do
   index := index + 1
```

Short Circuit Evaluation (cont.)

- C, C++, and Java: use short-circuit evaluation for the usual Boolean operators (&& and ||), but also provide bitwise operators that are not short circuit (& and |)
- Ada: programmer can specify either (short-circuit is specified with and then and or else)
- FORTRAN 77: short circuit, but any side-affected place must be set to undefined
- Short-circuit evaluation exposes the potential
- problem of side effects in expressions
- C Example: (a > b) || (b++ / 3)

Assignment Statements

- The operator symbol:
- = FORTRAN, BASIC, PL/I, C, C++, Java
- := ALGOLs, Pascal, Modula-2, Ada
- = can be bad if it is overloaded for the relational operator for equality (e.g. in PL/I, A = B = C;)
- Note difference from C

More Complicated Assignments

1. Multiple targets (PL/I)
   - A, B = 10
2. Conditional targets (C, C++, and Java)
   - (first = true) ? total : subtotal = 0
3. Compound assignment operators (C, C++, and Java)
   - sum += next;
4. Unary assignment operators (C, C++, and Java)
   - a++;
   - C, C++, and Java treat = as an arithmetic binary operator
   - a = b * (c = d * 2 + 1) + 1
   - This is inherited from ALGOL 68

Assignment as an Expression

- In C, C++, and Java, the assignment statement produces a result
- So, they can be used as operands in expressions

```
        while ((ch = getchar() != EOF) { ... }
```

- Disadvantage: another kind of expression side effect

Mixed-Mode Assignment

- In FORTRAN, C, and C++, any numeric value can be assigned to any numeric scalar variable; whatever conversion is necessary is done
- In Pascal, integers can be assigned to reals, but reals cannot be assigned to integers (the programmer must specify whether the conversion from real to integer is truncated or rounded)
- In Java, only widening assignment coercions are done
- In Ada, there is no assignment coercion