

# Retargetable compilers and tools for embedded processors in industrial applications

Cl. B. Liem

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# THESE

présentée par

**LIEM, Clifford Benjamin**

**B. Sc., M. Eng.**

pour obtenir le grade de **DOCTEUR**

de l'INSTITUT NATIONAL POLYTECHNIQUE DE GRENOBLE

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Bernard COURTOIS : Président

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# THESIS

presented by

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specialty: **Microelectronics**

## Retargetable Compilers and Tools for Embedded Processors in Industrial Applications

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## Abstract

Embedded core processors are becoming a vital part of today's system-on-a-chip in the growing areas of telecommunications, multimedia and consumer electronics. This is mainly in response to a need to track evolving standards with the flexibility of embedded software. Consequently, maintaining the high product performance and low product cost requires a careful design of the processor tuned to the application domain.

With the increased presence of instruction-set processors, retargetable software compilation techniques are critical, not only for improving engineering productivity, but to allow designers to explore the architectural possibilities for the application domain.

The contributions of this thesis are primarily in the following three categories:

- methods and experiences using a retargetable compiler methodology for embedded processors in industry.
- an augmentation of the knowledge necessary for compiling abstract source code for DSP architectures.
- a set of tools which allow the designer to explore an instruction-set architecture for a set of compiled code in the light of redesigning the processor for an evolution or reuse of the architecture.

The manuscript begins with an overview of the techniques of modern retargetable compilers and shows the application of practical techniques to embedded instruction-set processors. The methods are highlighted with examples from industry processors used in products for multimedia, telecommunications, and consumer electronics. An emphasis is given to the methodology and experience gained in applying two different retargetable compiler approaches in industrial settings. Many pragmatic areas such as language support, source code abstraction levels, validation strategies, and source-level debugging are also discussed.

In addition, new compiler techniques are presented which support address generation for DSP architectures. The contribution is an address calculation transformation based on an architectural model. This model allows the programmer to

write his algorithm on a more abstract level which encourages portability of code. Furthermore, the architectural model allows the designer to explore different configurations of the hardware for better running of the algorithm.

As a natural complement to the compiler techniques which have been presented, new utilities for the design of embedded processors are described. As the lifetime of an embedded processor is rich with architectural variations and design reuse, these aids provide ways of analyzing the match between application code and the instruction-set. Two tools allow the designer to obtain both static and dynamic feedback on the fit of the processor in the application domain. These tools allow the designer to explore the architecture space as well as the algorithm execution.

The material contained in this thesis has been accepted to be published in the form of a book by Kluwer Academic Publishers.

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# Chapitre 0: Présentation Générale en Français

## Résumé

Dans le cadre des applications de type télécommunications, multimédia, et électronique grand public, les processeurs embarqués ont tendance à acquérir une importance de plus en plus marquée lors de la conception de systèmes monopuces. Ce phénomène traduit le besoin des concepteurs à tenir compte rapidement des nécessaires adaptations aux fréquentes variations des standards évoluées. Le fonctionnement global des systèmes devant être préservé en terme de hautes performances et de coût réduit, cela impose une adaptation de la conception des processeurs aux besoins des diverses applications ciblées.

C'est ainsi que les techniques de compilation multicibles deviennent primordiales, non seulement pour la production du code d'application, mais aussi afin d'explorer les architectures de microprocesseurs et d'en exploiter toutes les caractéristiques de façon optimum.

Cette thèse débute par un condensé des techniques connues pour la compilation multicibles. Un chapitre est exclusivement consacré aux techniques employées pour la conception de compilateur ciblant les processeurs embarqués, suivi par un exposé de méthodes existantes notamment utilisées dans l'industrie pour les applications orientées télécommunications et multimédia. Appliquant deux approches de compilation à des processeurs industriels, divers enseignements et méthodologies en sont extraites. Plusieurs points d'aspect un peu plus pratiques sont ensuite abordés, se concentrant plus particulièrement sur les langages de spécification, les styles d'écritures, les stratégies de validation, et le débogage.

De nouvelles techniques liées à la génération d'adresses pour les architectures de traitement de signal sont avancées. Il s'agit en bref d'une technique de transformation pour les unités de calcul d'adresses fondée sur la connaissance du modèle architectural. L'intérêt principal d'une telle technique réside dans la possibilité

donnée à l'utilisateur d'écrire ses algorithmes à un niveau d'abstraction élevé, et ainsi d'explorer diverses combinaisons architecturales du processeur visé, combinaisons améliorant l'exécution finale du système.

En complément des compilateurs, l'existence d'outils d'exploration facilitant l'analyse de l'efficacité d'un jeu d'instructions se révèle d'un grand intérêt pour les concepteurs aussi bien des processeurs que des compilateurs associés. En effet, la durée de vie d'un processeur embarqué est souvent marquée par différentes variations et réutilisations de l'architecture, auxquels cas le type d'outils pré-cité peut s'avérer excessivement utile dans la mesure où ils facilitent ces évolutions. Deux outils permettant l'analyse statique et dynamique des instructions sont ainsi développés dans le cadre de cette thèse et présentés en dernière partie.

## 0.1 Introduction

La conception de systèmes monopuces est devenue une tâche très complexe, particulièrement si l'on considère la possibilité d'y inclure un, voire plusieurs processeurs embarqués, ce qui semble être la tendance actuelle. Le désir d'utiliser un processeur s'explique simplement: le concepteur est attiré par la possibilité d'adapter rapidement son produit suite aux variations de standards. Ce dernier point est mis en évidence notamment par l'utilisation répandue des processeurs embarqués dans les applications orientées télécommunication, multimédia, et électronique grand public. Ces domaines se caractérisent en effet par une évolution rapide des standards, en proportion avec l'intérêt grandissant du grand public pour telles applications.

Dans ce type de conception, il est clair que les outils de CAO sont un facteur critique. La Figure 0.1 présente un schéma idéal montrant les besoins en utilitaires envisagés. Le plus important est un compilateur multicibles, qui, par définition, est reconfiguré à partir de la spécification d'un jeu d'instructions. Cet outil permet la compilation du code écrit dans le langage C en générant du microcode pour le processeur cible. De plus, cet outil permet l'exploration d'architectures en modifiant simplement la spécification.

Afin de savoir quels changements sont utiles pour la conception d'architectures, il est important d'obtenir les statistiques d'utilisation des ressources, de façon à la fois statique et dynamique. Ainsi, un profiler peut servir soit à améliorer le

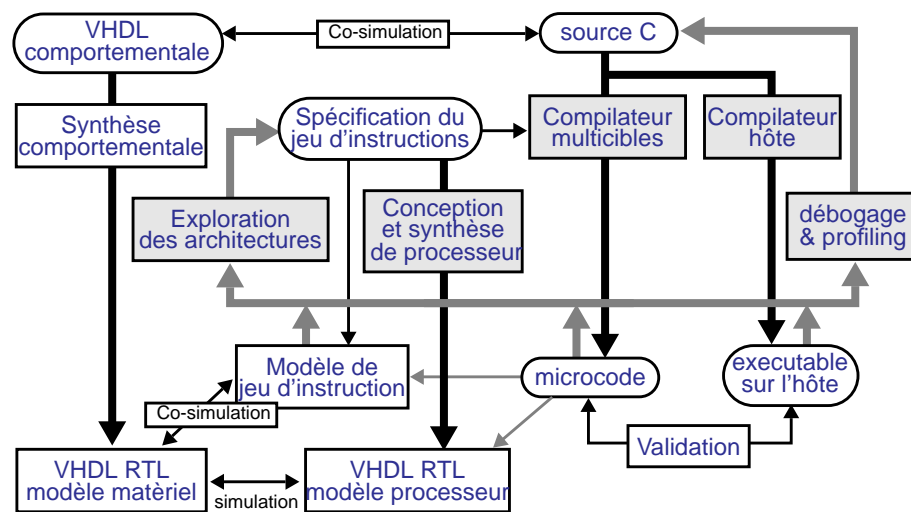


Figure 0.1 Outils de conception pour les processeurs embarqués.

source C, soit à raffiner l'architecture pour un certain type d'application. Les utilitaires qui permettent d'automatiser ces travaux de caractérisation sont utiles pour concevoir un processeur efficace.

Pour la conception complète d'un système, le concepteur peut se trouver en présence d'autres besoins, tels que la synthèse comportementale et la co-simulation VHDL-C. Cette thèse ne traite pas ces sujets, mais on confirme leur importance dans la vision globale.

## 0.2 Techniques de compilation pour les processeurs embarqués

Les techniques appliquées dans le domaine de la compilation sont bien avancées pour certaines variétés d'architectures. Néanmoins, les processeurs embarqués présentent certains contraintes et particularités qui ne sont pas sans poser quelques problèmes lorsqu'on leur applique les techniques classiques. On présente les techniques de compilation traditionnelles ainsi que les nouvelles techniques qui viennent d'apparaître.

### 0.2.1 Le processus de compilation traditionnel

Le mécanisme de compilation défini par le classique "Dragon Book" de Aho, Sehti, et Ullman [1] se présente comme un processus de traduction d'un programme écrit dans un langage source (e.g. C) en un programme dans un langage cible (e.g. code assembleur et code machine), par le biais d'un ensemble d'étapes, énumérées ci-dessous:

1. analyse lexicale et syntaxique
2. construction d'une représentation intermédiaire
3. analyse sémantique
4. génération du code intermédiaire
5. optimisation du code
6. génération du code final

Cependant, pour des cibles telles que processeurs embarqués, un certain nombre de problèmes se posent vis à vis de l'approche traditionnelle de compilation, ainsi qu'elle peut être décrite dans cet ouvrage. Ces problèmes peuvent se résumer aux suivants:

1. capacité à recibler le compilateur: L'approche traditionnelle se sert de l'information liée à l'architecture uniquement à la fin du processus, à savoir la génération du code final. Si le code intermédiaire n'a pas les caractéristiques propres à la machine cible, le code risque de ne pas être efficace.
2. contraintes liées aux registres: Les processeurs embarqués ont des registres spécialisés propres à leur architecture. Ils sont employés dans le but de réduire le largeur du microcode ainsi que pour garantir la vitesse de l'application qu'ils exécutent. Les contraintes de registres touchent à toutes les phases de la compilation.
3. spécialisation d'opérateurs: La génération du code intermédiaire décompose les opérations artificiellement en mini opérations comportant dans la plupart des cas deux sources et une destination. Il est cependant fréquent de trouver des architectures embarquées contenant des opérations avec plus de trois opérandes, qui sont alors peu exploitées.
4. parallélisme au niveau instruction: Les étapes de la compilation traditionnelle sont naturellement peu adaptées aux architectures comportant des propriétés de parallélisme. Par exemple, les processeurs de traitement de signal contiennent souvent une unité de calcul des données et une unité de calcul d'adresses qui fonctionnent en parallèle.

5. optimisations: Les logiciels temps-réels, une fois compilés, doivent avoir des performances meilleures ou tout au moins similaires à celles obtenues avec un code machine écrit à la main. Les optimisations effectuées par un compilateur sont à ce titre une partie indispensable. Les optimisations possibles sur un code intermédiaire sont essentiellement locales et loin d'être suffisantes. Les optimisations globales doivent être appliqués sur une représentation plus proche du code source tout en prenant en compte la structure de l'architecture ciblée afin de prendre en considérations ses particularités.

### 0.2.2 Le concept de compilation multicibles

Pour les processeurs embarqués, la compilation multicibles permet deux gains importants pour le concepteur:

1. Elle autorise l'élaboration rapide d'un compilateur pour un nouveau processeur.
2. Elle offre la possibilité d'explorer diverses architectures dans le but de faire tourner une application donnée de façon plus efficace.

Un scénario idéal est celui de l'environnement représenté sur la Figure 0.2, où le compilateur est reconfigurable simplement à partir d'une nouvelle spécification du jeu d'instruction. Des deux cycles de développement sont représentés, le plus familier est celui du côté droit de la figure: il correspond au développement du logiciel d'application à embarquer, à l'aide du compilateur. Sur la gauche de la figure, un second cycle de conception est mis en relief: il correspond au développement du matériel, au cours duquel les propriétés architecturales sont explorés à l'aide de ce même compilateur afin d'améliorer l'ensemble du système.

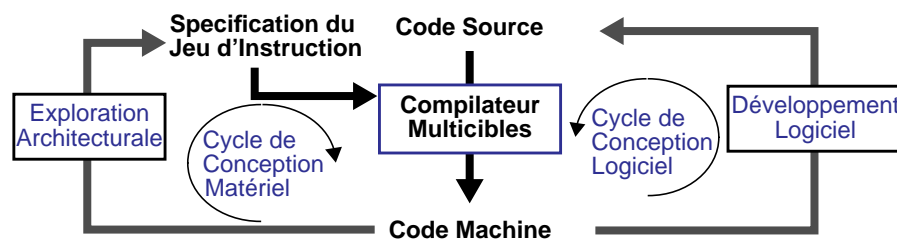


Figure 0.2 Principe de compilation multicibles

La voie la plus prometteuse devant permettre le ciblage multiple d'un compilateur correspond aux travaux sur les modèles architecturaux et les langages de spécification. Les compilateurs MSSV/Q [72] et Record [60], conçus à l'Université de

Dortmund, sont des exemples de compilateurs utilisant un langage de description de matériel. Ce langage, Mimola, permet à l'utilisateur de spécifier l'architecture ciblée en décrivant la structure physique du processeur. Le compilateur, par une analyse détaillée de la structure, est capable d'en extraire l'ensemble des informations nécessaires à la transposition du code source en code machine, après optimisation. Cette approche présente un gros avantage pour le concepteur du processeur, puisqu'elle lui offre l'opportunité d'essayer différentes configurations. Néanmoins, elle ne semble guère adaptée aux processeurs commerciaux dont la description structurelle détaillée n'est pas forcément disponible.

Le langage nML, conçu à l'Université Technique de Berlin et inspiré par des travaux sur le compilateur CBC, est un langage qui permet de spécifier un processeur à partir de son jeu d'instruction et de la connaissance des mécanismes d'exécution de celui-ci. Les éléments du langage sont assez riches pour pouvoir spécifier le comportement complet d'un processeur sans recourir à sa structure physique (netlist). L'avantage de l'approche réside en une description de la machine à un niveau comparable au manuel de programmation, indépendante de l'outil utilisé.

L'institut de recherche IMEC a repris le langage nML pour le développement du compilateur Chess. Le processeur cible est modélisé à l'aide d'un ISG (Instruction Set Graph), extrait de la description nML, et décrivant le mécanisme de fonctionnement de l'architecture cible. Ce modèle permet de centraliser et de combiner à la fois toutes les contraintes du jeu d'instructions et la structure du matériel, le comportement des opérations étant encapsulé. Toutes les phases de la compilation peuvent consulter ce modèle central, qui contient toute l'information nécessaire.

De façon similaire à Chess, le compilateur CodeSyn, développé chez Bell-Northern Research/Nortel, utilise un modèle structurel et comportemental afin de décrire l'architecture cible. Ce compilateur est abordé plus en détail dans la Section 0.3.2.

### ***0.2.3 Techniques dédiées aux processeurs spécialisés***

Pour les deux objectifs principaux que sont la qualité du code généré et la capacité à recibler le compilateur, trois étapes de compilation se révèlent prépondérantes:

- l'étape de reconnaissance et de sélection des instructions.
- l'étape d'allocation et d'affectation des registres.

- l'étape d'ordonnancement et de compaction.

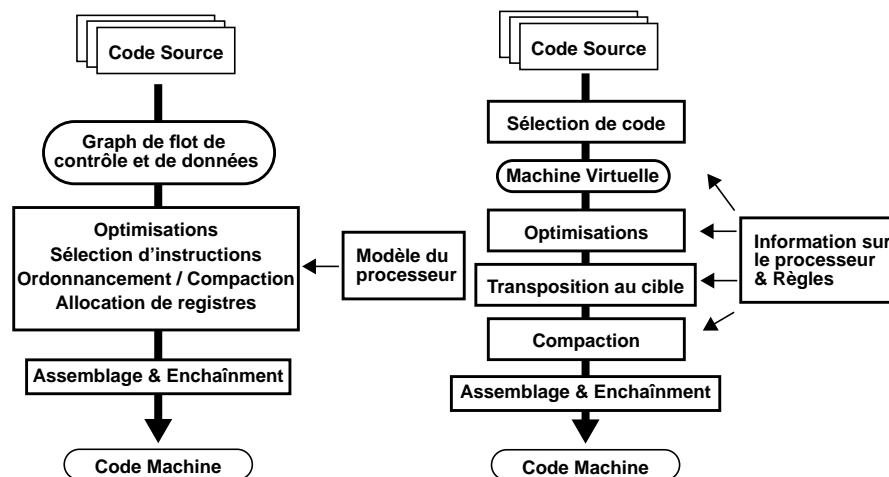
En outre, l'optimisation du code est un sujet complémentaire critique, puisque les logiciels temps-réels ont toujours besoin du code le plus dense et le plus rapide possible. Malheureusement, ce problème n'est pas encore complètement résolu pour les architectures embarquées.

### 0.3 Deux approches de compilation récentes

Cette section décrit deux approches de compilation récentes pour les processeurs embarqués. Chacune est basée sur des principes différents et présentant un certain nombre d'avantages. Naturellement, un certain nombre d'inconvénients permettent de relativiser chaque approches.

#### 0.3.1 Résumé des concepts

Les deux approches de compilation sont représentés sur la Figure 0.3. Pour la première approche, toutes les phases de la compilation se basent sur un modèle du processeur. Le code source est traduit dans une forme intermédiaire, par exemple un graphe de flot de contrôle et de données. Les phases de compilation appliquent des transformations successives sur cette forme intermédiaire jusqu'à l'étape de génération du code final. Toutes les transformations prennent en compte les contraintes du modèle architectural.



a. Compilation fondée sur un modèle    b. Compilation basée sur des règles

Figure 0.3 Techniques de compilation récentes

La deuxième approche (Figure 0.3 b) est très proche de la compilation tradi-



tionnelle à une exception: toutes les phases de la compilation dépendent de règles fournies par le développeur du compilateur. Ces règles permettent de réconfigurer la phase d'optimisation selon les besoins de chaque architecture cible. Le développeur a ainsi à sa disposition un environnement de programmation ouvert.

### ***0.3.2 CodeSyn: un compilateur fondé sur un modèle***

Le compilateur CodeSyn a été développé chez Bell-Northern Research/Nortel en réponse à un sondage effectué auprès de concepteurs spécialisés dans les applications de traitement du signal. Ce sondage a mis en évidence par un manque critique en terme de compilateurs efficace pour les processeurs de traitement de signal et les processeurs spécialisé.

Le compilateur CodeSyn présente trois avantages par rapport aux compilateurs traditionnelles:

- un modèle de spécification de jeu d'instructions souple, autorisant le reciblage rapide du compilateur pour de nouvelles architectures.
- une phase de reconnaissance et de sélection d'instructions complexes efficace.
- une phase d'allocation et d'affectation de registres pour les registres spécialisés.

### ***0.3.3 FlexCC: un compilateur basé sur des règles***

Fournir des compilateurs pour une gamme de processeurs aussi large que possible peut être considéré comme l'objectif de toute équipe offrant des services de compilation. En l'absence de la solution idéale représentée par un compilateur automatiquement ciblable, posséder un environnement souple de développement de compilateur, permettant par exemple au développeur de reprogrammer ce dernier facilement et selon ses besoins, a des avantages certains.

Le compilateur FlexCC utilisé par SGS-Thomson Microelectronics est basé sur des phases de compilation traditionnelles. L'approche présente quatre phases de transformations successives dirigées par le biais de fichiers de configurations. En plus des informations architecturales présentés dans chaque fichier, le programmeur a la possibilité de fournir des règles. Ces règles orientent chaque transformation selon les contraintes spécifiques à l'architecture ciblée.

Trois étapes clefs du processus de compilation sont les suivantes:

- sélection de code virtuel. Le code source est transformé en code assembleur pour une machine virtuelle. Dans un langage de programmation spécifique, l'utilisateur indique les registres disponibles, les modes d'adressage, et un jeu de règles. Pour les cas simples, employer un ensemble de règles prédéterminées est suffisant. Pour les propriétés particulières de l'architecture cible, l'utilisateur a la possibilité de fournir une règle sophistiquée.
- transposition à la machine cible. Au cours de cette étape, on transforme le code virtuel en une forme correspondant à la machine réelle. Dans la plupart des cas, cela peut être une traduction univoque directement à l'assembleur machine. L'environnement offre en outre plusieurs facilités pour manipuler les transformations dans des cas spéciaux: appels aux fonctions, expressions de contrôle, variables locales, etc. Ceci permet la réalisation de transformations complexes.
- compaction du microcode. Basé sur des concepts très connus, cela consiste à placer autant de micro-opérations que possible dans une micro-instruction, afin d'exploiter au maximum les possibilités de parallélismes offerts par le jeu d'instruction et d'obtenir un code machine final plus compact. A cette phase est associé un environnement de réconfiguration selon le processeur cible. Le programmeur doit ainsi déclarer les ressources de stockage de l'architecture tels que les registres, les mémoires, et les bus. Le code est compacté en respectant les dépendances de données et les formats disponibles du microcode.

#### ***0.3.4 Discussion***

Les deux approches récentes pour la compilation présentées au cours de cette section présentent un certain nombre d'avantages et d'inconvénients. En ce qui concerne l'approche basée sur un modèle architectural, il est possible de concevoir des algorithmes indépendants du style du processeur. De plus, le compilateur est relativement facile à recibler justement grâce au modèle architectural. Ceci augmente la possibilité d'explorer plusieurs architectures pour une application donnée et de choisir la mieux adaptée. Cependant, la représentation intermédiaire est très détaillée et devra donc naturellement être associée à une maintenance rigoureuse. De plus, les processeurs cibles sont dépendants du modèle architectural élaboré, supposé fixé. Pour les processeurs dont les caractéristiques ne sont pas entièrement

connues, les algorithmes de compilation doivent être modifiés au coup par coup.

L'approche de compilation à l'aide de règles présente l'avantage d'une grande flexibilité pour le développeur. Un compilateur peut être établi pour une architecture dans un large gamme de variations. Les propriétés spécifiques à l'architecture peuvent être prise en compte si besoin est. Cependant, l'exploration d'architectures est moins évidente puisque la mise au point de règles nécessite un certain temps.

## **0.4 Aspects pratiques pour la conception de compilateurs**

En supplément des techniques fondamentales de la compilation, un certain nombre de questions s'imposent concernant le développement et l'utilisation des compilateurs pour les processeurs embarqués dans un environnement industriel; répondre à ces questions peut influencer de façon notable l'efficacité du développement et la qualité du produit final:

- support du langage: Quels procédés et facilités de programmation est-il intéressant de fournir à l'utilisateur?
- contraintes d'architecture: Quels moyens sont à proposer au programmeur pour lui permettre d'exploiter les propriétés de l'architecture cible?
- style de codage: Niveau d'abstraction? Restrictions? Compromis?
- validation: Niveau de qualité requis pour un compilateur reciblé?
- débogage: Intérêt du débogage sur la machine hôte par rapport au débogage sur le processeur cible d'un point de vue comparatif?

### ***0.4.1 Support du langage source***

Le développement d'un compilateur C pour un processeur embarqué implique le choix d'un sous ensemble restreint du langage au niveau des types de données supportés, ainsi qu'un certain nombre d'extensions au langage pour le support des mémoires multiples, des mémoires spécialisés, ou encore des appels de fonctions.

### ***0.4.2 Les différents niveaux d'abstraction du codage***

Pour des raisons d'ordre pratique, il est essentiel que le passage vers des niveaux d'automatisation supérieurs s'effectue avec douceur. En attendant l'avènement de

techniques de compilation plus élaborées pour les processeurs embarqués, il est encore nécessaire de fournir des mécanismes afin qu'un concepteur puisse exploiter toute les fonctionnalités d'une architecture lorsque le compilateur en est incapable. Ces mécanismes comprennent:

- les fonctions prédéfinies (“built-in functions”)
- le support du codage aux différents niveaux d'abstraction

Une fonction prédéfinies dans ce cadre est une fonction transformée directement par le compilateur en un groupe d'instructions spécifiques à l'architecture, fournies par le développeur. Ce dernier peut ainsi par ce moyen engendrer les opérations nécessaire pour certaines tâches spécialisés, comme les fonctions d'interruption, les fonctions de boucles câblées, les mécanismes d'attente, les opérateurs matériels, etc.

En ce qui concerne le support de codage, il est possible de définir plusieurs niveaux de style de codage dans un langage comme le C. On peut distinguer quatre degrés d'abstraction:

1. Haut niveau ANSI C au niveau comportemental. Ce niveau est caractérisé par l'utilisation de références aux variables, aux tableaux, aux structures, et de toutes les opérations disponibles en C.
2. Moyen niveau. Ce niveau permet l'utilisation des fonctions prédéfinies. Tous les tableaux et structures qui sont déclarés en mémoire sont accédés par des pointeurs. Les variables et pointeurs peuvent être associés aux classes de stockage et aux classes de registres.
3. Bas niveau. Ce niveau permet à l'utilisateur d'affecter les variables et pointeurs aux registres spécifiques à l'architecture.
4. Niveau assembleur. Ce niveau permet à l'utilisateur d'écrire directement en assembleur dans son code C.

Le niveau 1 est la cible déclarée des techniques de compilation. Il permet d'écrire le code d'un façon abstraite et portable. Les niveaux 2 à 4 doivent être supportés par le compilateur et permettent à l'utilisateur d'exploiter les ressources de l'architecture quand le compilateur en est incapable. Ce dernier point représente une masse d'effort loin d'être négligeable au cours du développement d'un compila-

teur.

### ***0.4.3 Les stratégies de validation***

Le terme compilateur multicible indique que plusieurs processeurs cibles peuvent être supportés par le compilateur. Par conséquent, la validation fonctionnelle du compilateur reciblé est d'une importance fondamentale. Les approches de validation actuelles sont dominées par la simulation. Les aspects importants d'une stratégie de validation basée sur la simulation sont:

- un ensemble de programmes tests faisant appels aux opérations et facilités du compilateur de la façon la plus exhaustive possible. Des séries de tests sont disponibles commercialement (e.g. Plum-Hall, Perennial, MetaWare), mais pour les processeurs embarqués, il faut typiquement des programmes qui vérifient un sous-ensemble de C et les extensions relatives à l'architecture.
- un simulateur de jeu d'instructions. Bien que le sujet le mérite, il ne sera pas développé dans ce document. Un tel simulateur est aussi une partie importante de la validation. Il consiste en un modèle d'exécution similaire au processeur lui-même.
- compilation hôte. Sans parler des avantages liés à l'utilisation du compilateur hôte en tant que débogueur fonctionnel, cette compilation peut fournir des données comparatives. Cette méthodologie nécessite néanmoins le développement d'une librairie de fonctions bit-exactes (respectant les tailles de données au bit près) pour les opérations et fonctions prédéfinies qui sont spécifiques au cible.

### ***0.4.4 Le débogage***

Trois modes de débogage avec processeur embarqué seront considérés:

1. débogage sur l'hôte avec exécutable sur l'hôte. Le compilateur hôte est utilisé ainsi que les outils de débogage standards.
2. débogage avec le simulateur du jeu d'instructions. La compilation est effectuée par le compilateur cible et le microcode est exécuté sur le simulateur. L'outil de débogage communique avec le simulateur de jeu d'instructions.

3. débogage par une interface d'interruption. Cette interface communique avec un modèle cycle-exact du processeur ou une émulation matérielle de ce dernier.

Le premier mode permet d'effectuer le débogage fonctionnel de l'application rapidement ainsi que très tôt dans le cycle de design, avant même que les outils du cible soient disponibles. Le deuxième mode permet le débogage du code généré par le compilateur cible. Le troisième mode correspond principalement au débogage du matériel (modèle ou émulation).

## **0.5 Transformations pour les unités de calcul d'adresses**

Cette section présente une approche d'optimisation analysant les références aux tableaux dans un source C afin d'utiliser les unités de calcul d'adresses d'une manière efficace. Cette approche a été matérialisée par un prototype offrant des opportunités de transformations basées sur un modèle architectural et permettant d'optimiser un compilateur existant. Grâce à sa simplicité, la spécification du modèle permet également diverses explorations architecturales.

### ***0.5.1 Les unités de calcul d'adresses pour les architectures de traitement de signal***

Pour les architectures dominées par le flot de données, l'interaction entre les mémoires et l'unité de calcul de données représente un goulet d'étranglement. Afin d'améliorer cette interaction, l'unité de calcul d'adresses est apparue dans les processeurs de traitement de signal. Fréquemment, l'unité de calcul d'adresses est conçue sur un principe de fonctionnement postérieur: les adresses sont mises à jour après le calcul des données principales sur l'unité de calcul des données. Cela autorise un cycle d'exécution d'instruction très court, et les méthodes de pipelining peuvent être employées afin d'augmenter les performances du processeur.

Les unités de calcul d'adresses se trouvent sur nombreuses architectures de type processeurs spécialisés ou processeurs de traitement du signal commerciaux. Néanmoins, bien que certaines similitudes puissent exister entre elles, ces unités ne sont jamais identiques (nombre d'additionneurs, nombre de registres, opérations permises, codage d'instruction). L'impact de ces différents choix est très dépendant des applications susceptibles d'être exécutées sur l'architecture.

La meilleure façon d'évaluer les différentes structures des unités de calcul d'adresses est de tester les écarts de performance en fonction de ces dernières, en

compilant certains applications types. Malheureusement, il n'existe pas encore de techniques de compilation utilisant les unités de calcul d'adresses de façon efficace. Le fonctionnement postérieur est difficile à exploiter pour les compilateurs classiques. Ceci est notamment mis en évidence par les activités de benchmarking des compilateurs de processeurs de traitement de signal commerciaux, tel que le DSPStone [113] ou les benchmarking de Berkeley Design Technology [13].

### ***0.5.2 Techniques de génération d'adresses traditionnels***

Les approches traditionnelles employés pour générer les adresses de tableaux sont principalement basées sur un fonctionnement antérieur, ce qui implique un calcul des adresses systématiquement avant leur usage. Pour les architectures parallèles, il s'en suit des pénalités de performance.

Cette approche traditionnelle peut être améliorée par l'emploi de méthodes de pipelining [21][55] et de *hissage* ("hoisting") de code [52]. Malgré ces améliorations, les transformations ne parviennent pas à la génération naturelle d'adresses pour les unités de fonctionnement postérieur.

Une approche transformant de façon logique la génération d'adresses d'un fonctionnement antérieur en un fonctionnement postérieur est la transformation de références à des tableaux en pointeurs. Ceci permet aux calculs d'adresses d'être effectués en parallèle avec les opérations de l'unité de calcul des données.

### ***0.5.3 Une transformation pour le calcul d'adresses postérieur***

Un outil d'optimisation nommé ArrSyn (Figure 0.4), développé au cours de cette thèse, est présenté dans ce document. Il transforme les références de tableaux en adressage postérieur à l'aide de pointeurs. Les transformations sont dirigées par une spécification de ressources décrivant l'architecture existante ou à concevoir. Elles s'appuient d'autre part sur des informations statiques et dynamiques permettant l'optimisation des boucles exécutées le plus souvent. Le résultat de ces transformations est aussi en C, ce qui signifie que l'utilitaire peut être utilisé en conjonction avec un compilateur existant sans modification.

La spécification d'architecture se compose d'une déclaration de ressources: les registres disponibles, et d'une déclaration des opérations qui peuvent être exécutées sur ces ressources. Les transformations prennent en compte les contraintes de ce modèle architectural.

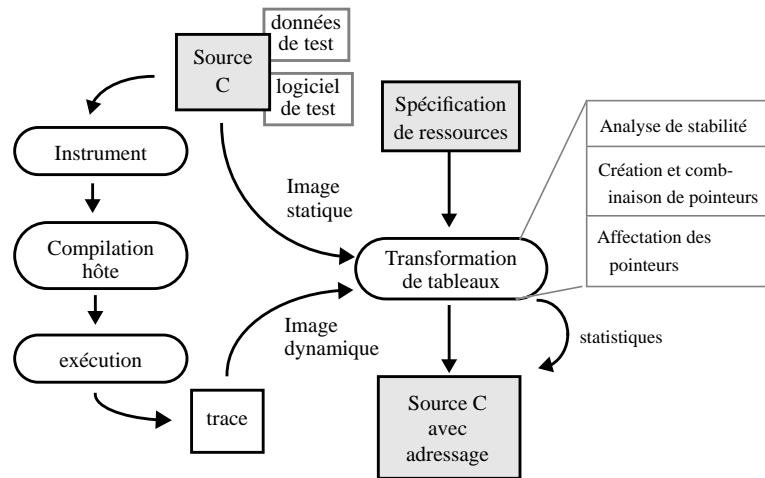


Figure 0.4 Le flot de ArrSyn: transformation des tableaux.

Le code source C est transformé en code cible C avec des propriétés différentes. Le code cible contient des pointeurs référençant les tableaux originaux du code source. Le choix de C comme cible conduit aux avantages suivants:

- le comportement du code cible peut être compilé et comparé à celui du code source.
- le code cible peut être utilisé directement par un compilateur donné.
- la sémantique est aisément compréhensible à l'utilisateur.

## 0.6 Expériences industrielles liées aux méthodes de compilation

Il est aujourd'hui courant de programmer directement en langage assembleur lorsque l'on a affaire à un processeur embarqué. Tant que cela sera, les expériences sur les méthodes de compilation seront d'importance cruciale pour l'acceptation des compilateurs. Cette section expose les résultats d'expériences réalisées dans le cadre de trois projets industriels. L'accent est mis sur les méthodologies utilisés et les divers enseignements qui ont pu en être extraits.

### 0.6.1 Un ASIP dédié aux télécommunications élaboré à Nortel

Un processeur spécialisé utilisé pour un routeur de lignes local a été conçu chez Nortel. L'architecture est inspirée de principes VLIW (Very Long Instruction Word), mais avec une largeur d'instruction limitée à 40 bits. Les concepteurs ont réussi à emprunter un mot-instruction relativement court par l'imposition des con-



traintes sur le mouvement des données dans l'architecture. Ce choix a permis également une augmentation des performances et une réduction de la surface du matériel par élimination de bus.

L'architecture se caractérise par d'autres spécificités, telles que unités de décalage de l'entrée et de la sortie de l'unité arithmétique afin de supporter plusieurs types de données, unité de calcul d'adresses ayant des modes d'adressage particuliers, boucles câblées en supplément des instructions de contrôle classique.

Le compilateur CodeSyn a été utilisé pour cette architecture. La phase de reconnaissance et de sélection des instructions s'est avérée importante pour le traitement des opérations de décalage combinées avec les opérations de l'unité arithmétique, ainsi que pour celui des opérations de l'unité de calcul d'adresses. L'allocation de registres spécialisés, point critique sur lequel l'emploi d'un compilateur commercial a conduit à un échec, a été possible avec CodeSyn.

Les résultats expérimentaux ont montré que les performances du code produit par le compilateur sont comparables à celles obtenues avec un code écrit à la main. Cependant, en moyenne, le code compilé a une taille supérieure d'environ 20% au code manuel. Le compilateur est aussi parvenu à compiler un grand ensemble de tests qu'il n'était pas possible de traiter avec d'autres compilateurs. Le point mis en relief est donc l'importance du traitement des registres spécialisés, point clef du succès de CodeSyn.

### ***0.6.2 Un visiophone intégré conçu chez SGS-Thomson***

Un visiophone intégré conçu chez SGS-Thomson Microelectronics constitue le second cadre de ces expériences industrielles. Il se compose de plusieurs opérateurs communicants dont certains câblés afin d'atteindre les performances temporelles nécessaires (e.g. l'Estimateur de Mouvement [14]). Néanmoins, nombreux sont les opérateurs conçus à l'aide de processeurs spécialisés (i.e. ASIPs) et destinés à exécuter des logiciels embarqués. Ce choix a été dicté par un besoin de flexibilité, nécessaire afin de supporter les modifications de standards dont les versions stables sont souvent délivrées avec un certain retard par les comités de standardisation.

Le compilateur FlexCC, utilisant l'approche à base de règles, a été choisi pour mettre au point les compilateurs de trois processeurs du visiophone intégré: le

MSQ (MicroSeQuencer), le BSP (Bit Stream Processor), et le VIP (VLIW Image Processor). Étant donné la simplicité et la similarité des architectures appréhendées par rapport aux processeurs plus généraux, le processus consistant à recibler le compilateur pour chacune d'entre elles s'est avéré quasi immédiat. Toutes les architectures contiennent un seul type de données et des opérations spéciales réservées à des tâches bien spécifiques. L'interface bus communicant a été élaborée pour un opérateur, puis standardisée pour les suivants afin de simplifier l'exécution de chaque opérateur et la mise au point des compilateurs.

Les compilateurs du visiophone intégré ne supportent qu'un sous-ensemble du langage C, réduit aux seuls éléments nécessaires pour exploiter la totalité de la fonctionnalité de chaque opérateurs. Pour chacun d'entre eux, le développement a été évalué à approximativement un homme-mois en termes de ressources.

Pour l'opérateur MSQ, le code généré par le compilateur a été comparé avec un code précédemment écrit à la main. Les résultats montrent une équivalence entre les deux. Pour cette architecture, la transposition du code C en opérations microcodées s'est déroulée de façon relativement directe. L'enseignement avoir été extrait est l'importance d'une architecture de fonctionnement restant dans la juste mesure et d'une interface bus standardisée. Cela simplifie le développement des outils de compilation.

### ***0.6.3 Un processeur multimédia réalisé chez TCEC***

Le processeur, MMDSP, conçu par Thomson Consumer Electronic Components pour la décompression et décodage d'algorithmes sonores tels que MPEG2, Dolby AC-3, et Dolby Prologic, constitue le cadre de la troisième expérience industrielle rencontrée au cours de cette thèse. À première vue, l'architecture est comparable aux processeurs de traitement de signal commerciaux avec une unité de calcul des données, une unité de calcul d'adresses, des bus de données et des mémoires. Néanmoins, certaines caractéristiques de l'architecture font qu'elle se distingue des processeurs classiques. L'unité de calcul d'adresses par exemple est capable d'exécuter plusieurs types d'opérations complexes, et permet d'exploiter efficacement des structures de mémoires multiples. Le multiplieur-accumulateur permet l'exécution efficace des sections temps-critique des algorithmes MPEG, ce qui implique des connexions spécialisés aux registres et aux bus.

Le compilateur FlexCC a été utilisé pour le MMDSP. En supplément du déve-

loppement du compilateur principal, plusieurs optimisations et outils spéciaux ont été développés afin d'accéder à l'environnement matériel et de garantir la performance du code généré. C'est le cas d'une interface de débogage développée pour communiquer avec le simulateur de jeu d'instructions de l'architecture. Une librairie de fonctions bit-exactes a été développée conjointement pour la compilation sur l'hôte.

Le compilateur a été validé en utilisant un ensemble d'exemples choisis pour leurs parties génériques ou spécifiques à l'architecture, le tout représentant plus de 12000 lignes de code C. Les sources C ont été compilés sur l'hôte à l'aide de la librairie bit-exacte et leur exécution comparée à l'exécution du microcode cible sur le simulateur.

Les résultats expérimentaux ont montré que pour un code source écrit au niveau haut, le microcode est à peu près 26% plus grand que le microcode écrit à la main. Le code source écrit au niveau moyen produit un code entre 0.5% et 11% plus grand que le microcode écrit à la main. Pour obtenir un code équivalent en taille au code écrit à la main, le code source doit être écrit au niveau moyen dont certaines parties au niveau bas.

Ce projet a laissé un certain nombre d'enseignements concernant le développement d'un compilateur reciblé et les besoins associés:

1. Un environnement complet. Associé à la compilation, des outils annexes sont nécessaires comme par exemple des interfaces vers les environnement matériels. La valeur ajoutée d'un débogeur ne doit pas être sous-estimée.
2. La validation complète. Une série des tests complète est utile pour assurer un bon niveau de qualité finale. Le temps nécessaire à la validation représente environ 30% du temps de développement total.
3. Le support pour les niveaux bas de codage. Les optimisations au cours de la compilation sont nécessaires mais ils s'avèrent secondaire par rapport au besoin en support pour les niveaux bas de codage. Le concepteur doit pouvoir exploiter toutes les possibilités de l'architecture
4. La conception conjointe. Le développement conjoint du matériel et du logiciel conduit toujours à un meilleur produit.

5. Les techniques de compilation avancées sont souhaitables. Bien que le troisième point relativise leur importance, les optimisations associées à la compilation sont potentiellement primordiales.

#### ***0.6.4 La compilation avancée***

Dans le but d'obtenir des compilateurs efficaces pour un haut niveau de codage source, il est inévitable d'employer des techniques de compilation avancées. Pour une transformation efficace, les points essentiels sont un modèle d'architecture et une représentation explicite du code source.

Cette section présente les résultats obtenus avec le prototype ArrSyn qui transforme les références aux tableaux dans un source C en références par pointeurs. L'outil a été testé avec un compilateur C pour une version d'évaluation de l'architecture MMDSP (Section 0.6.3).

Pour un ensemble d'exemples de traitement du signal, l'emploi de ArrSyn a conduit à une amélioration de la taille du code de l'ordre de 23% et à une amélioration des performances de l'ordre de 39% en moyenne. Ces résultats ne prennent pas en compte la transformation des boucles logicielles en boucles matérielles, ce qui représenterait un gain de performance supplémentaire.

A partir de ces résultats, combinés à ceux de la Section 0.6.3, on peut conclure que le calcul d'adresses représente un gain potentiel important.

## **0.7 Outils pour la conception de jeux d'instructions**

### ***0.7.1 Mise au point d'un jeu d'instructions pour différents besoins***

Après qu'un processeur ait été conçu et le code d'application écrit, il est souvent important pour le concepteur de connaître les correspondances existant entre son architecture et le microcode généré, par exemple dans le cas où l'architecture doit être revue pour obtenir un produit à coût réduit, ou dans le cas où l'architecture doit être réutilisée pour une autre application. En effet, la correspondance entre une architecture et les instructions utilisées est une caractéristique importante du bon fonctionnement d'un système.

### ***0.7.2 Présentation des outils d'analyse***

Conçus afin d'être utilisés conjointement avec un compilateur multicibles, ReCode

et ReBlock sont des prototypes permettant d'analyser le taux d'utilisation des instructions par le code d'application (Figure 0.5). L'outil ReCode utilise des analyses dynamiques et statiques des instructions. Il comporte une interface qui permet à l'utilisateur de facilement visualiser les définitions de champs d'instructions et d'analyser l'utilisation du code compilé. Les statistiques sont fournis à l'utilisateur de façon graphique. L'outil fournit aussi des fonctions pour corriger le codage d'instructions dans une optique de reconception du jeu d'instructions. De nombreuses fonctions de correction permettent aussi d'effectuer des changements dans le jeu d'instructions. La spécification de codage peut être ensuite régénérée pour le compilateur multicibles.

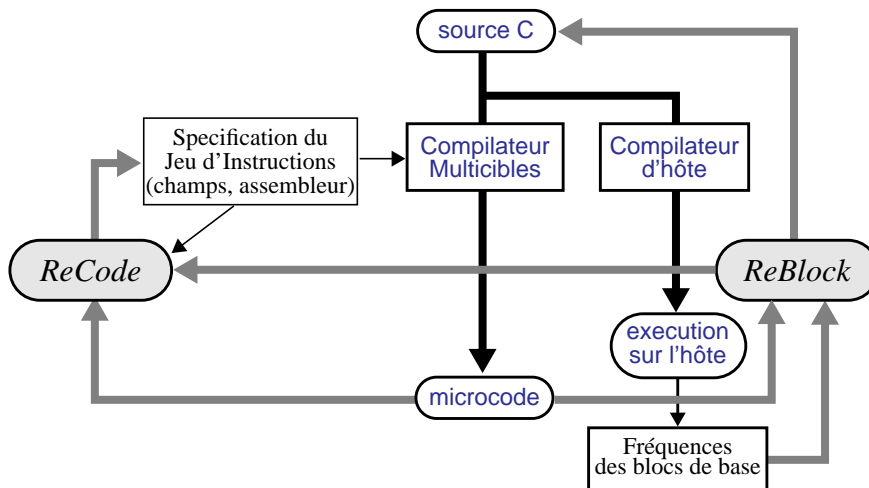


Figure 0.5 ReCode & ReBlock: outils pour l'analyse de microcode

Le deuxième outil, ReBlock, est un logiciel qui fournit des fonctions de profiling sans simulateur. Cela est rendu possible en utilisant les informations de fréquence d'exécution des blocs de base obtenues après compilation et exécution sur la machine hôte. Ces fréquences des blocs de base sont reliées au microcode généré par le compilateur multicibles par les correspondances existants entre le microcode et les lignes de C. Les estimations de performances au niveau bloc peut être facilement calculées à partir de ces informations. L'information de profiling est également utilisée par ReCode, un lien existant entre les deux outils.

### 0.7.3 Résultats expérimentaux

Les prototypes ReCode et ReBlock ont été utilisés pour l'analyse de plusieurs architectures embarquées, y compris les opérateurs du Visiophone Intégré de SGS-Thomson, le DAP (Digital Audio Processor) de SGS-Thomson utilisé pour les

applications téléviseur, et le MMDSP de Thomson Consumer Electronic Components.

L'interprétation de ces résultats par le concepteur peut conduire celui-ci à modifier certaines caractéristiques d'une architecture ou d'un jeu d'instruction en connaissance de cause. Par exemple, l'outil peut mettre en évidence qu'un certain type de branchement est sur-utilisé. Le concepteur peut alors décider d'améliorer le fonctionnement du branchement. Par ailleurs, le développeur peut décider d'implémenter une optimisation organisant les blocs de base. ReCode peut être aussi utilisé afin d'explorer les mouvements de données dans l'architecture. Par exemple, le mouvement entre registres pour l'architecture MMDSP est très utilisé par certaines combinaisons d'instructions. Le concepteur peut alors décider de favoriser les connexions rapides pour certaines transitions. L'utilisation de ReBlock fournit principalement des analyses de performances. Par exemple, pour un modèle de branchement delayé, l'outil peut indiquer le pourcentage du temps pris par les branchements par rapport à l'algorithme total. Ce type d'analyses a été réalisé pour l'algorithme Eurosound sur l'architecture DAP.

## 0.8 Conclusion

Les contributions apportées par cette thèse se partagent en trois catégories principales:

- expériences et méthodologies: utilisation de compilateurs multicibles dans un milieu industriel pour les processeurs embarqués. De riches enseignements ont pu être tirés de ces applications concrètes.
- culture scientifique: compiler un code source écrit à un niveau abstrait pour les architectures de traitement de signal représente un domaine de recherche en pleine expansion. La mise au point d'une méthodologie d'optimisation réalisant des transformations sur un code source, et permettant d'exploiter les unités de calcul d'adresses aura pu contribuer à augmenter les connaissances générales dans le domaine.

- développement d'outils: l'objectif étant de permettre au concepteur d'explorer un jeu d'instructions lié à un processeur donné, à l'aide d'un ensemble de microcodes compilés, cela afin d'envisager une évolution ou une réutilisation du processeur.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Embedded processors for today's system-on-a-chip

As microelectronic fabrication capabilities evolve to astounding levels of submicron technology, more and more functions can be integrated on-chip. Industries such as telecommunications and consumer electronics are witnessing a rapid evolution to entire systems being placed on a single die.

At the same time, demands upon system designs are mounting. The standards organizations which set the quality level whereby microelectronic systems are judged are continually in flux. This constant evolution in standards causes churn in hardware designs and can sometimes mean the decision for costly redesigns.

In effect, programmable processors are becoming increasingly present as a design solution. An example of this trend is the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone. While the Video CODEC version of the chip (the ST1100 [92]) contains two programmable cores, the current version being designed contains five embedded cores (see Section 6.2.). The most attractive reason for the use of a programmable solution is the ability to track the evolving standards using software for late design changes. Furthermore, with a custom instruction-set core, high speed, low cost, and low power are not compromised. Figure 1.1 depicts some of the decisions which make programmable processors a compelling design style.

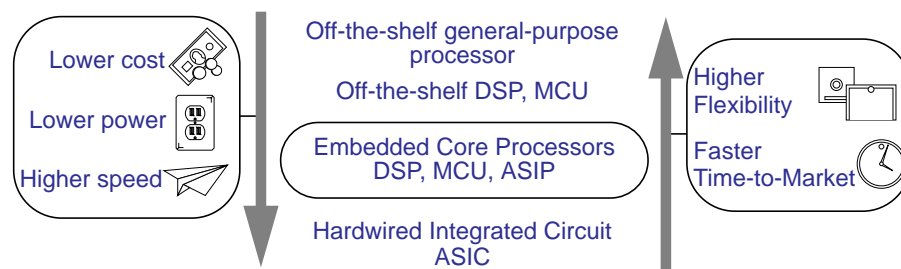


Figure 1.1 Embedded core processors: solutions to conflicting requirements.

Additionally, higher levels of integration are encouraging design practices such as the reuse of macro blocks. Whether these blocks are hard (i.e. netlists and/or



layouts) or soft (i.e. synthesizable VHDL, Verilog), embedded processors are a convenient manner to reuse intellectual property. The trend is especially clear within companies where embedded processor designs are reused and evolved beyond their original intention.

Finally, an enticing feature of an embedded processor is the ability to carry out concurrent engineering practices between hardware and software design teams. The instruction-set of the processor serves as the rigid contract between the two teams to carry a product to market in an efficient time cycle.

While it can be established that the use of embedded processor cores is advantageous, the design flow which supports their use is much different from the standard hardware design flow and even the design flow for general purpose processors. A key technology in the design for embedded processors is retargetable compilation; however, the techniques in this area are just beginning to appear.

We define an embedded processor as the principal component of an embedded system. An embedded system can be defined by describing its main properties (Camposano and Wilberg [8]):

- The system performs a dedicated function.
- The system's real-time behavior must conform to very strict requirements.
- The correctness of the design is essential due to the impact on the surrounding environment.

The focus of the entire manuscript is on the design tool needs for deeply embedded processors used in embedded systems. Examples include DSPs (Digital Signal Processors) and MCUs (microcontrol units) used in the consumer electronic domains of multimedia, and communications. A processor in these example systems typically has many or all of the following criteria present:

- The processor runs embedded software which is infrequently modified (i.e. *firm*).
- Products are sold in high volumes.
- Low cost and low power are of critical importance.
- The processor can be embedded on-chip as a core.

The discussion hereafter will neither include the requirements and tools for general-purpose microprocessors used in workstations and personal computers,

nor the requirements for highly parallel computers. Both of these types of machines have a very different set of design tool constraints and conditions when compared to embedded core processors.

This chapter begins with a review and look at the trends of the instruction-set architectures used in today's embedded systems in the application domains of telecommunications and multimedia. Following the discussion of the processor architectures, an overall picture of the needed design tools for embedded processors is discussed. The chapter then concludes with a summary of the objectives and organization of the rest of the book.

## **1.2 Embedded instruction-set architectures: What's new?**

### *1.2.1 The evolution of embedded processor architectures*

The evolution of embedded processors begins with a complex set of design principles arising from the general computing area. As these principles are brought into the world of real-time reactive systems, the constraints of the application areas affect the characteristics of the architectures.

**VonNeumann and Harvard Architectures.** One of the simplest designs of an instruction-set processor is the VonNeumann architecture as shown in Figure 1.2. This design is characterized by a single memory containing both the program instructions and the data to be processed. The controller for this type of architecture is straight-forward and synchronism between instructions and data is simple. However, when considering speed the data and address calculations which are done on the ALU are hindered by a significant bottleneck on the shared instruction and data bus. Furthermore, the register file shares this same bus. Another architectural point is that data and instructions are forced to have the same bit-width.

To relieve some of the weaknesses of the VonNeumann architecture, the Harvard architecture was introduced. An example is shown in Figure 1.3. The major difference between the two design styles is the separation of program and data memory. This allows the use of two separate busses improving the overall speed of the unit. Many variations can be added to the basic Harvard architecture including such examples as separate data and address register files, multiple data memories, and the addition of functional units like an address calculation unit (ACU).

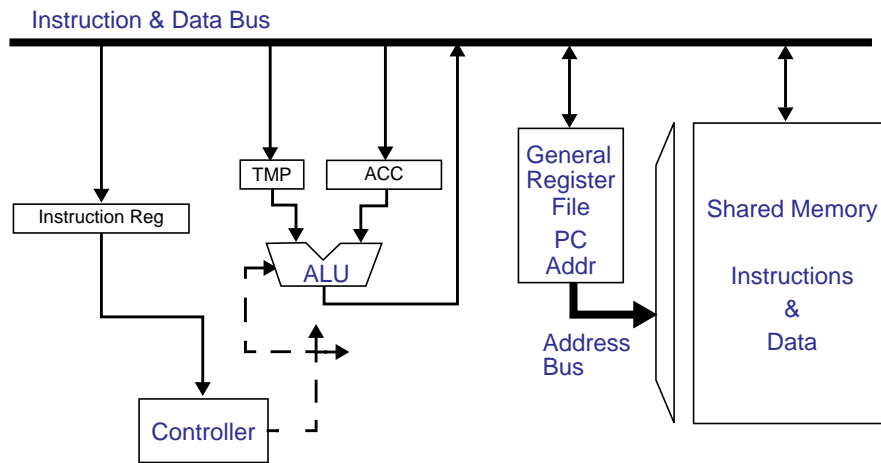


Figure 1.2 Simplified VonNeumann instruction-set architecture

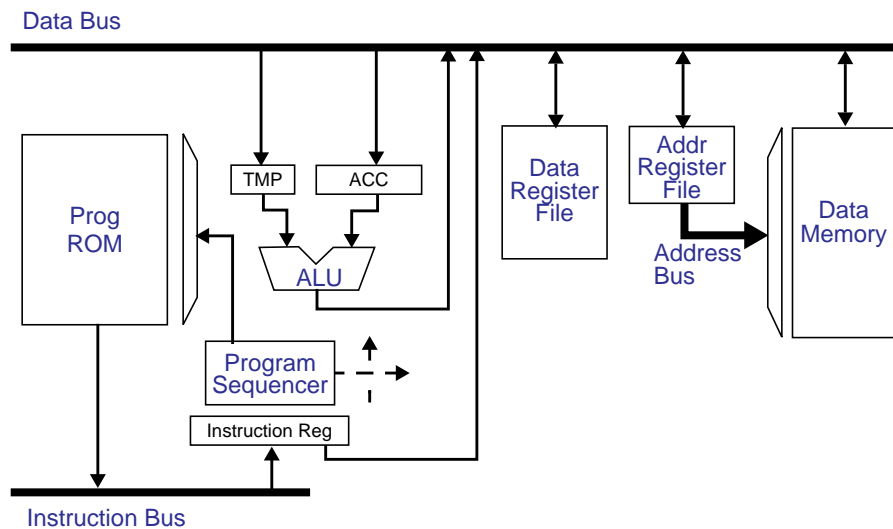


Figure 1.3 Simplified Harvard instruction-set architecture

**RISC, CISC, and VLIW.** Although there is a wide variation in the details, microprocessors have evolved from two broad principles: *CISC* (Complex Instruction-Set Computer) and *RISC* (Reduced Instruction-Set Computer) [76].

The general principles of CISC dictate the direct implementation in the machine of large, complex operations which could be found in a high-level language. Large pieces of functionality are made directly available in the hardware. An instruction in a CISC machine may contain many addressing modes available for the same ALU operation. For example, an indirect offset addressing mode may be available which can directly implement a memory reference from an array. The machine would calculate the correct address at run-time to retrieve the data. In

general, the instruction-sets are rather large since many combinations of instructions are present. An instruction is usually based upon a *data-stationary* concept which may take any number of cycles to execute until the calculation is complete (Goossens et. al. [36]).

In principle, the advantages of a CISC architecture is a simplified compiler mapping from a high-level language to instructions since many complex operations are directly available. Consequently, the CISC can also achieve a relatively high program code density. However, the simplicity of the compiler mapping is debatable, since the exploitation of complex operations is not always straightforward. Another disadvantage of the CISC mechanisms is a rather high amount of hardware complexity including the decoding and implementation of a large number of addressing modes.

In contrast, the RISC principles adopt a reduction of the instruction-set size to the bare minimum allowing a simplification of the hardware implementation and control. For example, in RISC machines, loads from memory and stores to memory are separated from ALU operations by intermediate registers. This implies the use of very simple addressing modes which allow single-cycle execution of all the operations. This memory hierarchy also improves data throughput by allowing operations to be executed in a *pipeline*, where a second operation can be started before the first is actually complete. The idea can also be extended to other functional units such as an ACU (Address Calculation Unit) which independently executes addressing operations in a pipelined fashion. Instructions in a RISC machine are usually based upon a *time-stationary* concept, whereby all instructions take the same time to execute (Goossens et. al. [36]).

The advantage of a RISC machine is a much simpler hardware control implementation and a smaller instruction-set. It also allows faster execution with the possibility of pipelining. However, compilers must be able to manage smaller individual operations. For example, an array reference must be separated into individual address calculations in contrast to a CISC principle where the addressing mode already exists. On the other hand, in practice, the RISC principle has actually simplified the compiler design since a smaller instruction-set is easier to manage than a large instruction-set.

The *VLIW* (Very Long Instruction Word) concept is a principle which extends

RISC fundamentals permitting a maximum of parallelism in a single machine cycle. The instruction-word is encoded in a way that allows operations to be executed in a manner independent from one another. This notion is known as *orthogonality*. Instruction widths can vary from a fairly narrow 61 bits for embedded applications (the TCEC MMDSP in Section 6.3) to 759 bit words for highly parallel machines! An example is an IBM VLIW architecture [120] shown in the diagram of Figure 1.4. The control logic for a VLIW is relatively simple compared to other high performance processors since there is no dynamic scheduling or reordering of operations as in many *superscalar* processors.

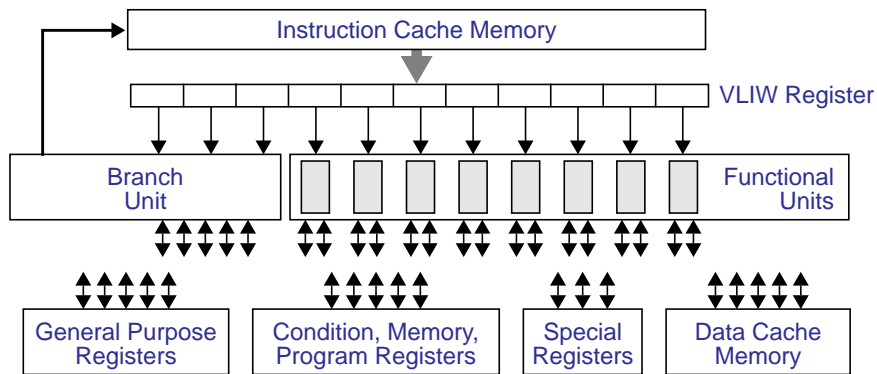


Figure 1.4 Example VLIW architecture with multiple functional units which execute in parallel [120]

For embedded real-time processors, a disadvantage of a VLIW is the high use of program memory. A VLIW program can have many poorly used bits stemming from the orthogonality in its wide instruction-word. This corresponds to unneeded memory size overhead which is an expensive consideration for a system-on-a-chip.

**Digital Signal Processors and Microcontrollers.** *DSPs* (Digital Signal Processors) are a type of architecture specialized for data intensive applications. They are characterized by certain functional blocks which allow the processors to function efficiently on typical signal-processing algorithms. Some examples are the algorithms for digital filters (FIR (Finite Impulse Response), IIR (Infinite Impulse Response), fast fourier transforms (FFT), noise elimination, and echo cancellation. The characteristic functional blocks of these architectures include multiply-accumulators (MACs), address calculation units (ACUs) with modulo and bit-reverse addressing modes, barrel shifters, and multiple memories.

The majority of today's commercial DSPs are based upon Harvard and RISC properties to meet the most stringent constraint of performance. Parallelism is also

a principal performance gaining factor which naturally leads to VLIW architecture considerations. However, DSPs cannot afford costly wide instruction words, which implies the use of highly encoded instructions. An example of DSP encoding restrictions is illustrated in Section 1.3.2. These machines still allow the full parallel execution of specifically chosen instructions important for signal processing. At the same time, orthogonality of the instruction-set is greatly diminished. However, the program memory savings is an important gain for the hardware.

DSP architectures are also characterized by heterogeneous and distributed register structures. Registers are first associated directly with the input and output of particular functional units and secondly reserved for special purposes. This is again a performance gain when compared to architectures with large general register files. Often, the capability of *coupling* registers for large data-types is also present, especially for functions like multiply-addition to preserve the precision of the calculations (see Figure 1.7).

Both floating-point and fixed-point DSP architectures are found on the market today. Despite the better precision of a floating-point unit, their fixed-point counterparts are used in the majority of high volume products because of the huge cost difference. Nevertheless, a fixed-point solution requires a well coded program to compete with the quality level of a floating-point algorithm. Some examples of commercial DSPs are: the Motorola 56000 series [78], the SGS-Thomson D950 core [91], the Texas Instruments TMS320 series[100], and the Analog Devices ADSP-21xx series [5].

*MCUs* (Microcontrol Units or microcontrollers) are another type of real-time reactive instruction-set processor which are oriented toward control tasks. These architectures are much more difficult to categorize as they can be based on either CISC or RISC principles; however a large number of commercial 8 and 16 bit devices are based on CISC principles. For example, it is common for an MCU to contain over 10 addressing modes and over 100 instruction types. What sets them apart from microprocessors is the general low cost and the explicit functions for memory and input/output control tasks used for real-time interaction in an environment. Nevertheless, microprocessors have also been used in real-time environments, yet they generally have significantly higher costs. Some examples of commercial microcontrol units are the Motorola 68HC05, 68HC11, MPC500

[117], the SGS-Thomson ST6, ST7, ST8, ST9 [95], and the Texas Instruments TMS370 family [121].

### ***1.2.2 Embedded processor architectural directions***

Compounding an enormous variety of instruction-set architectures being used today, one clear trend in embedded processors is the support of architectural variations. Looking through the portfolio of a major semiconductor vendor's offerings is more overwhelming than looking through a clothing catalogue with different colors and sizes! For example, the Motorola 68HC11 MCU is categorized by a first set labelled A through P, then further subcategorized resulting in over 50 members. The SGS-Thomson ST9 MCU is offered in a multitude of packages (Dual in Line Plastic Package, Plastic Leaded Chip Carrier Package, Window Ceramic Leaded Chip Carrier, Plastic Quad Flat Pack, etc.), with a variations on pin input/output (32, 36, 38, 40, 56, 72), and a large variation on memory configuration (ROM 8/16K, EPROM 16/32K, RAM256/1280K, EEPROM). Of course, there is also the option of different peripherals of various shapes and sizes: Multifunction Timers, DMA (Direct Memory Access), Analog-to-Digital Converters, etc.

This trend continues for DSPs. For the Motorola 56K series, they are categorized in five main families: the DSP56000 for digital audio applications, the DSP56100 for wireless and wireline communications, the DSP56300 for wireless infrastructure and high MIPS applications including Dolby AC-3 encoders, the DSP56600 for wireless subscriber markets, and the DSP56800 for low cost consumer applications [117]. Another example, the SGS-Thomson D950 core has several memory configurations as well as a configurable coprocessor interface [91]. A set of instructions are set aside to communicate with a coprocessor which may be added to customize the hardware to a particular application algorithm.

It is clear that for the embedded processor market, it is not enough to have a product with a fixed architecture. A solution is competitive because it is specialized for the application domain and the architecture is refined for the type of algorithms to be executed.

The concept of architecture customizing has been taken even further in some companies such as Philips which have designed the flexible EPICs DSP core [111] for a range of products including digital compact cassette players (DCC), compact disc players, GSM mobile car telephones, and DECT cordless telephones. Flexibil-

ity in the EPICs architecture includes the customization of word-lengths, peripherals, memory types, memory dimensions, and register sets.

In high volume products, it is apparent that the concept of architecture customizing is a principal competitive factor. By consequence, the architecture trend is the move toward dedicated processors built using flexible variations on a theme. This type of architecture is known as an *ASIP* (Application Specific Instruction-Set Processor).

### **1.3 Tools for embedded processors: What's needed?**

#### ***1.3.1 Ask the users***

For the large majority of real-time embedded firmware, assembly is the common source language [86]. While there is a general awareness that high-level languages bring many more benefits including readability, portability, and easier maintenance, the current state of compiler technology for embedded processors is less than acceptable. For example, the DSPStone benchmarking activities [112][113] have demonstrated the low efficiency of commercially available DSP compilers including the Motorola 56001, the Analog Devices ADSP2101, the AT&T DSP1610, the Texas Instruments TMS320C51, and the NEC uPD77016. All but the last two compilers are retargets of the GNU gcc compiler (described in Section 2.1.2). For these processors, compiled code for a set of DSP algorithms was shown to run from 2.5 to 12 times slower than hand-coded algorithms! For a designer of real-time systems, a 20% performance overhead is typically the tolerance limit [86]. This makes these commercial compilers unusable.

As embedded systems become more sophisticated, the amount of legacy code in assembly programs becomes so large that code management becomes a serious issue. Consequently, embedded system programmers do recognize a real need for compiler technology. This was demonstrated in a survey of designers for telecommunication systems [83][86], indicating that the greatest need for embedded processors is the presence of efficient software compilers.

While the compiler technology for embedded processors has not yet advanced to an adequate level, an embedded system does provide some unique opportunities for the compiler developer. Unlike for general-computing systems, a program for an embedded system is well simulated and validated on a host platform before



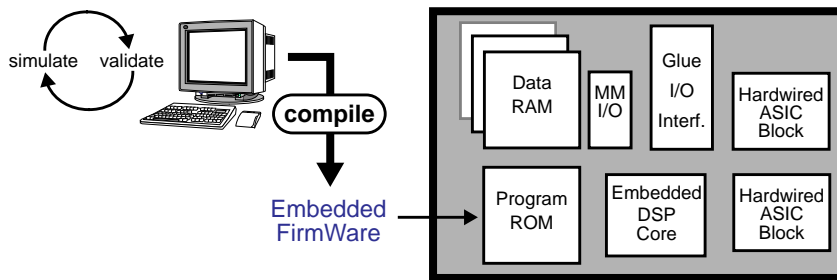


Figure 1.5 Host simulation and validation before final download to the embedded system

being downloaded to the final embedded system (Figure 1.5). This offers the opportunity to make use of such items as a host compiler, profiling tools, and execution based optimization strategies. Of course, the time needed for thorough simulation is always an open problem. Nevertheless, simulation remains an integral part of any embedded software development cycle.

Figure 1.6 shows the full picture of the design tools that we envision to be needed for systems containing embedded instruction-set processors. The heart of the hardware-software design flow is a retargetable compiler which is reconfigured by means of an instruction-set specification. Modifications to this specification serve as a method to explore the effect of making architectural changes on the performance of the C source algorithm. Furthermore, the specification could also be used to generate an instruction-set simulation model and a hardware description of the processor itself.

For this design flow, the key technologies are the compiler techniques which map C algorithms to microcode by means of an instruction-set specification. A review of compiler techniques is presented in Chapter 2, with contributing techniques and methodologies in Chapters 3, 4, and 5.

The use of a host compiler (e.g. workstation or personal computer) serves multiple purposes. The first is early functional verification of the source algorithm even before a processor design is available. The second purpose is validation of the targeted compiler. These subjects are discussed in detail in Chapter 4. By consequence, the presence of both a retargetable compiler and host compiler also allows further possibilities. They can be used for debugging in various forms (Section 4.4) and for architecture and algorithm exploration. For example, the knowledge of which instructions are used by a source algorithm in both a static and dynamic fashion is useful for the refinement of the system performance. Both processor

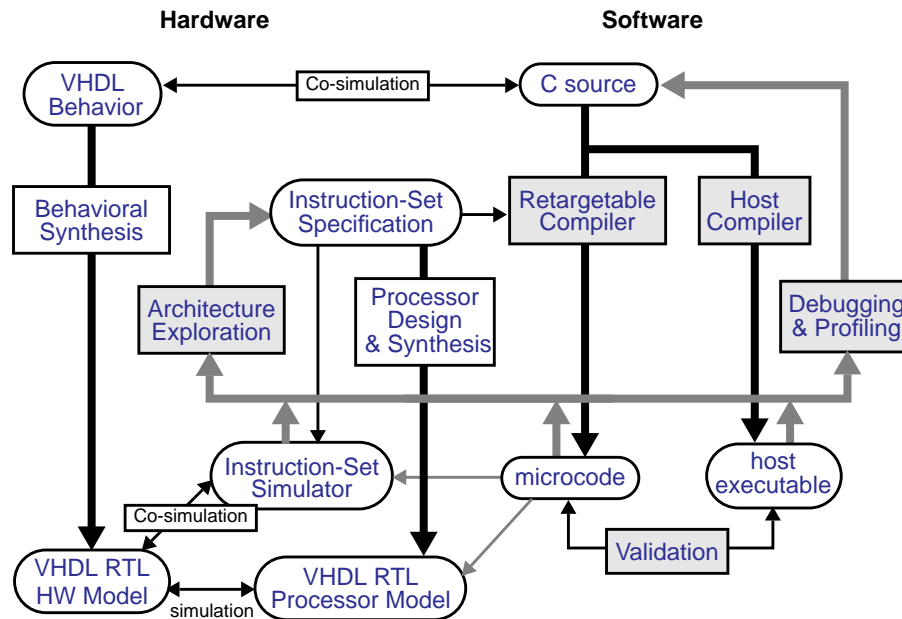


Figure 1.6 Design tools for embedded processors.

hardware and algorithm software may be refined to the algorithm needs. Tools which aid a designer in these areas are introduced in Chapter 7.

In addition to these tools, a number of additional technologies are important for hardware-software co-design of embedded systems. These technologies include the areas of hardware-software estimation and partitioning [51][42], hardware-software co-simulation (e.g. VHDL-C co-simulation) [80][104], behavioral synthesis of hardware [14], and processor design and synthesis. While we recognize the importance of these areas, these subjects are beyond the scope of this text.

While Figure 1.6 shows a number of design tools which are important for the full design activity for embedded processors, the enabling technology is retargetable compilation which is the main focus of this book.

### 1.3.2 Architecture implications on compilation

The highly specialized embedded processors used in today's real-time embedded systems have been placing heavy burdens on the known compiler technologies. Difficulties stem from the architecture specialization in each application domain. For example, small, heterogeneous, distributed register files are common in digital signal processor design. An example is shown in Figure 1.7, where many registers are placed at the inputs and output of the ALU and other functional units as opposed to having a large, general register file (see Figure 1.3). This design styles

allows the instructions to be encoded in a manner which keeps the instruction width to a minimum. However, it also means that registers are used for specific roles and sometimes overlapping roles. For example, in Figure 1.7 S1 could be a special register used solely for bit-shifting operations. Another example would be the *coupling* of the output registers A1 and A2 to be used for a double-precision data-type, as well as the use of each register separately for single-precision data-types.

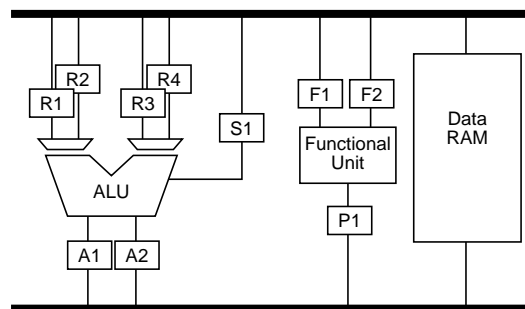


Figure 1.7 Example of heterogeneous, distributed register files

Specialized registers imply that a compiler needs to treat registers based on their function in a certain context. In contrast, the trend in general-purpose processors is to provide a large number of registers which can be used for any function. This is done primarily to simplify the compiler task. Now, as embedded applications change the requirements of a programmable architecture, compilation technologies are called to keep pace.

Another sizable challenge for DSP compilation is dealing with architecture restrictions as a result of instruction-word encoding. An example of tight encoding restrictions is shown in Figure 1.8 for the 16-bit SGS-Thomson D950 DSP core. Two instruction types are shown: the simple `Multiply` instruction and the `Multiply-Accumulate with 2 indirect Register Loads`. Notice the differences which distinguish the format of each instruction. The opcodes are of different widths: 10 and 3 respectively. However, the greatest impact is the difference in allowable register usage for each instruction. In the `Multiply` instruction, the right source may be any of the 4 registers R0, R1, A0, or A1, and the left source may be any of the 7 registers: L0, L1, R0, R1, A0, A1, or P. However, for the `Multiply-Accumulate` instruction, the left source for the multiply operation may only be one of two registers L0 or L1, while the right source may only be: R0 or R1. Looking closely at the instruction word, it is clear that the designer

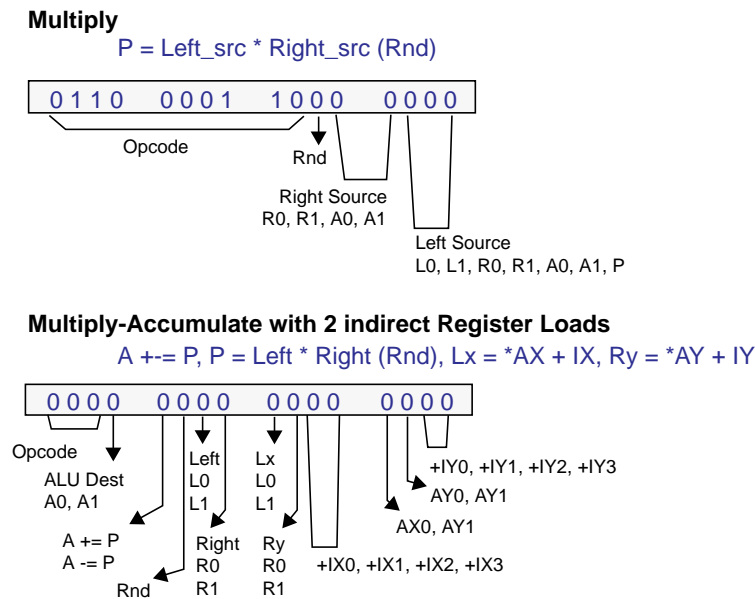


Figure 1.8 Instruction encoding for the SGS-Thomson D950 DSP core.

has a heavy encoding constraint if he wants to offer a large amount of parallelism.

The implications of these forms of encoding restrictions on the compilation techniques are enormous. For a compiler to make use of the multiply-accumulate instruction in the previous example means that it must be treated by all the basic phases of compilation including: instruction-set matching/selection, register allocation/assignment, and scheduling/compaction. Furthermore, optimizations such as loop pipelining are of extreme importance. These and other existing compiler techniques are reviewed in Chapter 2.

While we have just touched on some of the architectural considerations of embedded processors on compilation, there are many more which will be discussed at various points in this book. The numerous architectural constraints of embedded processors implies that, at the very least, a compiler take into consideration all of the hardware restrictions. This implies that all the phases of compilation need a knowledge of the architectural features of the target. A compiler would benefit from the incorporation of an architectural model to describe hardware constraints. Furthermore, a model of the hardware is also a promising route to promote retargetability to varying architectures. Retargetability is further discussed in Section 2.2.

## 1.4 Objectives, contributions, and organization

The objectives of this text are to provide the reader with an overview of compiler technology for embedded processors with an emphasis on practical techniques. A number of industrial experiences are cited, where retargetable compiler methodologies are used. The goal is to highlight both the advantages and disadvantages of the methodologies and approaches. Furthermore, this text aims to contribute new ideas and techniques to this flourishing field in both tool technology and design know-how for embedded processor based systems.

The contributions of the manuscript can be summarized in three main categories:

- experiences and methodologies in compiler approaches for embedded processors in the context of industrial products for telecommunications and multimedia.
- a new compilation approach to address generation for Digital Signal Processors based on an architectural model.
- a set of tools which allows the designer to explore the fit of a set of applications on a processor in light of an architecture evolution or reuse.

The organization of the rest of this book is as follows: Chapters 2-6 describe compiler methodologies for embedded processors and their application in industrial case studies. This begins in Chapter 2 with an overview of traditional and embedded processor compiler techniques. Chapter 3 describes two retargetable compiler systems developed in industry for embedded processors. Chapter 4 discusses a number of practical issues which are needed in any methodology incorporating a compiler for an embedded processor. This is followed in Chapter 5 by a new approach to a compiler transformation specifically for address generation: a critical part of compilation technology for DSPs. Chapter 6 describes a number of case studies with industrial processors, using the techniques presented in the previous chapters.

Chapter 7 presents architecture and algorithm exploration tools which are complementary to an embedded processor development environment. Finally, Chapter 8 presents a wrap-up of the contributions of the book followed by a reflective outlook on the horizon.

## Chapter 2: An Overview of Compiler Techniques for Embedded Processors

The challenge of constructing compilers for today's embedded processors is faced with a wealth of compilation techniques designed initially for architectures of a wide variety. These techniques have been converging from two main areas: software compilation for general-purpose microprocessors and high-level synthesis for ASICs [36]. This chapter presents a review of individual techniques with emphasis on the methods which apply to the constraints imposed by today's embedded processors.

### 2.1 Traditional software compilation

This section discusses the well-known techniques used in most compilers for general purpose computing systems such as workstations and personal computers. The content is restricted to characteristics of the compilation problem as they pertain to real-time embedded systems. In such a system, code performance and size is critical, since the firmware is intended to reside in the system reacting only to external stimuli. The effectiveness of a compiler is of utmost importance, since for embedded processors, it may mean the difference between the compiler being used and not!

#### 2.1.1 *Dragon-book compilation*

The classic text by Aho, Sehti, and Ullman [1] defines compilation as the translation of a program in a source language (e.g. C) to the equivalent program in a target language (e.g. assembly code and absolute machine code). This translation is typically decomposed into a series of phases, as shown in Figure 2.1.

The first two phases of the process deal with parsing the physical tokens of the source program (lexical analysis) and analyzing the structure of the programming language (syntax analysis). The result of this is an intermediate representation of the source code. A typical example of this representation is a forest of syntax trees

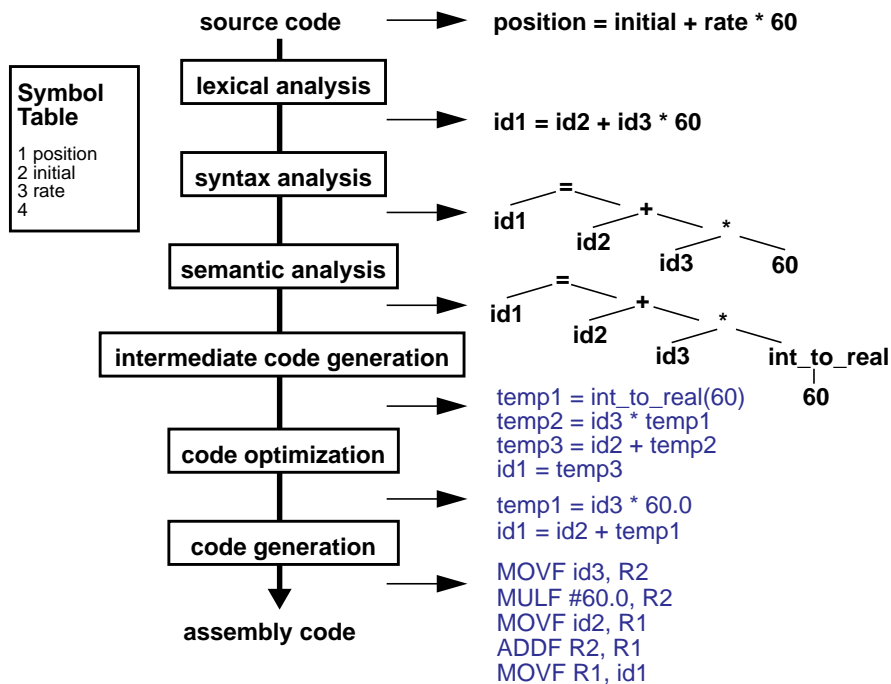


Figure 2.1 Steps in traditional compilation

(Figure 2.1). For each tree, a node represents either an operation (e.g. =, +) which is to be executed upon its children nodes, or the identifier of a symbol.

The third phase is an analysis of the intended meaning of the language (semantic analysis). It statically determines that the semantic conventions of the source language are not violated. Examples of semantic checks are: type checking, flow-of-control checking, and symbol name checking.

These three phases need not be totally independent, but are often sequentially executed *on-the-fly*, during the traversal of the source program. In tandem with these three processes, one or more symbol tables are constructed as an internal housekeeping of the compiler for symbol types, sizes, locations, etc.

Following these phases, many compilers produce an intermediate code, which can be thought of as code for an abstract or *virtual* machine. A common form is known as *three-address code* (or *tuples*), which simply means that each instruction has at most three operands: 2 sources and 1 destination.

This intermediate code can be improved upon using code optimizations of which a large number and variety exist [1][28]. These range from local to global optimizations and from guaranteed improvements to high gain, high risk transformations. That could mean that after an optimization, code is worse than the origi-

nal in terms of area and performance. Choosing the right level of optimization is a difficult task; however, it cannot be disregarded. It is often the case that the result of compilation is unsatisfactory without the application of optimizations. Optimizations for embedded processors are discussed in Section 2.6.

Finally, code from the intermediate form is translated to assembly code for the target. Memory locations are chosen for variables (register and memory allocation) and the code that results is suitable to be run on the target machine.

In the context of compilers for embedded processors, there are clearly some difficulties with this traditional approach to software compilation. We outline some of the main issues as follows:

**1. Retargetability.** In the traditional approach to compilation, retargeting to a new architecture is confined to the final code generation phase. This means that the intermediate code must closely resemble the final target in order to produce efficient code. If the instruction-set of the final target is widely different than that of the virtual machine, it can be difficult to produce efficient target code. As embedded processor instruction-sets vary widely in composition, it may be troublesome to conceptualize an intermediate form which is general enough for any target.

**2. Register Constraints.** Embedded processors often contain a number of special-purpose registers as opposed to general purpose register files. In many cases, registers are reserved for special functions. This is a design effort used to narrow instruction words through format encoding. The instruction width reflects directly into program space, which is costly especially for on-chip programs. The impact of register constraints is on all the phases of compilation.

**3. Arithmetic Specialization.** Three-address code artificially decomposes data-flow operations into small pieces. Arithmetic operations which require more than three operands are not naturally handled with three-address code. Operations such as these often occur on DSP architectures [64].

**4. Instruction-level Parallelism.** The task decomposition in the traditional view of compilation does not naturally suit architectures with parallel executing engines. For example, a DSP often has both data calculation units (DCU) and address calculation units (ACU). A compiler should take into account the possibility to perform operations on different functional units, as well as choose the most compact solu-



tion.

**5. Optimizations.** Real-time embedded firmware cannot afford to have performance penalties as a result of poor compilation. Efficient compilation is only arrived upon by many optimization algorithms. Optimizations to intermediate code (e.g. three-address code) are mainly restricted to a local scope. Global optimizations which use data-structures (e.g. arrays, structures), data-flow, and control-flow information would be more naturally suited to a higher level intermediate representation, closer to the source program structure. Even at this high level, optimizations should take into account the characteristics of the target architecture.

Many techniques are beginning to be introduced to overcome these and other factors which can make compilation for embedded processors much different than for general computing architectures. Some of the new approaches improve on weaknesses of the traditional view of compilation, while others introduce new methods which have evolved from techniques in behavioral and register-transfer level hardware synthesis.

### *2.1.2 The GNU gcc compiler*

The GNU gcc compiler is distributed by the Free Software Foundation [96] and originates by work of Richard Stallman, Jack Davidson, and Christopher Fraser, with contributions by many others. With the free distribution of its C source code, it has been ported to countless machines and has been retargeted to even more. For examples of embedded systems, a retargeted gcc compiler is offered commercially for several DSPs including the Analog Devices 2101, the AT&T 1610, the Motorola 56001, the SGS-Thomson D950, and the DSP Group Pine and Oak cores. It has become the de-facto approach to develop compilers quickly from freely available sources.

A simplified picture of the gcc compilation flow is shown in Figure 2.2. The input source code is parsed and converted into an internal form, called Register Transfer Language (RTL), inspired by LISP lists. A number of architecture independent optimizations are applied to the RTL prior to any further transformation. The optimized RTL is then refined during the following phases: instruction combining groups simple RTL operations into clusters of operations; instruction scheduling orders the instructions in the time axis (see Section 2.5 on scheduling); register class referencing selects the most appropriate register file for each live

variable, while registers within register files are allocated and assigned during register allocation (see Section 2.4 on register allocation and assignment); a final machine-specific peephole optimization phase is applied to the generated code (see Section 2.6.1 on peephole optimization). Several of the above phases depend on the machine description, mostly for what concerns the available instruction patterns and peephole optimizations. Machine-specific macros and functions written in C are also used in the machine description.

One of the well-known strengths of gcc is its set of architecture *independent* optimizations: common subexpression elimination, dead code removal, constant folding, constant propagation, basic code motion, and other classical optimizations. However, for embedded processors, it is extremely important that optimizations be applied according to the characteristics of the target architectures. Simple and often *innocent-looking* optimizations can have adverse effects on the efficiency of code. This is discussed in Section 2.6. Unfortunately, gcc has little provisions for which optimizations may be applied according to the target machine.

In the area of real-time DSP systems, the performance of many of the gcc-based compilers fall short of producing acceptable code quality. This has been demonstrated clearly by the DSPStone benchmarking activities [112][113]. Further

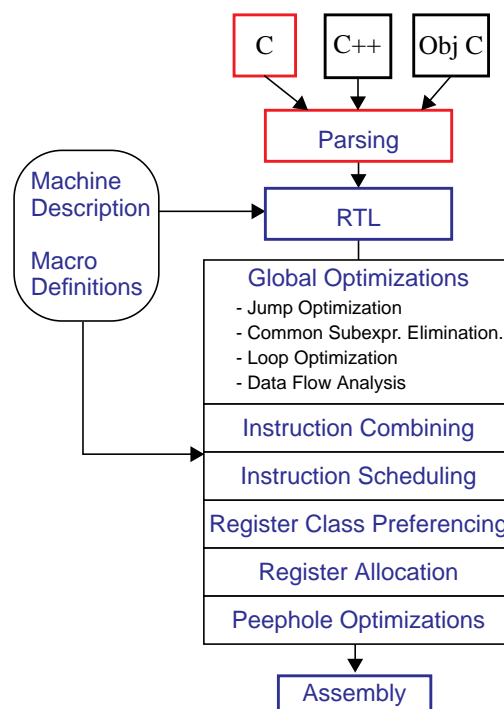


Figure 2.2 A simplified view of the GNU gcc compilation chain

evaluation of DSP tools and compilers for commercial processors have been done by Berkeley Design Technology Inc. [13] which also show that many of the existing commercial C compilers produce inefficient code on commercial fixed-point DSPs [15].

This result may be somewhat surprising given that this compiler technology has existed for some time. In particular, gcc is very popular as an efficient compiler for many workstation and home computing systems. The underlying reason for the difference in performance between general computing targets and DSPs is made clear in the document distributed with gcc. Quoting from [96]:

“The main goal of GNU CC was to make a good, fast compiler for machines in the class that the GNU system aims to run on: 32-bit machines that address 8-bit bytes and have several general registers. Elegance, theoretical power and simplicity are only secondary. GNU CC gets most of the information about the target machine from a machine description which gives an algebraic formula for each of the machine’s instructions. This is a very clean way to describe the target. But when the compiler needs information that is difficult to express in this fashion, I have not hesitated to define an ad-hoc parameter to the machine description. The purpose of portability is to reduce the total work needed on the compiler; it was not of interest for its own sake.”

Embedded processors usually fall into the category of having few registers, heterogeneous register structures, unusual word-lengths, and other architectural specializations. gcc was not conceived for these types of processors; and therefore, compiler developers using gcc are faced with two choices: lower code quality or a significant investment in custom optimization and mappings to the architecture. In the latter case, *ad-hoc* parameters in the machine description and machine-specific routines are needed. Naturally, this greatly reduces the compiler retargetability.

## 2.2 Compiler retargetability

Ever since the appearance of compiler technology, an interest in retargetability was raised to support the varying architecture design styles and also to support processor upgrades [32]. While there was always interest in the topic, a formal retargetability model has never been fully adopted. The trend has been that the more optimization effort put into a compiler the more that compiler becomes invariably

linked with the specific architecture. Furthermore, the lifetime of an instruction-set for a general computing processor has usually been long enough to justify concentrating all the effort on architecture-specific compilation.

For embedded processors, the renewed interest in retargetable compilers is two-fold:

1. Retargetability allows the rapid set-up of a compiler to a newly designed processor. This can be an enormous boost for algorithm developers wishing to evaluate the efficiency of application code on different existing architectures.
2. Retargetability permits architecture exploration. The processor designer is able to tune his/her architecture to run efficiently for a set of source applications in a particular domain, recompiling the application for each redesign of the architecture.

Ideally, a truly retargetable compiler is one whereby the programmer himself is able to reconfigure the compiler simply by changing the specification of the compiler. The principle is shown in Figure 2.3.

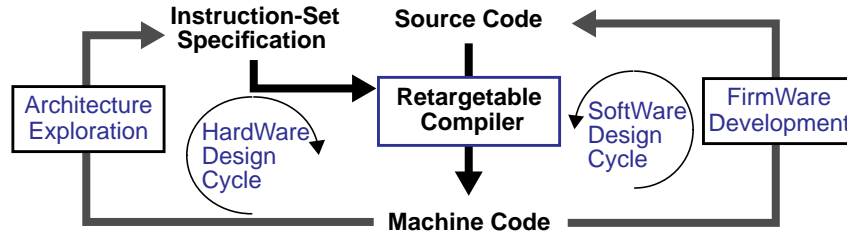


Figure 2.3 The retargetable compilation principle

Figure 2.3 shows two design cycles: the software and the hardware design cycle. The one to the right of the figure is the familiar development course, where the programmer uses the compiler to develop software. The second cycle is to the left of the figure, showing the retargetable compiler being used as a design tool to explore the processor architecture. The ideal user-retargetable situation is where the instruction-set specification completely describes the processor mechanics in a manner which is simple enough so that the programmer is able to make changes himself. Exploration is supported for redesigns by changes to the instruction-set specification.

### ***2.2.1 Different levels of retargetability***

For today's compilers a great many levels of retargetability exist. In [6], Araujo classifies retargetability into three categories. A general interpretation of these categories is as follows:

1. Automatically retargetable: the compiler contains a set of well defined parameters which allow complete retargeting to the new processor. Full knowledge of the range of target architectures is contained within the compiler. Retargeting time is on the order of minutes and seconds.
2. User retargetable: the compiler user is able to retarget the processor by furnishing an instruction-set specification. The compiler may require a certain amount of pre-compile or set-up time. Retargeting time is on the order of days and hours.
3. Developer retargetable: the compiler may be retargeted to a range of processor architectures, but requires expertise with the compiler system. This category can become blurred with the complete rewriting of a new compiler. Retargeting time is on the order of months and weeks.

While the dividing line between these categories can be difficult to place, perhaps the most indicative measure is the retargeting time, which clearly separates the classes.

State-of-the-art compilers for embedded processors fall primarily in categories 1 and 3, while the main goal is to fall into category 2. Compilers in category 1 are mainly single-target compilers which allow small variations to the target processor. The weakness in these compilers is the small range of targets which they support, therefore making architecture exploration difficult.

The advantage of compilers in category 3 is the support for a wide range of architectures. However, the weakness is the relatively long compiler development time. In addition, a compiler expert is needed to perform the compiler retargeting.

### ***2.2.2 Architecture specification languages and models***

The most promising avenue for supporting the retargetability of compilers for embedded processors is the work on specification languages and models. An instruction-set specification language allows a user to describe the functionality of a processor in a formal fashion. Subsequently, the transformations of a compiler

may be retuned according to the architecture. This retuning can be done by means of an architecture model. While an architecture model need not be generated by a specification language, a language-based input is the most natural interface to the user.

**Mimola.** The MSSV/Q compilers from University of Dortmund [73][74] represent early work on mapping high-level algorithms to structural representations of processors. The processor is described in a hardware description language called *Mimola* [11]. The structure of the processor is defined by a netlist of functional components with the explicit activation of components via bits in the instruction word. An example is shown in Figure 2.4. This example target Mimola structure

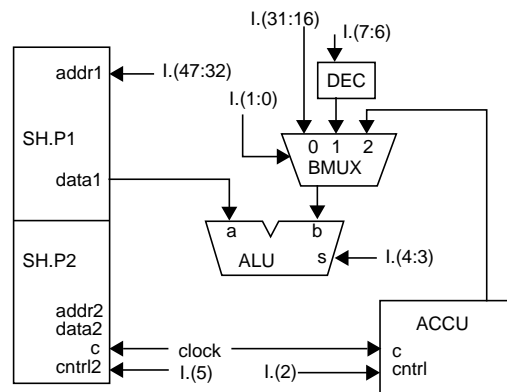


Figure 2.4 An example Mimola target structure [74]

contains a dual-port memory (SH), an Arithmetic and Logic Unit (ALU), an accumulator register (ACCU), a decoder (DEC), and a multiplexer (BMUX). Sets of bits from the instruction word (I) activate functional units and connections in the target architecture.

The algorithm language is a Pascal-like subset of Mimola. After the application of a set of target-dependent, user-definable program transformation rules, the algorithm is matched to the target structure. The compiler uses a recursive descent algorithm matching operations to functional units, and constants and variables to memory locations. During this execution, paths are matched using reachability analysis of the target structure. For optimization reasons, several instruction versions are generated and bundling is performed to reduce the number of final instructions.

The strength of the MSSQ/V compilers is the direct description of the processor architecture. The compilers work directly with the physical structure of the

hardware, which leads to a fair level of retargetability. However, writing the processor description requires intimate detail of the decoding strategy of the entire architecture. In the case of commercial processors, for example, detailed information of the hardware would not be available. Only a programmers manual of the instruction-set is available. Furthermore, matching an algorithm to a detailed netlist of components could reflect in inefficient compilation times as physical paths need to be frequently traced.

The more recent generation of compilers from University of Dortmund is the Record [60][61] compiler. It also uses Mimola as the processor description language but uses another approach for compilation. Record uses a pre-compilation phase called *instruction-set extraction* which automatically generates a compiler code selector from a hardware description model of the processor. The advantage of this approach is the use of an efficient code generator generator (this concept is discussed in Section 2.3.1) for the main instruction-set selection phase of compilation. It is this improvement that separates Record from the MSSQ/V compilers. In addition to this are a number of additional compiler transformations which improve instruction-level parallelism, including address generation (discussed in Section 5.2.1) and compaction (discussed in Section 2.5).

The instruction extraction procedure begins from a Mimola netlist model of the processor and by traversing the data paths, it determines the instructions which may be executed on the processor. These patterns are then fed to a program which produces a grammar for the code generator generator. In this manner, a set of register-transfer templates are formed which, when coupled with the code generator, comprise the front-end of the compiler.

The Record approach is indeed a large improvement over the previous MSSQ/V compilers as it makes use of structural information of the processor while allowing efficient pattern matching utilities to be used for the main compilation flow. Again as the Mimola hardware description language is used, the disadvantage of the approach is that an explicit netlist of the processor is needed to retarget the compiler. While this might be an advantage to a hardware designer who deals with his own specialized embedded processors, it is disadvantageous for a programmer using a commercial processor where the details of the hardware functionality are unknown.

**nML.** The CBC compiler [24][25] from the Technical University of Berlin is a project that inspired the development of a processor specification language known as nML [31], which stands for *not a Machine Language*. This inventive abbreviation stresses the fact that the language is intended to describe the behavior of a processor rather than the structural details. The nML language describes a processor by means of the instruction-set and the execution mechanics of that instruction-set. The key elements of the language are the description of operations, storage elements, binary and assembly syntax, and an execution model. These elements combined with some features such as the derivation of attributes allows the full description of an instruction-set processor without the detailed structural information of a netlist. The level of information is comparable to a programmer's manual for the processor.

The nML language is based on a synchronous register-transfer model, allowing also the description of detailed timing including structural pipelining. Figure 2.5 shows a partial instruction-set description demonstrating the principal elements of the nML language. Types may be composed from a set of pre-defined type constructors: `bool`, `card`, `int`, `fix` and `float`. Using these types, storage elements may be declared while providing names for identification. The last principal element of the language is the *partial instruction (PI)*, which is described in one of two ways: an *OR-rule* which declares several alternatives; and an *AND-rule* which combines several PIs to form a new PI. This is done in attribute grammar, whereby each PI may be derived from other PIs. This is shown conceptually in Figure 2.6.

Associated with each PI is a continued set of attributes, the foremost being the `action` attribute which describes the execution behavior. The `action` attribute

Declarations	let wordsize=16 type word=int(wordsize)	
Storage Elements	reg R[8,word] delay=1 reg SP[1,word] alias=R[7] mem M[1024,word]	
Partial Instructions	opn aluAction = add   sub   or   and opn add() action={L3=L1+L2;} image="00" syntax="add" opn dataPathOp(a:reg, b:reg, c:aluAction, d:reg) action={L1=a; L2=b; c.action; d=L3;} image=a.image::b.image::c.image::d.image syntax=d.syntax::"::a.syntax::c.syntax::b.syntax	← OR-rule  ← AND-rule

Figure 2.5 Sample nML Language Elements



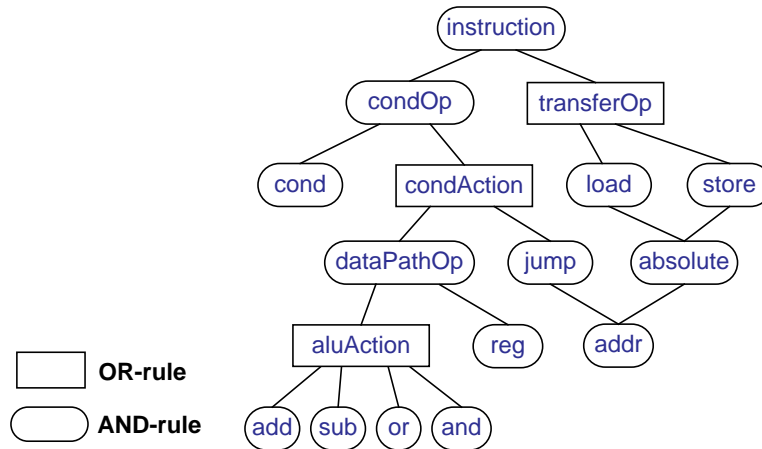


Figure 2.6 The derivation of attributes in the nML language.

may be of two permitted forms:

1. assignment: e.g. `dst = src1 + src2`
2. conditional: e.g. `if c then dst = 0 else dst = 1 end`

The definition of the behavior may contain any operators from a pre-defined list, including C-like operators: arithmetic & logic, bit rotation operators, and type conversion functions.

Other important attributes of the PI are `image` and `syntax`, which describe both the binary and assembly representation of the microcode. The compiler uses these attributes to determine the fashion in which to emit the microcode.

The nML description language is a complete description of the processor at the level of a programmer's manual. For embedded processors, the user is able to capture all the functionality, execution, and encoding of the machine. The strong point of nML is that the language is not tied to the implementation of a compiler or simulator, which is the case for many machine descriptions [96].

**Instruction Set Graph.** The ISG model was introduced by VanPraet [106] and is used in the Chess compiler [57]. The representation is an example of a model that associates behavioral information of the processor with structural information. Making use of nML as the description language, the ISG model is generated automatically and encapsulates the functionality of the processor together with the instruction-level semantics. The main elements of the Instruction Set Graph are shown in Figure 2.7. The ISG contains two types of storage elements: *static resources* such as addressable memory or registers with explicit bit-widths, and

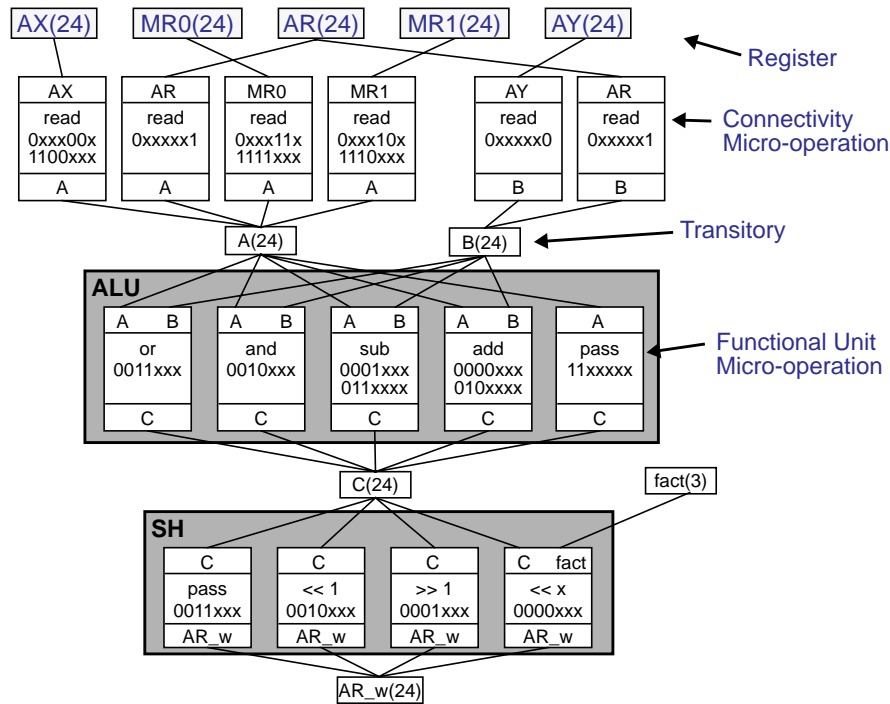


Figure 2.7 Principles of the Chess Instruction-Set Graph (ISG) model

*transitories* which pass values with no corresponding delay. Storage elements are interconnected by *micro-operations* which correspond to specific operations which may be executed on a functional unit of the processor by an instruction code, or by connectivity to other storage elements. Each micro-operation contains a list of legal instruction-bit settings, which in principle activate a connection between storage elements. Therefore, a legal micro-instruction is constructed by forming a path through the ISG, keeping structural hazards in mind.

This approach allows a convenient encapsulation of the operations of the processor while keeping an active record of the encoding restrictions defined by the instruction-set. In the Chess compiler it serves as a base model for all the phases of compilation (instruction-set matching and selection, register allocation and assignment, and scheduling) to form the mapping from a source algorithm to microcode implementation. The model is a higher abstraction than a full functional unit netlist which ties behavioral operation to the structural data connectivity.

**CodeSyn Model.** The *CodeSyn* compiler developed at Bell-Northern Research / Nortel uses a mixed structural and behavioral level model to describe the target instruction-set processor. Similarly to the ISG model, it ties behavioral aspects with the structure of the architecture. Details of the model are described in Section

### 3.2.2.

Two main goals remain for compilers targeting embedded processors: code quality and retargetability. While the goals are sometimes conflicting, the growing amount of embedded firmware and the rapid appearance of new architectures makes both equally important. For these goals, there are three principal compiler tasks for embedded processors:

- instruction-set matching and selection,
- register allocation and assignment,
- scheduling and compaction.

Unfortunately, the three tasks are highly interdependent, which is a concept known in the compiler community as *phase coupling*.

## 2.3 Instruction-set matching and selection

We separate instruction-set matching and selection into two broad definitions:

1. Instruction-set matching is the process of determining a wide set of target instructions which can implement the source code.
2. Instruction-set selection is the process of choosing the best subset of instructions from the matched set.

While these general definitions could be interpreted as the entire compilation process, the matching and selection process has varying levels of importance depending on the compilation approach. In some compilers, it does comprise the entire compilation process; in others, it is only one phase of other more important phases. Furthermore, some compilers take a simplified view of the process, selecting only the first matched instructions.

### 2.3.1 *Pattern-based methods*

The traditional approach to matching source code to an instruction-set is to produce a base of template patterns of which each member represents an instruction. During compilation of a source program, these patterns are matched to portions of the source. For example, it is possible to translate a source program into a forest of syntax trees, which are then matched to the pattern set of syntax trees (see Figure 2.1). A subset of all the matched patterns are selected to form the imple-

mentation in microcode (i.e. instruction-set selection).

Dynamic programming [3] is a method used to select a *cover* of patterns for the subject tree. It is a procedure with linear complexity that selects an optimal set of patterns when restricting the problem to trees and a homogeneous register set [3]. The procedure is a simple linear process which guarantees the best choice of patterns at each node of a tree (the procedure is described in [1]). However, embedded processors are characterized by heterogeneous register sets and instructions best described by graph-based patterns. This means the advantage of dynamic programming is diminished for embedded processors.

Tree-based pattern selection extensions which allow the handling of heterogeneous register sets have been formulated in the work of Wess [108][109]. In this approach, register constraints are encapsulated by a *trellis* diagram. Using this diagram as the target model, the code selection process is considered as a path minimization problem.

On the level of software engineering, a popular, and interesting approach is the so-called *code generator generator* or *compiler compiler*. Examples of these systems are the Glanville-Graham generators [35], BEG [23], Twig [3], Burg and Iburg [124][30], and Olive [123]. We present the concepts in two steps: code generation by tree rewriting, and pattern matching by parsing [1].

**Tree rewriting.** A simple example is shown in Figure 2.8, where the source code is represented by a syntax tree. A set of reducing rules allows the tree to be rewritten by successive applications. For each application of a reducing rule to a branch of the tree, code is emitted. In the example, the rules are applied in the following order: 2, 1, 3. Although this is a simple example, it illustrates the procedure which

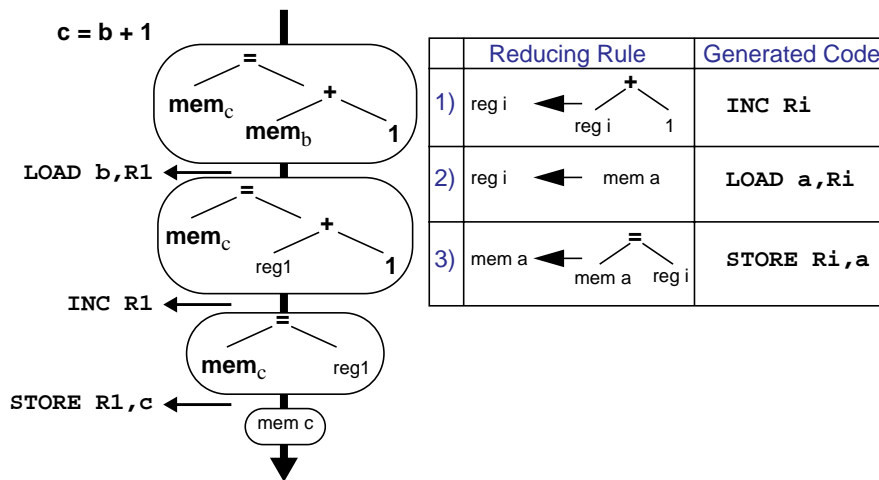


Figure 2.8 Principle of code generation by tree rewriting.

applies to trees of any size and shape and can also be extended to dags [28].

**Pattern matching by parsing.** It was observed in [35] that the matching of code templates against an expression tree resembles the problem of matching productions against a token sequence during source code parsing. Representing the syntax tree as a prefix string allows the transformation of the previous problem into a parsing problem. For example, the syntax tree of Figure 2.8 becomes:

= memc + memb 1

In this way the reducing rules become simply a grammar with related actions:

1)  $\text{reg } i \leftarrow + \text{reg } i \ 1 \ \{\text{INC } R_i\}$

2)  $\text{reg } i \leftarrow \text{mema} \ \{\text{LOAD } a, R_i\}$

3)  $\text{mema} \leftarrow + \text{mema} \ \text{reg } i \ \{\text{STORE } R_i, a\}$

Three main issues arise with the code generator generation principle:

1. when more than one pattern matches a tree (i.e. conflicts), the quality of code is dependent on which rule is applied. (i.e. pattern size trade-offs)
2. the quality of the code is dependent on which branches of the tree are visited first (i.e. scheduling)
3. registers are chosen *on-the-fly* (i.e. register assignment is local)

The first of these can be approached by simply favoring larger patterns; however, this is an ad-hoc approach which does not always reflect the cost of a pattern. It is possible to use dynamic programming in this stage [3], even at compile-compile

time when based on homogeneous registers and a constant cost model [30]. However, it may be a disadvantage when incorporating more complicated cost models which depend on heterogeneous registers and pattern selections crossing tree boundaries. Scheduling and register assignment are extremely important issues for embedded processors requiring code quality and are discussed in Section 2.5 and Section 2.4 respectively. In general, the disadvantage of a code generator generator is that it integrates many of the compiler phases into one. Consequently, when it is important to concentrate on a certain phase of compilation which is important for an embedded processor target, it becomes difficult to tackle.

Despite the basic difficulties, the SPAM (Synopsys Princeton Aachen MIT) project [7][62][63] has been able to apply the principles to one embedded processor, the Texas Instruments TMS320C25 DSP. Using the Olive code generator generator [123], a grammar was constructed for the TI C25 data-path shown in Figure 2.9. The Olive grammar for the architecture is shown in Figure 2.10. The use of a grammar allows the details of the parser to be hidden from the user; however, during this process a schedule of instructions must be considered before code is emitted.

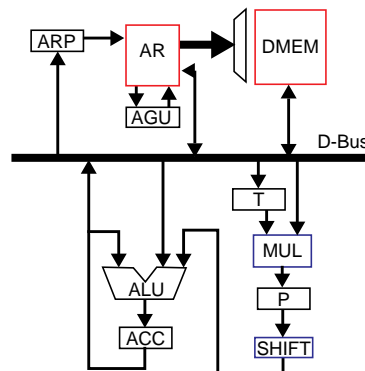


Figure 2.9 The Texas Instruments TMS320 C25 data-path.

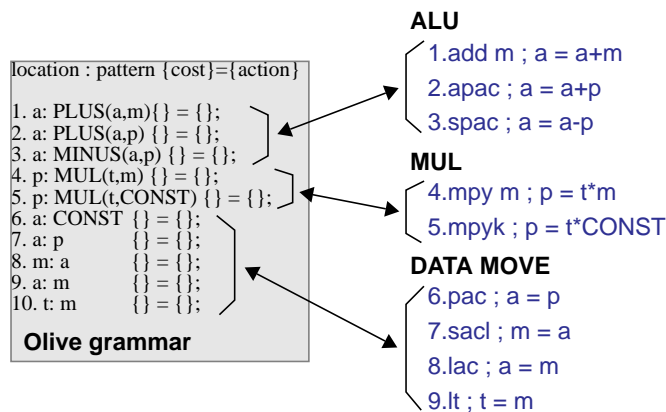


Figure 2.10 SPAM Olive grammar and patterns for the TI C25.

ted. This is discussed in Section 2.5. The Olive pattern set treats the restrictions of registers for the TI C25 architecture; however, it is not clear whether it is possible to specify processors with larger register files with overlapping register roles. In addition, the restrictions of register uses with the encoding of the instruction-set is not included in the grammar.

Other approaches which use tree-based pattern matching and selection include the *CodeSyn* compiler and *FlexCC* compilers, which are presented in Chapter 4.

### 2.3.2 Constructive methods

Although not yet extensively studied for embedded processors, techniques for the matching of directed acyclic graphs (*dags*) as opposed to simple tree structures may become important. This is because many instructions in embedded processors and DSPs are more naturally described as dags, for example: accumulator-based machines and auto-increment (decrement) address registers. In addition, more optimization possibilities are available from source algorithms when all the control and data-dependencies are explicitly kept in a dag. As generating code for trees is a difficult problem, generating code for dags becomes much more complicated. Heuristics which enhance tree-based methods are explained in [28] and [1].

Some approaches have been introduced which base pattern matches on structural connections of the processor. Using the Mimola model as described in Section 2.2.2, MSSQ/V determine valid patterns by verifying against the structure. Similarly, the Chess compiler uses a *bundling* approach [106] which couples nodes of a control-data flow graph (CDFG) based on the instruction-set graph model (Figure 2.7). This also allows the selection of bundled patterns which are heavily restricted by the encoding of the instruction-set. The validity of patterns is determined directly by the architecture model. There are two advantages to this approach: the pattern set need not be computed at pre-compile time, and the bundling of patterns can possibly pass control-flow boundaries in the source code [106].

## 2.4 Register classification, allocation, and assignment

Issues in data storage for embedded processors are probably the most difficult problem in compilation. The largest tasks are register allocation and assignment,

which we define as follows:

1. Register allocation is the determination of a set of registers which may hold the value of a variable.
2. Register assignment is the determination of a specific physical register which is stipulated to hold the value of a variable.

As well as being a challenge for architectures with many registers, register allocation and assignment for embedded processors is complicated by special-purpose registers, heterogeneous register files, and overlapping register functions. However, as a large base of work already exists, much of today's research builds upon techniques of the past. A survey of register allocation methods until 1984 can be found in [79], and classic approaches are discussed in [1][28].

#### **2.4.1 Register classes**

In dealing with heterogeneous register files of programmable machines, one approach is to introduce the concept of *register classes* [27][96]. In general, a register may belong to one or more register classes of overlapping functionality. By these means, the compiler is able to calculate those registers which are most needed for a specific function; and hence, a strategy for register allocation and assignment can be carried out.

In both the CBC compiler [27] and the GNU gcc compiler [96], the concept of a *symbolic* or *pseudo* register is used so that the compilation may proceed in two steps. During instruction-set selection, a symbolic register is assigned for each program storage element. Next, symbolic registers are organized by means of the register classes in a register allocation phase. Following, detailed register assignment of each symbolic register to a real (i.e. *physical, hard*) register is performed.

The *CodeSyn* compiler builds upon the concept of register classes for special-purpose registers and the allocation approach is described in Section 3.2.4.

#### **2.4.2 Coloring approaches**

Pioneering work on register allocation by Chaitin [17][18] introduced the notion of *coloring* to determine the number of registers needed for a program's variables. An example is shown in Figure 2.11 to explain the coloring formulation. The left part of Figure 2.11 shows a basic block of source code which contains a set of variables



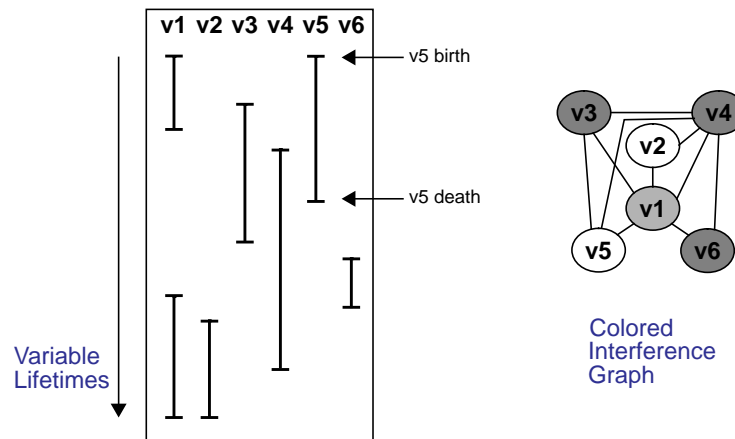


Figure 2.11 Register allocation by coloring.

and their corresponding lifetimes. A variable is said to be alive when its value must be retained for an operation which occurs later in the program. The process of coloring proceeds in two steps. The first step is to build an *interference graph* whereby the nodes of the graph represent the variables and a set of edges connecting the nodes. An edge represents an overlap of lifetimes between the two variables, meaning that the two variables cannot use the same storage unit (register).

The second step is to assign a color to each node of the interference graph, such that no two connecting nodes have the same color. The number of colors used in the graph is the number of registers needed in the program. The interference graph shown in Figure 2.11 needs at least 4 different colors and therefore 4 registers.

Taking a closer look at this example, one would notice that there is solution to this problem which uses just 3 registers. The difficulty was in the previous formulation of the coloring problem. That interference graph has its weaknesses, as it contains neither the overlapping information of lifetimes nor the relative times of the overlaps. To arrive at the 3 register solution, the interference graph in Figure 2.12 should be solved. The variable  $v_1$ , which has two independent lifetimes has been split into two nodes, allowing it to reside in two different registers.

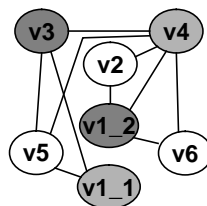


Figure 2.12 Register coloring: second formulation

In a real program, the coloring formulation is entangled with control-flow con-

structs such as `if-then-else` conditionals, loops, case statements, function calls and local/global scoping. The formulation using coloring for a real application must be extended to handle these cases. In addition, heterogeneous register files and overlapping functions significantly change the nature of the formulation.

Extensions to Chaitin's formulation which use exact lifetime information have been studied by Hendren et. al. [41]. Their formulation also includes careful treatment of cyclic intervals, which colors variables whose lifetimes extend over several iterations of a loop. However, it does not handle heterogeneous register files.

A further difficulty with the coloring formulation is determining variables to *spill*. Spilling is the process of moving a variable to memory when all the registers are being used. For example, in the example shown in Figure 2.11, if only 2 registers were available on the architecture, variables would have to be spilled to memory. Chaitin has approached this problem in his formulation [18]; however, the problem becomes more complex in the presence of special purpose registers; for example, if only certain registers are permitted to store a value to memory (see Section 6.1).

Another formulation of the register allocation problem, which can be regarded as a type of coloring, is inspired by the channel routing problem in place and route synthesis. The *Left Edge* algorithm [54], which has been used for channel routing of connections in VLSI physical design, can also be applied to register allocation. In Figure 2.13 we illustrate the formulation using the previous example.

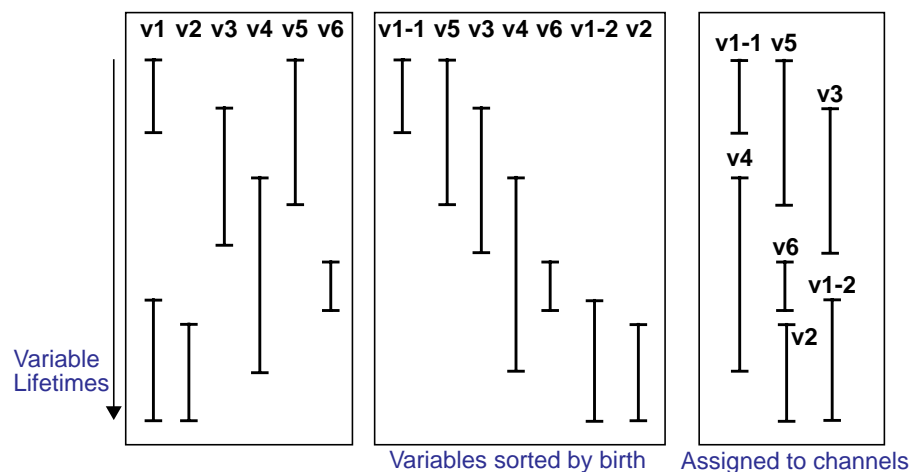


Figure 2.13 The Left Edge algorithm applied to register allocation.

The approach proceeds in four steps:

1. Sort the variable lifetimes (i.e. segment) in increasing order of their births or left-edge (top-edge in the case of Figure 2.13).
2. Assign the first segment (top-most edge) to the first channel. (e.g. v1-1 in Figure 2.13)
3. Find the next segment which can be placed in the current channel (e.g. v4 in Figure 2.13).
4. Continue until no more segments fit into the current channel. Start a new channel and repeat Step 2. until all segments are assigned to channels. When finished, each channel may be assigned to a physical register.

The Left Edge algorithm is greedy in nature; however, it produces an optimal result in the minimum number of registers needed. Notice that the example of Figure 2.13 requires a minimum of 3 registers as was discovered with the coloring formulation in Figure 2.12. The advantage of the Left Edge algorithm over coloring is that it explicitly takes register lifetimes into account. Naturally, the approach must be extended to take into account control structures, spilling, and special-purpose register structures [66].

Coloring is a problem formulation to register allocation. After colors are determined, the register assignment part is a simple one-to-one mapping of colors (or tracks) to registers. Register assignment is not so simple in the presence of special-purpose registers; however, a solution can be provided using register classes as described in Section 3.2.4.

### ***2.4.3 Data-routing***

To deal with the distributed nature of registers in DSPs and application-specific signal processors, the register assignment process has been reformulated as a problem closely tied to the architecture structure. In *data-routing*, the goal is to determine the best flow of data through the architecture such that execution time of the microcode is minimized. While data-routing techniques are generally more time consuming than other register assignment approaches, they usually provide solutions for architectures with very heavily constrained register resources and distributed register connections. Some of the previously mentioned register allocation techniques can fail for these architectures.

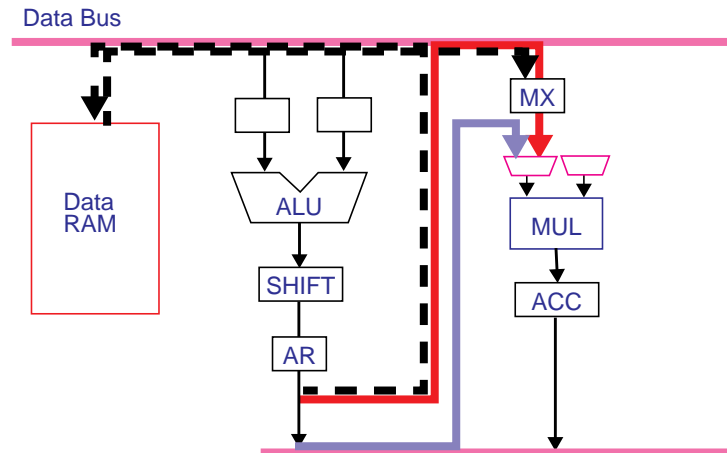


Figure 2.14 Data-routing in the Chess compiler.

Rimey and Hilfinger [90] introduced an approach known as *lazy data-routing* for generating compact code for architectures with unusual pipeline topologies. The idea is to schedule instructions as compact as possible and to decide on a data-route only after an operation is scheduled. A spill path to memory is always guarded to guarantee that no deadlocks will occur. A similar approach was used by Hartmann [40] in the CBC compiler, where a complicated deadlock avoidance routine was incorporated for architectures with very few registers.

The Chess compiler uses a branch and bound approach to data-routing [56][57]. An example of the concept is shown in Figure 2.14. Three alternate data-routes are shown for a value which leaves the AR register and is headed for a multiplication. The first is the direct route along the lower bus and directly into the multiplier (MUL), the second uses a longer path by means of the upper bus and the input register of the multiplier (MX), and the third shows the value temporarily spilled to data memory (DATA RAM). The data-routing approach determines a solution from these three candidates which were found through branch and bound search techniques. The quality of each solution is determined using probabilistic estimators which monitor the impact of an assignment on the overall schedule of the control-data flow graph of the source code. These estimators are based on scheduling algorithms from high-level synthesis [85].

## 2.5 Scheduling and compaction

Scheduling is the process of determining an order of execution of instructions. Although it can be treated separately, the interdependence with instruction selec-

tion and register allocation makes it a particularly difficult problem for embedded processors. Furthermore, machines which support instruction-level parallelism require fine-grained scheduling. This type of scheduling is called *compaction*.

An example shown in Figure 2.15 for the Texas Instruments TMS320C25 has motivated scheduling techniques in the SPAM project [7]. Recalling the instruction-set patterns shown in Figure 2.10, this example shows a data-flow tree which has been scheduled three different ways. The *Normal Form Schedule* [2] can generate optimal code for architectures with homogeneous register sets, but the example in Figure 2.15 a) shows that suboptimal results can occur for the TI C25 even for a very simple example. Problems stem from the very few and distributed registers of the architecture (see Figure 2.9). Only a clever schedule can avoid the need to spill and reload values from extra memory locations as shown in Figure 2.15 b) and Figure 2.16 a). The optimal solution (Figure 2.16 b) requires consideration of the architecture's register and memory structure.

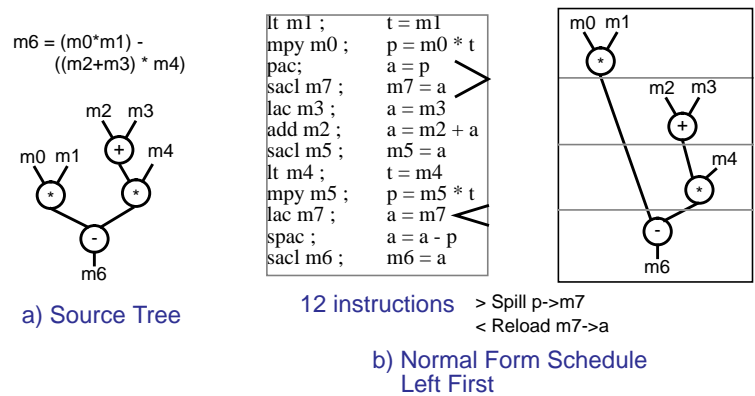


Figure 2.15 Motivating data-flow example for the SPAM project with the TMS320C25 [7]

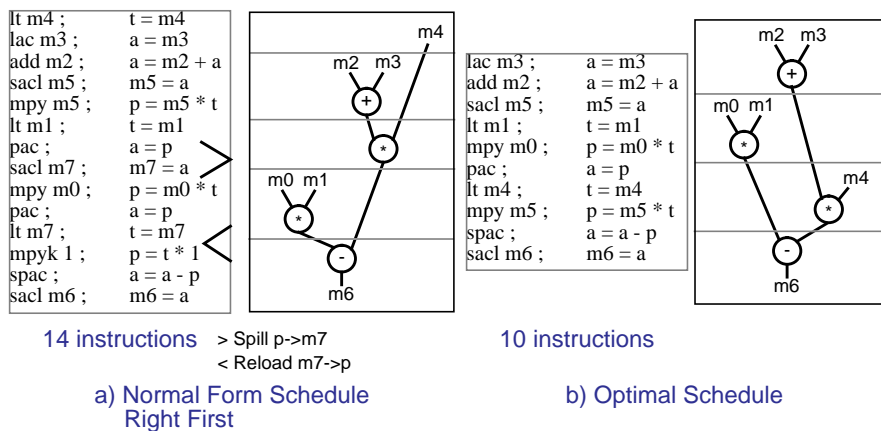


Figure 2.16 SPAM scheduling example for the TMS320C25

The SPAM group have proposed a solution which optimally solves tree-based data-flow schedules for architectures such as the TI C25 architecture, which satisfy certain criteria. These criteria include the presence of only single and infinite storage resources connected in a certain way. Extensions would be necessary for the register structures of architectures which differ substantially from the storage criteria displayed by the TI C25. Furthermore, the approach neither handles control-flow in the source code, nor instruction-level parallelism of the processor.

Mutation scheduling [81] is an approach whereby different implementations of instructions can be regenerated by means of a mutation set. After the generation of three-address code, critical paths are calculated. Attempts are made to improve the speed by identifying the instructions which lie on critical paths and *mutating* them to other implementations which allow a rescheduling of the instructions. In this manner, the overall schedule is improved. The advantage of this approach is that it works directly on critical paths and improves timing on a level of the code which is very close to the machine structure.

An Integer Linear Program (ILP) is a formal, algebraic method of expressing a problem. Given a set of criteria which guarantee a correct solution, an ILP solver is able to find the best solution according to an objective function. Wilson at the University of Guelph [110] is investigating the use of ILPs to solve compilation problems for embedded processors. They propose a compilation model which integrates pattern-matching, scheduling, register assignment and spilling to memory. The ILP solver dynamically makes trade-offs between these four alternatives based on an objective function and a set of constraints. The objective function is usually a time goal which is iteratively shortened until further improvement is minimal. The set of constraints includes architecture characteristics like the number of accumulators, other registers, and functional units.

Scheduling and also software pipelining (discussed in Section 2.6.2) for real-time signal processing have been approached with ILP formulations (Depuydt et. al. [21]). Although conceived primarily for hardware, the concepts are also applicable to software. ILPs have also been used to approach code compaction for the instruction level parallelism in DSPs (Leupers et. al. [59]).

**Microcode compaction.** Compaction is a form of scheduling referring specifically to the improvement of parallelization in an instruction word. An example of the

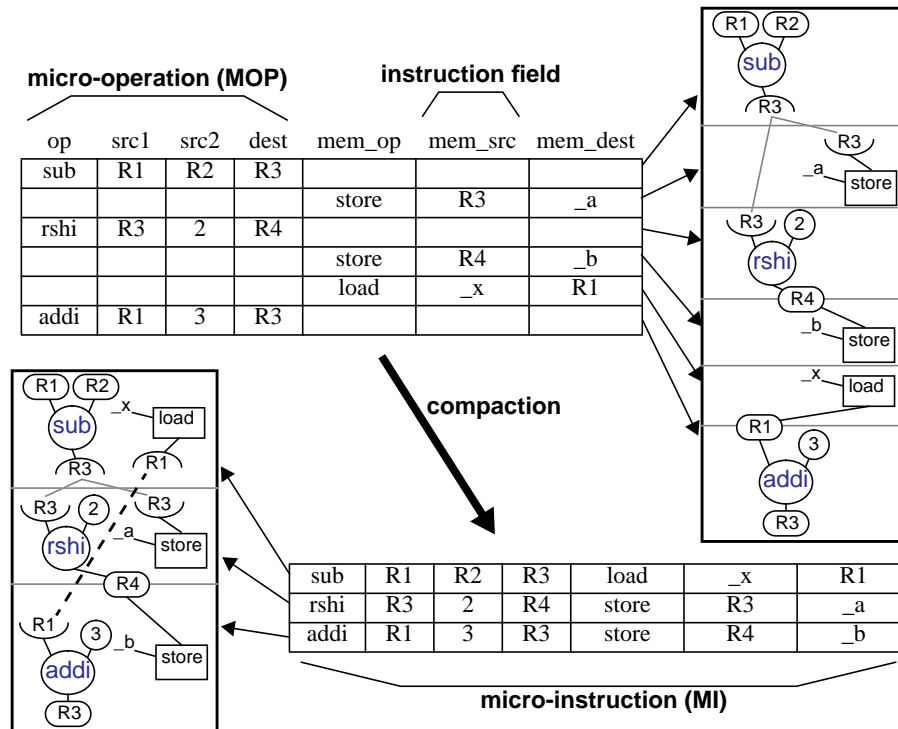


Figure 2.17 Microcode compaction.

principle is depicted in Figure 2.17. A micro-operation (MOP) is a low-level operation which can be executed on the processor. These fill into full micro-instructions (MI) which can eventually be executed on the machine. The idea is to place as many micro-operations as possible into each micro-instruction. In the example, ALU operations can be scheduled in parallel with address calculation operations as long as data dependencies are kept intact. In addition, because there are no data dependencies between the load and stores, the load may take place before the stores, assuming the variables do not overlay in positions in memory. Note that this manipulation does increase the lifetime of register R1; however, if this scheduling is done on the level of micro-instructions, register assignment has already been done and the compaction will be inhibited in cases where the register data-dependence is violated. For example, this compaction would not be possible if register R4 were used for the load instruction.

Lioy and Mezzalama [71] have approached the compaction problem by defining pseudo micro-instructions and sequences of micro-operations with source and destination properties. These sequences can then be packed into and upward past pseudo micro-instructions to form real micro-instructions. This packing takes into account the resource conflicts of the machine, such as register dependencies and

the use of functional units.

For embedded processors, the compaction problem is more intricate because of the possible encoding restrictions of the architecture as explained in Section 1.3.2. Parallelism in a machine architecture does not always imply that the instruction-word supports that parallelism. Again, this stresses the point of phase coupling with the other tasks of compilation like instruction-set selection and register allocation. For microcode compaction, a highly encoded instruction-word also means that instruction bit-fields cannot be simply regarded as an orthogonal resource.

## 2.6 Optimizations for embedded processors

The subject of compiler optimization for embedded processors remains predominantly an open problem. While a large amount of optimization theory exists for general computing architectures [1][9][10][28], the topic is not well understood for embedded real-time architectures. This is primarily because the standard mapping techniques for embedded architectures are just beginning to appear [75]; and secondly, because of the amplitude of constraints that embedded processors impose on standard optimization techniques.

For real-time embedded processors, the *rule of thumb* is the 90/10 rule. The code spends 90% of the time in 10% of the code. This simply emphasizes that time-critical areas of microcode can be localized to certain areas. These *hot spots* when optimized will give the best overall gain in performance. A unique opportunity for embedded processors is the simulation and verification cycle which is done before downloading embedded software (see Figure 1.5). In this case, global optimizations can benefit from profiling statistics. Aspects of profiling are discussed in Section 5.3 and Section 7.5.

Nevertheless, frequently executed parts of code can in general contain any type of code; and therefore, the variety of needed techniques for optimization are boundless. This section attempts to cover only a subset of techniques which have either been shown to be effective for some type of embedded architecture or, based on the characteristics of today's embedded architectures, show promise as being important for the success of future embedded processor compilers. Naturally, we exclude the optimization techniques which are inherent in the basic compiler tasks for embedded architectures, as they were covered in the previous sections.



We define two broad categorizations for optimizations: local and global. The dividing line between the categories is loosely defined, and we use them merely for the purpose of organizing the discussion.

### 2.6.1 Local optimizations

**Standard Optimizations.** A large number and variety of standard optimizations exist and can have various effects on compiler efficiency [1][9]. Some examples are: *constant propagation*, *constant folding*, *common subexpression elimination*, and *strength reduction*. While many of these are alleged to be architecture-independent, a closer look at embedded processor architectures shows that most of them are architecture-dependent. Following are two simple examples that illustrate the difficulties.

Figure 2.18 shows a very simple example of two statements which contain common subexpressions,  $b \gg 2$ . If we consider a case where these statements are far apart in execution sequence, eliminating the common subexpression creates a local storage with a long lifetime. In the most likely case that the local storage is assigned to a register, this inhibits the use of the register for other purposes. In many embedded processors where registers are a scarce resource, the variable may need to be spilled to memory depending on how much local storage is between the two expressions. Another possibility in this example is to keep the variable  $b$  in a register and to recompute the value of  $b \gg 2$ , which could possibly be a better choice if  $b$  is used further in the program.

The important point is that common subexpression elimination increases the *register pressure*, which may or may not improve the final code size or performance. An effective approach must take all the local storage requirements into

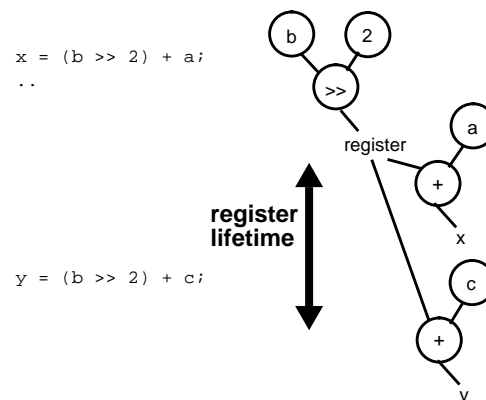


Figure 2.18 Common subexpression elimination increases variable lifetime

account.

A second optimization example is constant propagation as shown in Figure 2.19. Figure 2.19 a) shows a sample C source with many statements containing a common constant expression: the variable x. A natural optimization is to propagate the constant 2 into the succeeding expressions to result in the C source shown in Figure 2.19 (b). However, we shall show that, depending on the architecture, even for this simple case this optimization leads to worse results.

Consider an architecture which supports three parallel operations: a data operation on a DCU (data calculation unit), a memory operation (load / store), and an address operation on an ACU (address calculation unit). In addition, it is common for an instruction-word to contain one constant field, as constants normally require at least 16 bits to be coded as an integer. Figure 2.19 c) shows a direct compilation of the source code a) into this type of architecture. Notice that this example results in an opportunity for a compact, pipelined execution of an ACU operation, load from memory, and DCU operation. For the same architecture, Figure 2.19 d) shows a direct compilation of the source code b). Notice that since the constant field is shared for all constant operations, the dependency on this resource causes

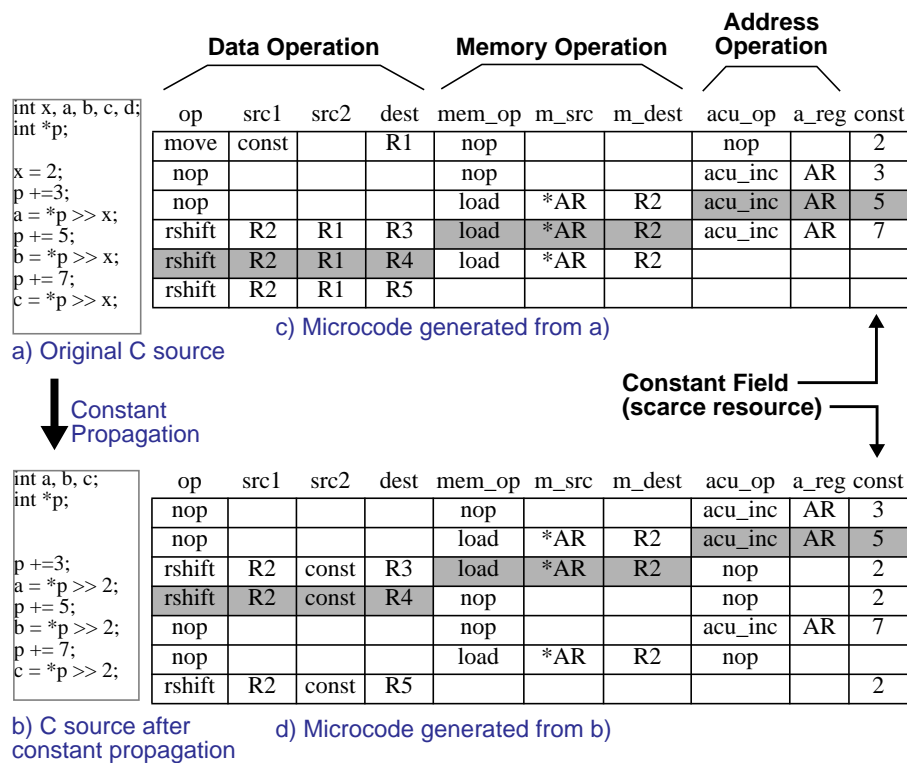


Figure 2.19 Constant propagation can occupy a vital resource: the instruction-word

breaks and stalls in the execution pipeline. Although the microcode of Figure 2.19 c) uses one more register (R1) to hold the constant, it is a much better solution than the microcode of Figure 2.19 d).

Optimizations on constants can have adverse effects on architectures with a scarce constant field resource. This fact has prompted the design of some architectures which provide long (e.g. 16 bits) and short (e.g. 8, 4 bits), as well as custom constant field formats in the instruction-word in an attempt to reduce the dependency on a long constant field, as well as free other bits for instruction coding.

Despite the fact that a multitude of standard optimizations prevail [1][30][9], their effects on microcode for real-time architectures can sometimes be counter-intuitive. The important aspect is that new strategies for the application of these standard optimizations which depend on the family of architectures being targeted are needed. An effective compiler would apply a set of optimizations based on characteristics of the architecture. Furthermore, a compiler should provide control to the programmer on where and when optimizations are applied.

**Peephole Optimization.** An effective methodology to improve code is peephole optimization [1][28], which can be applied either on the level of intermediate code or the final microcode for the target. Figure 2.20 shows a simple example of peephole optimization application on a sequence of code. Some characteristics of these optimizations are that some rules provide opportunities for other rules; for example, in Figure 2.20 Rule 1. for Rule 2. and Rule 2. for Rule 3. Other properties such as the recursive application of rules can drastically improve code sequences.

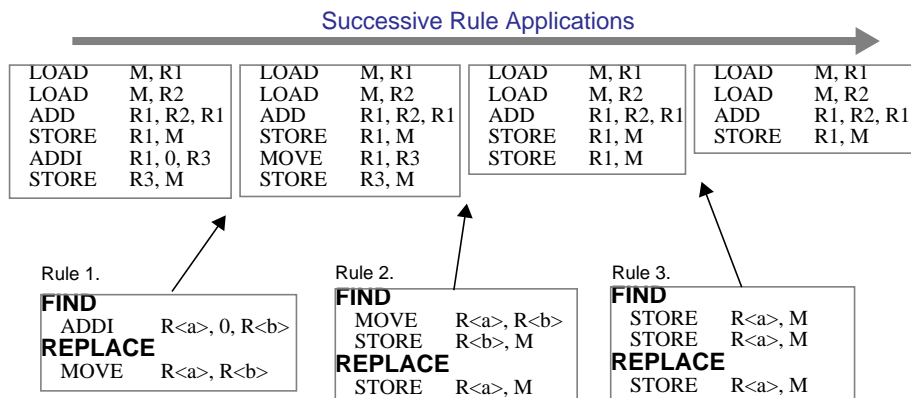


Figure 2.20 Peephole optimization example

In setting up a set of peephole rules, the compiler developer must understand very well the behavior of the front-end that created the code to be optimized. In

this manner, he/she can keep the number of rules to a minimum. Moreover, the developer should guard against rules which could produce incorrect code. For example, in Figure 2.20, Rule 2 is an unsafe rule, since it is possible that the value in  $R\langle b \rangle$  be used in the code at a spot following the match of the rule.

Strength Reduction	Null & Redundant Sequences	Machine Specific Idioms	Control-Flow
<b>FIND</b> Divide a, 2 -> b <b>REPLACE</b> RShift a, 1 -> b  <b>FIND</b> Divide a, 4 -> b <b>REPLACE</b> RShift a, 2 -> b  <b>FIND</b> Addi a, 1 -> a <b>REPLACE</b> INC a	<b>FIND</b> Addi a, 0 -> b <b>REPLACE</b> Move a -> b  <b>FIND</b> Multiply a, 1 -> b <b>REPLACE</b> Move a -> b  <b>FIND</b> Store reg-> M Load M -> reg <b>REPLACE</b> Store reg -> M	<b>FIND</b> Store 0 -> A <b>REPLACE</b> Clear A  <b>FIND</b> Sub sp, 1 -> sp Store sp-> M <b>REPLACE</b> Store --(sp) -> M	<b>FIND</b> Branch L1 ... L1: Branch L2 <b>REPLACE</b> Branch L2 ... L1: Branch L2  <b>FIND</b> Jump_true L1 Jump L2 ...a L1: ...b L2: ...c <b>REPLACE</b> Jump_false L2 ...b L2: ...c

Figure 2.21 Some categories of peephole optimization rules

The success of peephole optimization lies in the fact that the very simple mechanism can be applied to a large number of general optimizations, both data-flow and control-flow. As well, it is possible to do peephole matching on *logical* sequences of code rather than just physical sequences of code (Davidson and Fraser [20]). Logical sequences are a set of instructions that are not physically next to one another, but are connected through data or control-flow dependency. Since peephole optimizations are local, a well-structured matching mechanism can allow the application of hundreds to thousands of optimizations within reasonable run-time. A non-exhaustive list of categories of peephole optimization is shown in Figure 2.21.

The advantages of peephole optimization is the easy understanding and implementation. It can sometimes even improve compiler speed, since there is less code to assemble. The drawbacks of peephole and local optimizations is that they are machine-dependent and incomplete. Depending on the architecture, these optimizations are not enough to guarantee good code.

### 2.6.2 Global optimizations

In this section, we present optimizations which involve a more global analysis of source behavior. In general, transformations in this category manifest complex characteristics. Three subjects are becoming significant topics for embedded software compilation: loop optimizations, inter-procedural optimizations, and memory optimizations.

**Loop Optimizations.** As loops represent the area of code which is the most executed, a large number of optimization theory has been dedicated to this area [9][10]. Nonetheless, the interior of loops can contain any type of code meaning that the analysis is complex.

Streamlining the retrieval of data from and the storage of data to memory elements can produce substantial gains. Transformations from higher level language constructs like array and structure references to efficient machine-specific address generation are an important technology. This subject is treated in Chapter 5 for DSP architectures.

*Loop restructuring* is the term for transformations which change the structure of loops without affecting the computation of a loop. *Loop unrolling* [9] reforms loops by replicating the loop bodies for an unrolling factor,  $u$ , and iterating over the new step  $u$  instead of the original step 1. Unrolling can reduce the looping overhead and increase instruction-level parallelism. Moreover, for loops with few iterations, it can completely eliminate the loop structure.

*Loop pipelining* (or *software pipelining*) is a related restructuring procedure which improves the instruction-level parallelism of code within loops. This is best explained through an example which is shown in Figure 2.22. The upper left corner shows a C source code example of a simple loop which computes the subtraction of the elements of one array by the constant 3 for storage in another array. The arrays are accessed with the use of pointers. The addresses of the pointers are updated at the bottom of the loop. Figure 2.22 a) depicts the loop body (excluding the pointer updates and code for the loop index) in a graphical data-flow form. In each iteration a value from the global array  $a[]$ , whose address is held in the pointer  $ap$ , is loaded into the register  $reg1$ , and subsequently the constant 3 is subtracted from  $reg1$  to produce a value into  $reg2$ . This result is then stored to memory using the address in pointer  $bp$ . For a load-store architecture (RISC), this

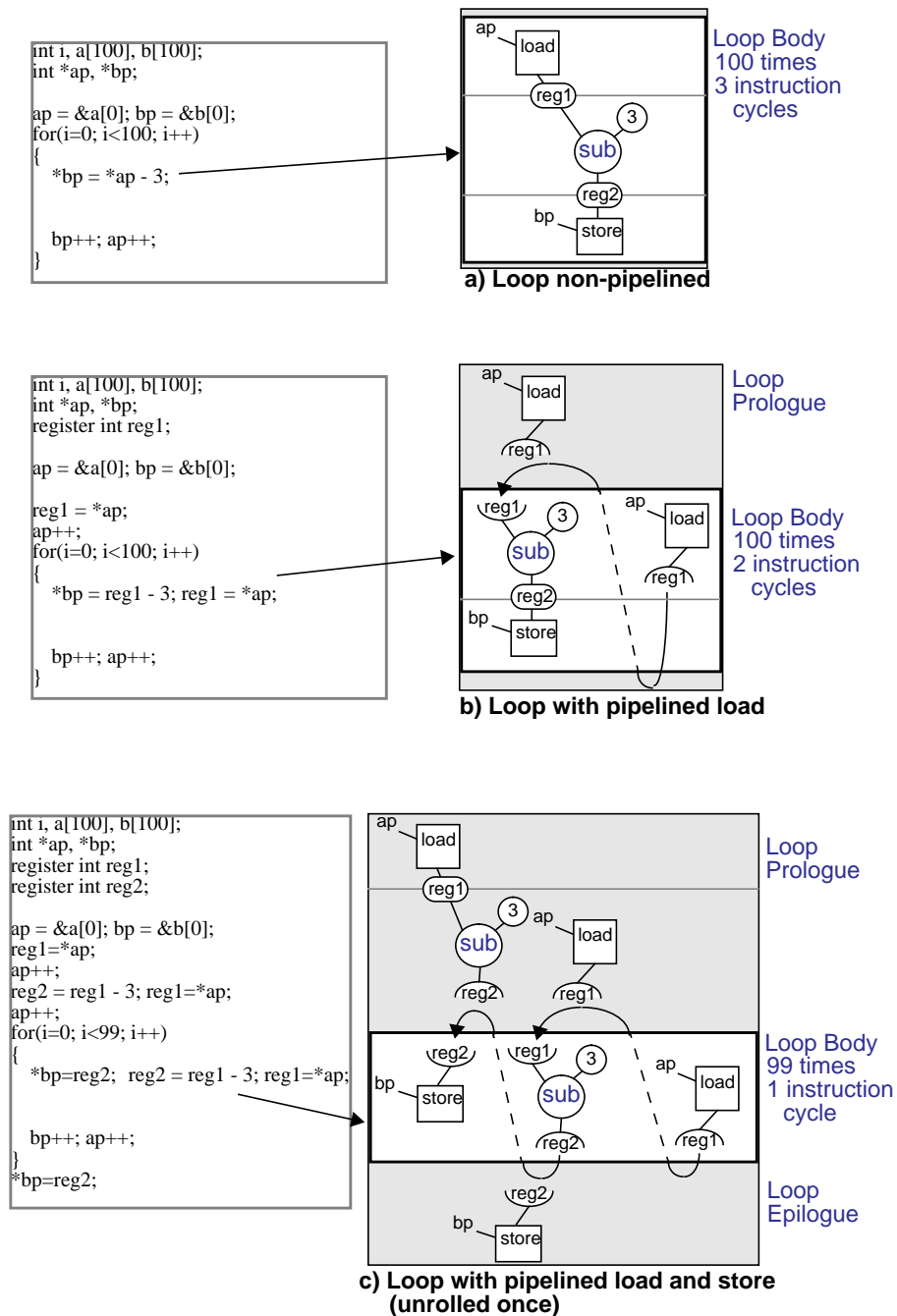


Figure 2.22 Loop pipelining permitting arithmetic, stores, and loads in parallel.

would mean that the body would be cut into at least 3 instruction cycles (dashed lines): load-from-memory, addition, store-to-memory. For simplicity, we define each operation as taking 1 instruction cycle.

A partial pipeline is shown in Figure 2.22 b) where the load for the value pointed to by `ap` is executed once before the loop and in parallel with the subtraction operation. Also shown is an explicit representation in C code where the tem-

porary values are to be placed in the `reg1` variable which is declared to be of the `register` storage class. The pipelining has reduced the number of instruction cycles which are executed in the loop body. Although the microcode length has increased a little, the transformation has greatly improved the performance by introducing parallelism.

Unrolling the loop one time and further pipelining allows the store operation of `*bp` to be done in parallel with the subtract operation as shown in Figure 2.22 c). Before the loop body, the load operation of `*ap` is done twice and the subtraction is done once. After the loop, the store operation of `*bp` is done once. This transformation allows three operations to execute in parallel in the loop body. Again, the code size increases while greatly improving the performance.

This example has shown one method of pipelining a loop for improving performance in load-store architectures. The effect of the transformation depends heavily on the type of processor architecture and the application being compiled. For example, for DSPs (Digital Signal Processors), a large number of commercial architectures benefit from software which has been loop pipelined [5][78][91].

On the compiler side, the loop pipelining optimization requires a deep analysis and is highly architecture dependent. The analysis touches on the source level control-flow information (the loop structure) and data-flow information (the data dependencies and operations). It involves all the key compiler phases: instruction selection, register allocation, and scheduling. Furthermore, compaction of the instructions to meet the architecture constraints must be considered on the microcode level. It is not surprising that a retargetable method for loop pipelining has not yet appeared!

Previous work on the software pipelining subject includes the scheduling approach by Lam [55] for VLIW machines. The procedure includes first unrolling the loop body, then rescheduling the remaining instructions. The concept is described in [9] using the S-DLX architecture, a super-scalar version of the well-known DLX architecture introduced by Hennessey and Patterson [43]. Loop folding [37] and pipelining concepts [21][47] are approaches used for pipelining DSP hardware architectures and are equally applicable to software.

Another simpler type of loop optimization is *loop-invariant code motion* [9][28]. This analysis determines whether a computation within a loop can be exe-

cuted outside of a loop. *Code hoisting* [9][36] is the general term for moving code to an earlier execution point. *Loop unswitching* [9] moves conditional tests outside of a loop by repeating the loop structure for each condition. Other loop reordering methods [9] such as: *loop interchange*, *loop skewing*, *loop reversal*, *loop distribution*, etc. can be used to improve the characteristics of a loop so that other optimizations like loop-invariant code motion can have a better effect. Each of these are behavior-preserving transformations which allow other manipulations to be done.

To re-emphasize, many of these optimizations are strongly dependent on the types of architecture and strategies for applying these optimizations is the challenge of compiler construction for embedded processors. In the meantime, it is possible to transform source-level code by hand with a good knowledge of the architecture. Lowering the abstraction level of source code is discussed in Section 4.2.

**Interprocedural Optimization.** Modern high-level programming practices encourage modularity which suggests that small, well-bounded subprograms are better structured than large main programs. However, the mechanisms needed to support subprograms can often lead to inefficiencies. Two possibilities exist for the optimization of subprograms [28]:

1. In-line expansion of subprogram calls.
2. Optimization of called subroutines.

In-line procedures are subprograms whose code have been expanded to replace the call. Although similar to pre-processor macro expansions, they differ somewhat because of variable scoping rules. Languages such as C++ allow a programmer to suggest which subprograms are to be expanded in-line. Although ANSI C is somewhat more restrictive, it is possible to provide small extensions (`#pragma`) which serve the same purpose.

In-line expansion is predominantly a time vs. space trade-off, where the overhead of call-to and return-from subroutines are no longer needed. However, if called several times, the program code size can expand significantly. On the other hand, it is common to have subroutines which are called only one time which offers both a time and space improvement. Contrary to intuition, it is also possible to expand restricted versions of recursive subroutines. For example, a subroutine which computes the factorial of a constant could be expanded since the call depth



is known at compile time.

If left to a compiler to choose which subroutines should be expanded in-line, a linking phase such as that used in C makes the procedure awkward. However, if all the functions are explicitly available, a compiler can make use of a subprogram call graph such as the example shown in Figure 2.23 to make the decision on which subroutines to expand. This graph simply denotes which subprograms call which at the execution of the program. Leaf (innermost) subroutines are the most likely candidates for expansion. Other useful measures for choosing candidates are calls from within loops, or better yet, execution frequencies generated from a profiler.

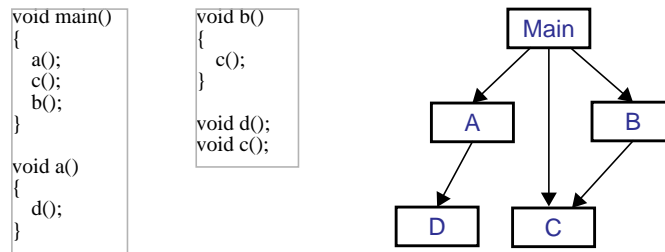


Figure 2.23 An example call graph.

When compiling the code within an in-line subroutine, the scoping information of variables is particularly useful. This marks the difference between in-line subroutines and preprocessor macros. While a compiler would need to determine the lifetime of variables into and out of macros, a well-written subroutine guarantees entry by parameters and exit by return values (excluding global variables).

Optimization of called subroutines is a very practical method in block-structured languages like Ada and Pascal. However, in languages like C, separable compilation and linking pose some problems. This is explored further in Section 4.1.3. When optimization is possible, in for example a restricted version of C, code saving techniques can be used. Most of the overhead in subroutine calls is in the *activation record* [1] and the local variables on the run-time stack. The activation record is a portion of code which is used to keep values such as the machine status (registers which are active), passed parameters, and return values. For subroutines with few parameters, it is possible to pass parameters in registers rather than on a run-time stack, should the architecture have enough registers. The same is true for return values; however, optimizing the assignment of registers can be a difficulty (discussed in Section 4.1.3). If a subroutine is determined to be non-recursive (by building a call-graph), a compiler can also make the trade-off of putting local vari-

ables in static memory rather than on the stack.

**Memory Optimizations.** Program memory of an embedded processor can be a particularly expensive part of the architecture, especially for single chip solutions. Efforts such as the narrowing of instruction words through encoding implies continual difficulties on compiler methods. An illustration of this is the limitation of absolute program memory addresses. Because of the short instruction words, an instruction-set which uses exclusively absolute memory addresses is limited in program size. Embedded processor designers have overcome this limitation in a number of ways. One approach is to provide near and far program calls and branches. A program memory can be organized in a set of *pages* as shown in the example of Figure 2.24.

While a paged program memory is a good solution for the hardware, it poses a number of challenges to the compiler developer. For code with good performance, subroutines need to be allocated in memory in a fashion which reduces changing pages. Furthermore, long subroutines must be broken into smaller pieces so that each block fits into a page. Solutions to the problem are straight forward; however, an optimal solution is non-trivial. The example in Figure 2.24 shows a solution whereby subroutine page addresses are stored and managed by the compiler in a branch table. Each time one of these subroutines is called, the return page address is kept on the run-time stack.

The equivalent to program pages can also occur in data-memory, when a large amount of data memory is needed. For example, data *windows* can be used to organize the memory. Similar types of considerations must be taken in the compiler to

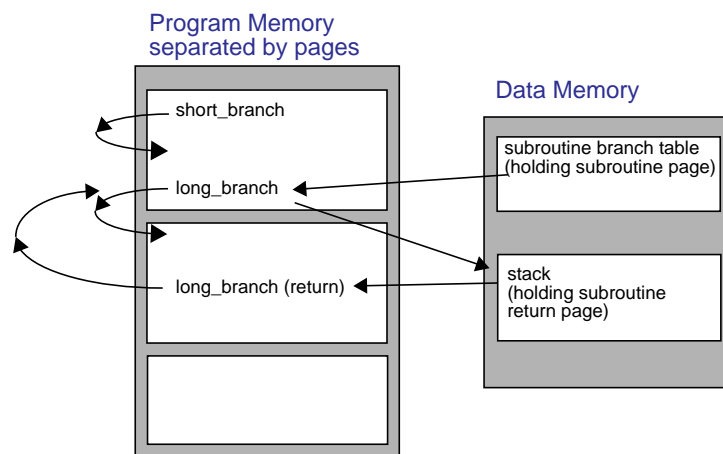


Figure 2.24 Paged program memory and an example subroutine management.

minimize the time needed for the global storage and retrieval of data.

Another hardware solution to improve memory retrieval is the presence of *caches*. A cache is a temporary buffer which acts as an intermediary between program or data memory, improving the locality of the data. These are common to general-purpose computing architectures and appear on more sophisticated embedded processors. Approaches to improve the cache hit/miss ratio are beginning to appear for both program caches [101] and data caches [82]. Others have approached program memory reduction through code compression techniques [62]. The idea is to keep a program *dictionary* of frequently used sequences of code.

Allocation to multiple memories is a topic which arises for some DSP architectures, such as the Motorola 56000 series and the SGS-Thomson D950 (see Section 5.1). For these architectures, the parallelism is improved by allowing independent retrieval and storage operations on each memory. The implication for compilers is the need for memory allocation strategies which make best use of these resources based on the data-flow in the source program. This problem has been addressed in approaches which improve upon previously generated or hand-written assembly code by balancing the data in two memories [98]. However, techniques which are incorporated into the analysis phase of compilers are also needed. Still, practical considerations for memory allocation also need to be considered. These are discussed in Section 4.1.

## 2.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a wide overview of modern compiler technology for embedded processors. It begins with a look at traditional software compilation and its relevance to the constraints of embedded processor architectures. A principal set of issues were identified as shortcomings with this approach including weaknesses in retargetability, ability to handle register constraints, capability over architecture specialization, and inherent compiler control for instruction-level parallelism and optimization.

Next, the most popular compiler with freely available sources was discussed: the GNU gcc compiler. As the compiler was designed for general purpose RISC architectures, some weaknesses appear for embedded processors including a dis-

persion of information among various functions and macro definitions. The weakness of the compiler for DSP architectures was further supported by the DSPStone and Berkeley Design Technology benchmarking activities of commercial compilers. The performance of the commercial compilers based on gcc is described as less than acceptable.

Next, the concept of compiler retargetability was discussed as a means of the rapid set-up of a target compiler as well as an agency for architecture exploration. The promising avenue of architecture specification models and languages was examined. Related work on specification languages includes: Mimola, a processor description language on the structural level, and nML, a behavioral description language on the instruction-level. Architectural models include the ISG of the Chess compiler, and the mixed structural-behavioral model of the CodeSyn compiler.

Following, the three fundamental tasks of the compilation process were investigated: instruction matching/selection; register allocation/assignment; and scheduling/compaction. Instruction matching/selection is predominantly done today by pattern matching and constructive methods. Register allocation/assignment is recognized as a critical compiler task and can be guided by classification schemes. Data-routing approaches are a further assignment method for architectures with heavily constrained register resources and distributed register structures. Scheduling and compaction approaches were then presented, illustrating the strong need for an effective approach to exploit data movement and parallelism of a machine.

Finally a number of optimization techniques were described. The need for application strategies of standard optimizations was illustrated through discrepant events in examples for very simple embedded processors. Peephole optimizations, loop optimizations, interprocedural optimizations and memory optimizations were discussed, all with regard to the challenges for today's embedded architectures.



## Chapter 3: Two Emerging Approaches: Model-based and Rule-driven

This chapter describes the function of two practical compilers for embedded processors developed and used by the author and colleagues in industrial contexts. While the two operate on very different principles, they each have their strengths with regard to the goals of retargetability and ability to generate efficient code. Naturally, each approach also has a certain number of weaknesses. However, each of the two tools has made particular contributions which have added to the understanding of the compilation problem for embedded processor targets. Furthermore, each approach has shown to have its place as an effective approach to compilation for embedded processors.

### 3.1 Overview of the concepts

Two recent approaches to compilation for embedded processors are shown in Figure 3.1. The first method, Figure 3.1a, uses a central processor model upon which all the phases of compilation are based. The source code is translated into an inter-

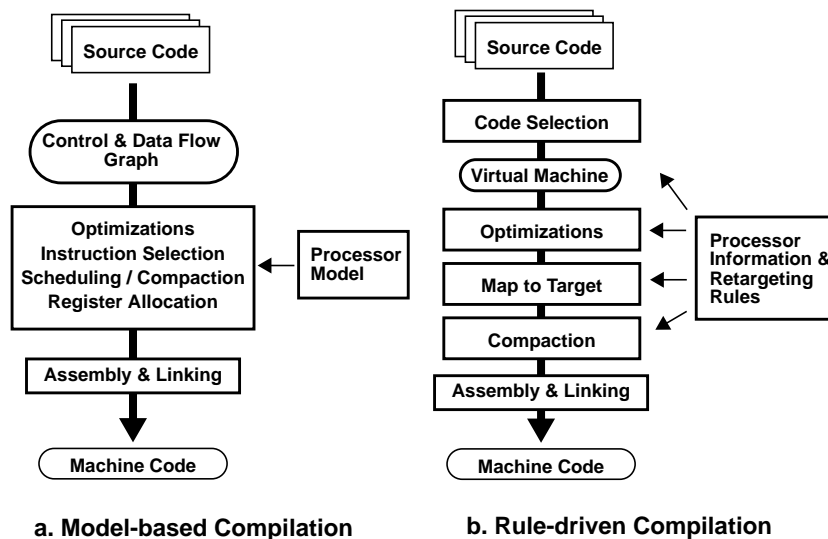


Figure 3.1 Emerging compilation techniques

mediate form, an explicit representation of the behavior of the source in a set of CDFGs (Control-Data Flow Graphs). The successive phases of compilation execute transformations upon this form to arrive at the final microcode. These transformations are done in a manner which satisfies the properties of the central architecture model.

The second method, Figure 3.1b, resembles quite closely the traditional approach to compilation as described in Section 2.1. The principal difference is the presence of processor information and retargeting rules. The rules provided by a developer allow the compiler phases to be reconfigured according to the architecture style. An open-programming concept provides an environment for the developer to build a target compiler.

In both approaches, information of the processor architecture drives the succession of the compilation steps. This feature is essential for embedded processors, where the architecture characteristics are unlike standard microprocessors. For example, processors for real-time reactive systems often contain a limited number of registers which are specialized for certain functions, as well as encoded instruction words, and special functions to communicate with the rest of the system. The compiler task of mapping onto these functions requires special attention.

### **3.2 The model-based CodeSyn compiler**

The CodeSyn compiler was built mainly in response to a survey of the needs of designers of DSP systems for telecommunications. The details of the survey can be found in [83]. The survey, which was conducted among a number of design groups at Bell-Northern Research / Northern Telecom (Nortel), indicated several groups using both commercial DSP processors as well as application-specific instruction-set processors (ASIPs). Among other needs, the foremost was the requirement for compilers for both the commercial and in-house processors.

With respect to traditional compilation, the strengths of the CodeSyn system are in three main areas:

- A flexible instruction-set specification model which supports quick retargeting to new processors.
- An efficient pattern matching and selection approach which supports complex instruction recognition and utilization.

- Allocation of special purpose registers taking into account overlapping roles.

### 3.2.1 Overview of the approach

The overall flow of the process is depicted in Figure 3.2.

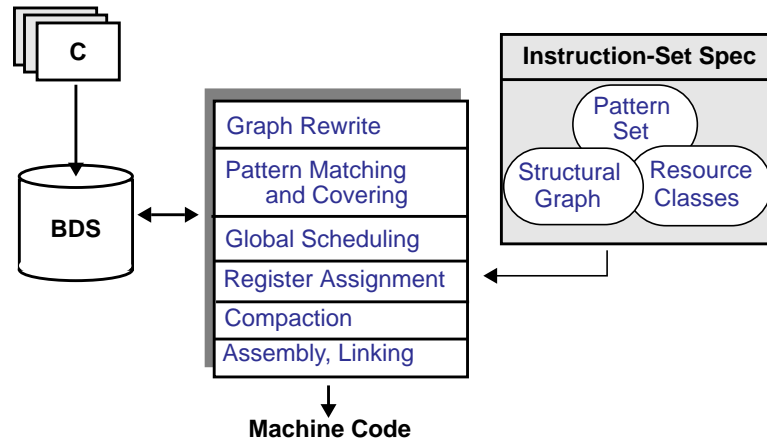


Figure 3.2 The CodeSyn compilation process

The compiler contains a set of modules including:

- 1. A source-level C parser.** The C sources are converted into a hierarchy of Control-Data Flow Graphs (CDFGs) in an internal format called BDS (BNR Data-Structure).
- 2. A graph-rewrite module.** This phase performs local translation of operations in the CDFG to operations found in the target architecture.
- 3. An instruction-set pattern matcher and selector.** Pattern matching is formulated as the determination of all possible sets of instructions which can perform the function of the subject CDFG. The selection algorithm then chooses the best implementation from this set.
- 4. A scheduling module.** This phase performs a coarse ordering of the patterns found in the matching and selection phase.
- 5. A register allocation and assignment module.** Register classes are used in allocation, then local variables of the CDFG are assigned to specific physical registers of the architecture.
- 6. A back-end containing a compactor, assembler and linker.** Particular contributions have been made in the instruction-set matching/selection and the register



allocation/assignment phases. These phases are detailed in Section 3.2.3 and Section 3.2.4 respectively.

### 3.2.2 Instruction-set specification

The CodeSyn instruction-set specification consists of a mixed behavioral and structural-level model composed of three main parts:

1. A pattern set of microinstructions.
2. A structural connectivity graph.
3. A classification of the resources in the structural graph.

A pattern is a behavioral level representation of an instruction, comparable to the description of an instruction in an assembly programmers manual. Microinstructions are described as small pieces of control-data flow graphs, and can be categorized in three classes: pure data-flow (containing arithmetic, logical, relational operations, and address calculation); pure control-flow (containing hardware loops, unconditional jumps and branches); and mixed data/control-flow: (containing conditional jumps and branches). Assembly and binary instruction formats are associated with each pattern. Example patterns are shown in Figure 3.3.

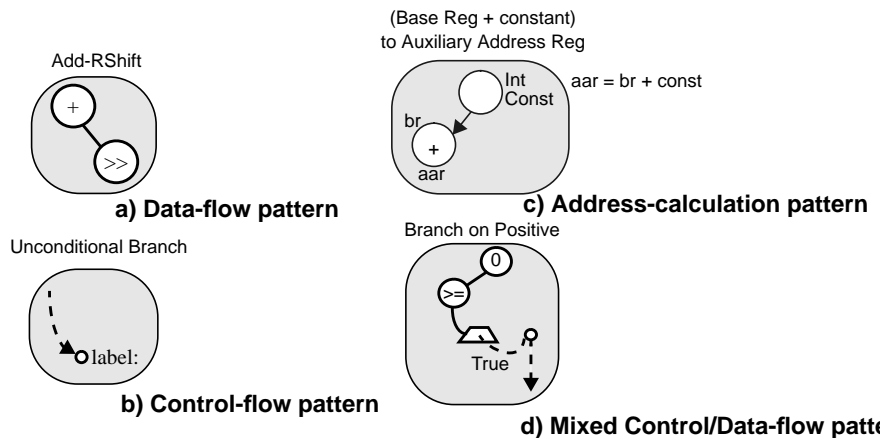


Figure 3.3 Example instruction-set patterns

An example of the structural graph and resource classification is shown in Figure 3.4. This structural graph is used by the compiler to determine the possible data movement through the processor. A register classification is used to categorize the registers in the architecture, which are typically categorized on two levels: a broad classification of general function and a small classification of specific function. Any number of overlapping registre classes are supported.



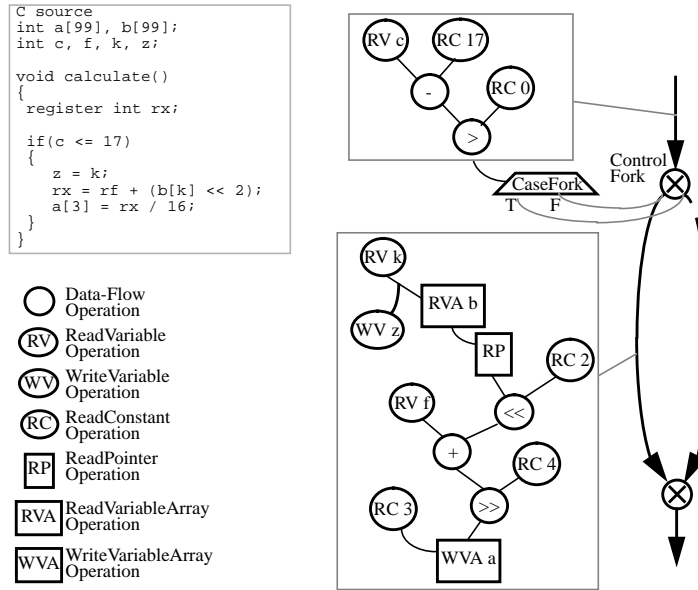


Figure 3.6 Example: source C code and CDFG

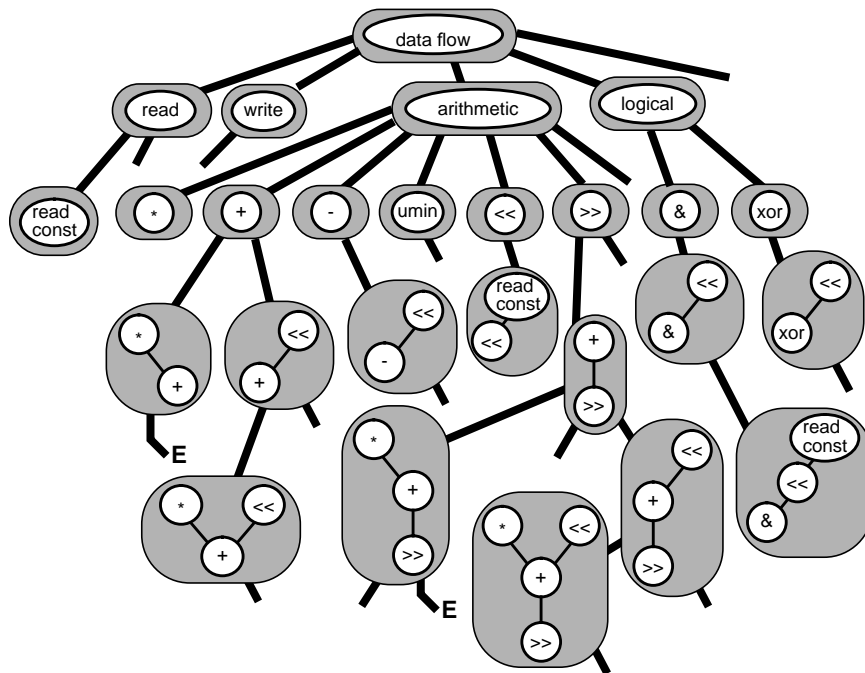


Figure 3.7 Root of section of the data-flow pattern pruning tree

control-data flow graph (CDFG) is an explicit behavioral representation of the source C program containing a separable data-flow graph and control-flow graph. The left side of the CDFG (the data-flow graph) contains purely data-flow operations. Each of these data-flow operations are bound to edges in the control-flow graph (the right side of the CDFG), indicating to which program flow the operations belong. At some points in the CDFG, data-flow operations pass information

to the control-flow graph (CaseFork), indicating a control-flow decision point.

Notice that two graph rewrites have been done to the CDFG. The `if` condition has been rewritten to a subtract followed by a compare to zero, which allows matching to a branch on greater-than instruction; and, the `divide by 16` has been rewritten to a right shift by four. These are rule-based graph rewrites based on the specific capabilities of the architecture. Also, `register rx` is recognized as a local, temporary value and replaced by pure data-flow in the CDFG.

**Data-Flow Patterns.** Pattern matching is the task of determining isomorphic relationships between instruction-level CDFGs and the source CDFG. Instead of trying a match at every point in the CDFG with every pattern in the instruction-set, the number of attempted matches are kept to a minimum by a novel and efficient organization scheme, introduced in [65]. The pattern set is pre-sorted in a *prune tree*. This is a tree organized such that if a pattern does not form a match, then it is possible to prune the branch of the tree at this point for any further matches. It is guaranteed that no matches are possible beyond the prune point. Figure 3.7 shows the root portion of a data-flow prune tree for an example architecture. We have found in practice that it is possible to have enough organization of the prune tree so that the matching algorithm complexity approaches linearity with respect to the number of nodes in the subject graph.

At each node of the subject data-flow graph, the root of the prune tree is checked to see if it matches. If the root matches (it is a data-flow node), then the children of the root of the prune tree are checked. For each pattern that matches, the children are recursively checked for matches. For each pattern that does not match, the prune tree is pruned at this point for all the branches below this point. No further matches are possible below the prune point. At some points in the tree, it is also possible to slightly extend the tree into a dag such that the same characteristics of the pruning mechanism are retained. In Figure 3.7, the branches marked E may be reconverged into the respective pattern directly below, turning the tree into a dag. This incrementally improves the efficiency of the matching mechanism, since it increases the number of places where the branches may be pruned.

The approach is an efficient method to determine all the possible pattern implementations at all the points in the subject graph to allow an exploration of possible pattern selections. For example, Figure 3.8 a) shows a subject graph which has

been matched to the patterns in Figure 3.7. Combinations of these patterns represent the possible implementations of the subject graph in a *covering* (i.e. instruction selection). Figure 3.8 b) and c) shown two possible coverings which can implement the subject graph. At first glance, Figure 3.8 b) would produce the better code as it is implemented in only two instructions; however, for the constant propagation problem of the type explained in Section 2.6.1 and illustrated in Figure 2.19, the covering of Figure 3.8 c) may be better depending on the context.

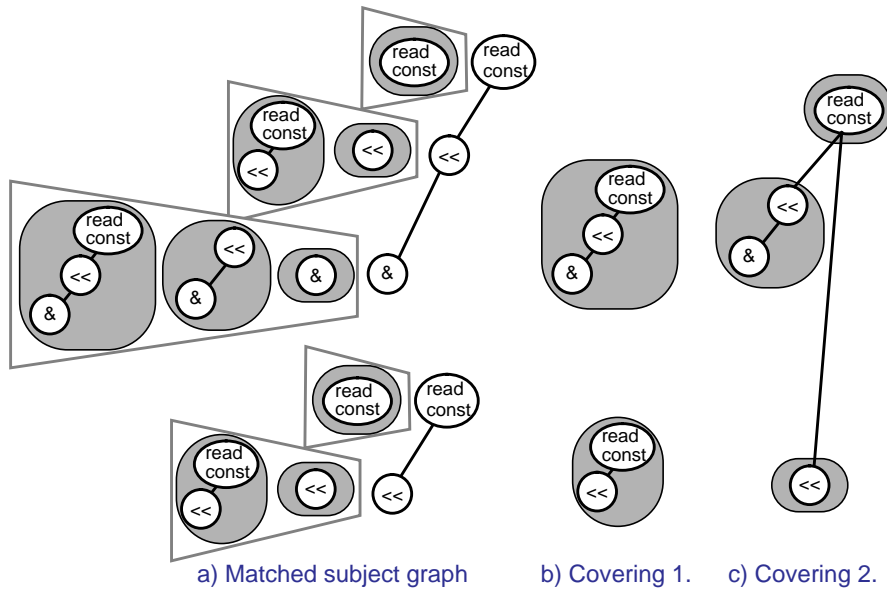


Figure 3.8 Subject CDFG with two possible coverings.

The important feature of the approach is that it provides pattern matches in a fashion that allows the matches to be propagated to other phases of the compiler to find the best coverings. The first covering algorithm developed in CodeSyn is dynamic programming as described in Section 2.3.1; however, the pattern matches are available for future improved algorithms in the phases of register allocation and scheduling.

**Control-Flow Patterns.** Figure 3.9 depicts an example control-flow pattern prune tree. The prune tree contains both patterns which are purely control-flow and others which have mixed control and data-flow. Although the prune tree is much shallower than its data-flow counterpart, the matching principles remain the same. Typically, the control-flow subject graph contains much fewer nodes and edges than the data-flow graph; therefore, matching time is manageable.

Notice that the conditional branch patterns shown here only include those which branch on true. It is possible to include the ones that branch on false,

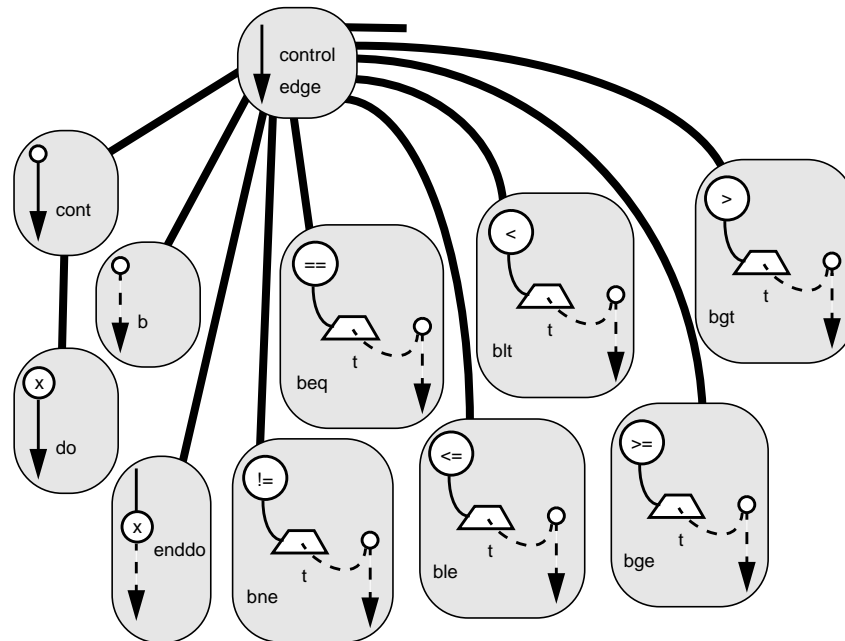


Figure 3.9 Control-flow pattern prune tree.

depending on the behavior of the C to CDFG front-end.

The matching algorithm for the control-flow patterns is analogous to the data-flow matching algorithm. In this case, matching begins by traversing all the edges of the control-flow graph, in contrast to the nodes in the data-flow graph. The matching algorithm determines isomorphic relationships of the control-flow graph with each control-flow pattern. If the pattern contains a mix of control-flow and data-flow, the algorithm directly calls functions used in the data-flow matching algorithm.

### 3.2.4 Register allocation and assignment

Benefiting from the annotation of register classes on the input and output terminals of patterns, the allocation of registers is done by calculating overlaps in the classes. Following the data-flow between nodes, candidate register sets are calculated from the intersection in each annotated register class.

Shown in Figure 3.10 is a matched and covered CDFG in preparation for register allocation. Instructions have been identified which perform the implementation of the operations in the data-flow graph. In addition, WriteRegister and ReadRegister operations have been explicitly placed between the operations, with the annotation of register classes found on the input and output terminals of the patterns. Following, candidate register sets are calculated from the intersection of register

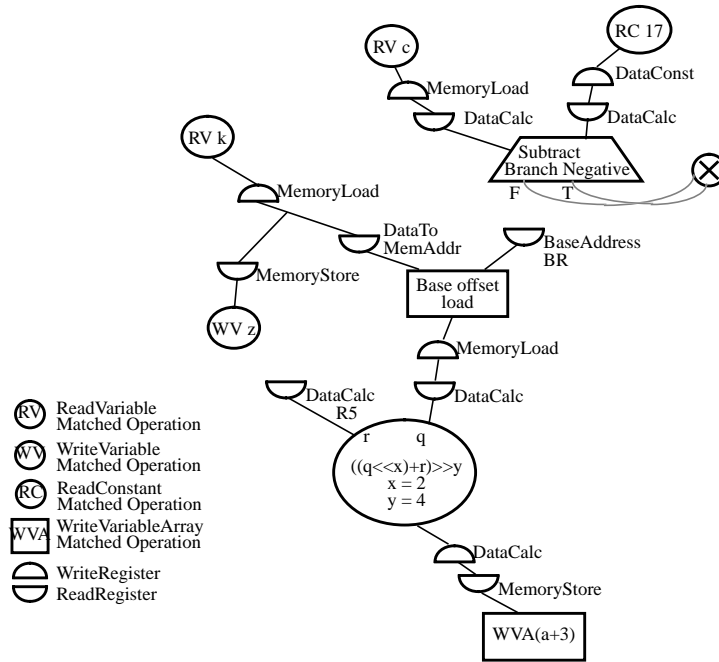


Figure 3.10 Matched and covered CDFG - preparation for register allocation.

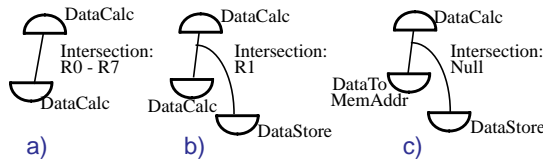


Figure 3.11 Register allocation - calculation of candidate register sets

classes between WriteRegister operations and ReadRegister operations as shown in Figure 3.11.

The task of register assignment is to determine specific physical registers as the input and output operands of the instructions. Intersecting register classes containing no candidate registers (Figure 3.11 c) can only be resolved by moves to available registers and spills to memory.

The approach to register assignment is greedy in nature and geared toward giving priority to registers dedicated to specific tasks. The general procedure is as follows and the details are described in [66]:

1. Assignment begins at intersection points which have register classes containing only one member register.
2. Assignment for the intersection points in Step 1. are ordered based upon lifetime and number of reads. Assignment begins with the shortest lifetime and fewest number of reads.

3. Steps 1 and 2 can lead to register assignment conflicts which are handled by greedily inserting register moves.
4. The remaining candidate intersections are assigned by a left-edge algorithm (see Section 2.4.2) enhanced for overlapping register classes. The procedure begins with the most constrained class (fewest members) and continues to the least constrained class (most members).

At points where there are no available registers, spills to memory are inserted. This is nontrivial since the DataStore class is needed and it may be a dedicated register (R1) in some architectures (see Figure 3.4). This problem has been resolved by placing priority assignment orders on the registers in each class. Registers which are members of the DataStore class are the last on the priority list to be assigned.

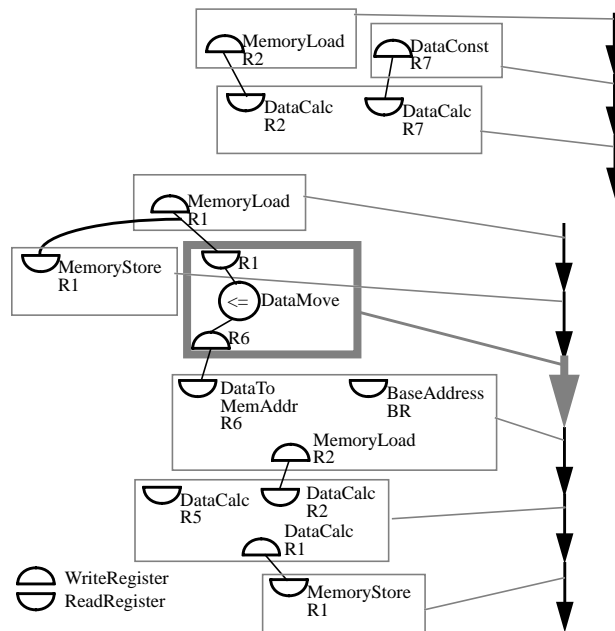


Figure 3.12 Scheduled CDFG with registers assigned

Figure 3.12 shows the same example as Figure 3.10 focusing on the ReadRegister and WriteRegister operations. The operations in the CDFG has been coarsely scheduled using list methods. As well, register assignment has been completed. Notice that a conflict move has been inserted to resolve the two ReadRegisters which have been assigned to special purpose registers (R1 and R6), and are written by a common WriteRegister. Apart from compaction, at this point the CDFG is completely mapped to the instruction-set of the architecture. Assembly code format instructions which have been associated with the patterns are emitted along with the assigned registers. This results in sequential assembly code. Compaction



is done in a separate phase as is explained in Section 3.3.5.

### ***3.2.5 Assessment of the approach***

A model-based approach to retargetable compilation has a number of advantages. The instruction-set model provides a central core whereby all the phases of compilation can rely on architecture information. This naturally augments the retargetability of each algorithm. In particular, the CodeSyn compiler has shown that it is possible to use enhanced algorithms which can perform efficient pattern matching and selection in addition to register allocation and assignment for special-purpose registers. An intermediate representation which is rich with control and data-flow information is useful for optimizing the mapping onto the instruction-set.

On the other hand, a full control and data-flow representation can also be quite a heavy set of information. It contributes to the needs of maintenance and could also be a barrier to compilation speed, should the source programs become lengthy.

An efficient mapping to a target architecture is possible with a model-based approach; however, it necessitates that the architecture lie within the boundaries of that model. Any architecture peculiarities of a new target which are not anticipated must be handled by improving the retargeting algorithms.

## **3.3 The rule-driven FlexCC compiler**

In the case of providing a compiler service, the desire may be to provide compilers for the widest possible variety of processors. In the absence of an automatically retargetable compiler system which is applicable to any architecture, a flexible *compiler development environment* has benefits. One such approach is the rule-driven approach, currently in use at SGS-Thomson Microelectronics for in-house embedded processors. The phases of this compiler have been restructured in such a manner as to make it easier to reprogram the compiler for new targets. Building upon traditional compiler techniques, this programming environment for compiler development can improve the time of the retargeting process, as well as provide a manner to reuse compiler strategies and experience.

### ***3.3.1 Overview of the approach***

This approach to compilation was first presented by Gurd in [38]. It is based on step-wise progressive refinement whereby each phase of compilation is formed

upon an open programming concept. This programming environment allows a compiler development team to build rapid prototypes using a well-defined train of tools. The compilation process is roughly based upon the traditional view of a compiler as explained in Section 2.1 and shown in Figure 3.13.

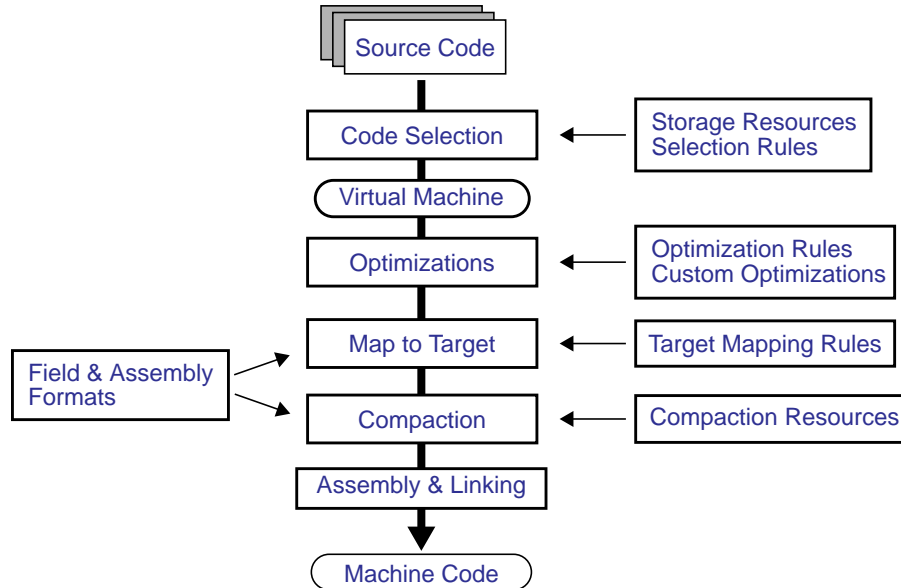


Figure 3.13 Overall flow of rule-driven compilation

A compilation is divided into four main phases, which are shown by example in Figure 3.14 and summarized as follows:

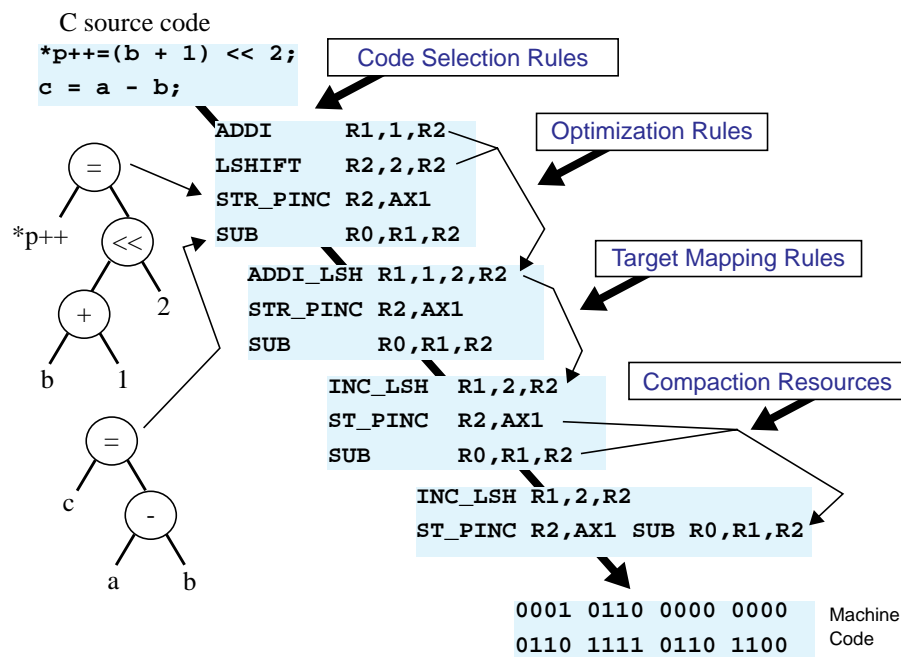


Figure 3.14 Refinement steps in a rule-driven compilation.

**1. Virtual code selection.** The developer defines a virtual machine which resembles in functionality the instruction-set of the real machine, but is sequential in operation. Those processors with parallel execution streams would be simplified to one stream. The virtual machine description contains two main parts:

1. a description of resources including register sets and addressing modes.
2. a set of code selection rules.

**2. Optimizations.** Instructions for the virtual machine may be passed to a series of optimization routines, such as a peephole optimizer, whose principles are explained in Section 2.6.1. Rules for the peephole optimizer are provided in a simple language which contain keywords and wildcards.

At this point in the compilation, it is also straightforward to add custom optimization sequences, since the input is very well defined. This definition was done in the earlier design of the virtual machine. For example, a data-routing optimizer may be inserted to determine the best movement of data through the machine, given the structural connectivity of the hardware.

**3. Mapping to the target machine.** The optimized sequence of virtual instructions are transformed into operations for the real machine. Each transformation again follows a rule provided by the developer. Each rule indicates a source piece of code and a target implementation in the form of micro-operations representing bit fields of the instruction-set.

**4. Code compaction.** Micro-operations are compacted into real instructions. The compaction procedure executes based on constraints of both the bit-field formats and read/write/occupy resources which are indicated by the developer. The compactor attempts to push the maximum number of micro-operations to the earliest possible positions.

The straightforward tasks of assembly and linking immediately follow compaction.

**The open programming concept.** The rule-driven compilation approach is built upon the concept of an open programming environment. All the rules are defined in well-structured programming languages. At each point in the compilation, primitives are provided which allow the identification of cases which may appear in the source. These cases can then be manipulated by a set of control-flow functions in



disposal a programming language which contains a set of high-level primitives corresponding to information which is generated as syntax trees of the source program. For each operation which may occur in a syntax tree, the developer provides a rule for the emission of code for the virtual machine. This rule will be triggered upon matches to the source code and executed at compile time. An example is shown in Figure 3.15. Syntax trees are constructed from an analysis of the source program, and each tree triggers a rule depending upon the operations of the nodes. The developer can then provide case functions on what code to emit depending on the properties of the tree. The programming language contains a large number of features such as the ability to call rules from other rules and recursively call rules.

This approach allows the developer to provide simple rules for the majority of cases and more complex mappings for special features of the architecture. For example, the developer may restrict the use of certain registers whose function are constrained by the architecture. This is important to support the special-purpose registers found in embedded processors.

Register assignment within register sets is performed after code selection using a coloring approach. The approach uses standard techniques as described in Section 2.4.2, in a manner which satisfies the constraints imposed by the code selection rules.

### ***3.3.3 Target machine mapping***

This step performs a refinement of the sequential operations for the virtual machine into instructions for the real machine. In many cases, this can be a simple one-to-one mapping; however, a C-like language offers the capability to manipulate this mapping based on values generated by the previous steps. The most common values used for manipulation are the parameters of the assembly code. For example, for the assembly instruction, `INC R1`, manipulations may be made depending on the parameter `R1`. An example which illustrates some of the features is shown in Figure 3.16. The example shows a rule driven from an arithmetic right shift operation. Several features such as function calls, control statements, and local variables provide a rich palette whereby the programmer can manipulate the generation of micro-operations. The example of Figure 3.16 b) shows a mapping which fires the contents of the `if(in_reg != out_reg)` statement in the mapping rule, while the example Figure 3.16 c) does not activate the statement.

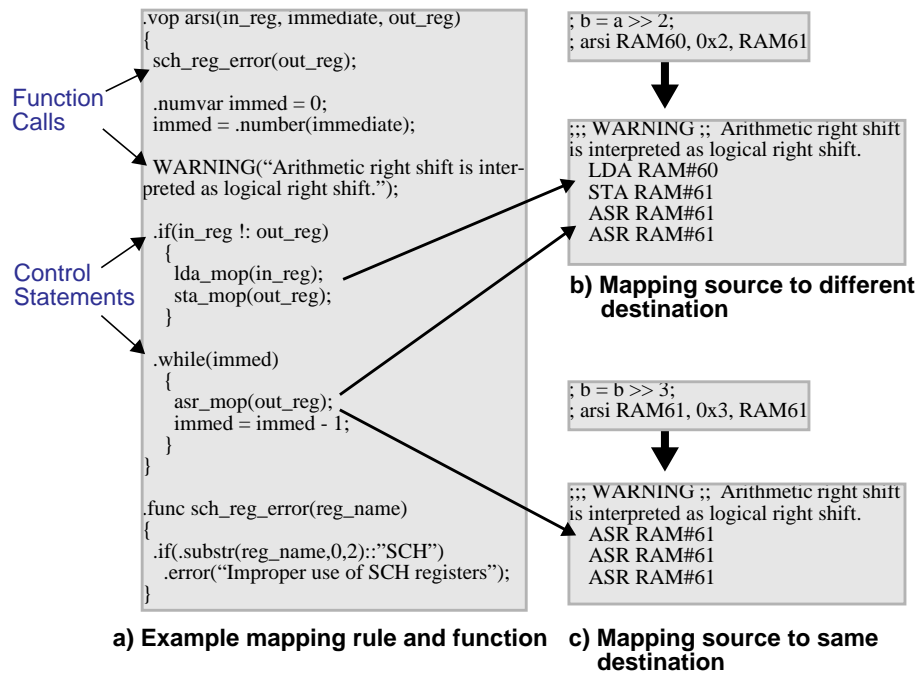


Figure 3.16 Target mapping example

The example also shows the possibility of a compile-time expansion of constant values to multiple instructions (`while` loop).

### 3.3.4 Microcode compaction

The compaction phase of the rule-driven compiler is based upon well-known methods as described in Section 2.5. Some features that make it a practical approach is the ability to retarget the process to varying styles of architectures. The compactor attempts to pack micro-operations as tightly as possible within the given constraints. Those constraints come in two forms: the bit-fields in the micro-instruction-word which are assigned by micro-operations; and a set of resources defined by the programmer. These resources usually include architectural storage units such as the registers and memories, as well as shared transitional units such as busses. In the definition of micro-operations, the programmer is obliged to indicate which resources are written-to, read-from, and occupied. Thus, the compaction algorithm is able to obey all the data-flow dependencies, as well as the resource restrictions of the machine.

An example is shown in Figure 3.17, where three types of micro-operations (mops) are declared, each defined to read, write, and occupy certain resources. As the compactor proceeds through the list of micro-operations 1 to 5, it pushes each

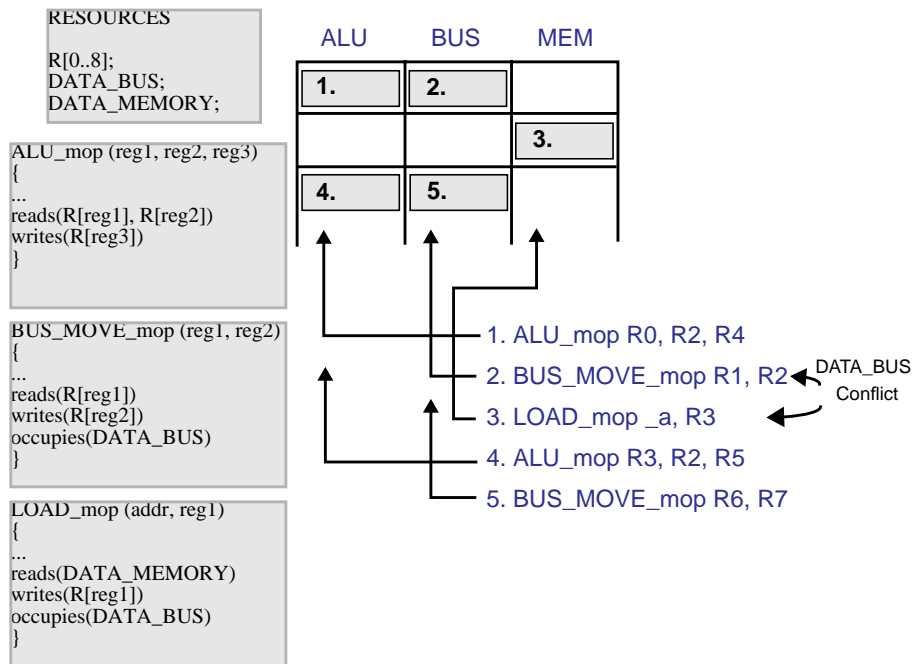


Figure 3.17 Programmable micro-operation compaction

mop into its respective field. If there is no resource conflict, a mop can be placed in parallel with (e.g. Figure 3.17: mop 1 and 2) or even past a previously placed mop. Resources include registers and memories which keep data-dependencies in order, but also include architecture constraints like the occupation of functional units or busses (e.g. Figure 3.17: mop 2 and 3). Furthermore, non-existent resources may be defined to specify unusual architecture constraints.

While giving a flexible view to the programmer on how the compaction procedure is executed, the onus is on the developer to validate that all the resources have been correctly declared and used in each micro-operation. However, granted that the approach is flexible as a compaction procedure especially for VLIW machines, it does not provide a straight-forward solution to highly encoded micro-instruction words since the bit-fields represent the first constraint of the compaction algorithm. To address highly encoded instruction-sets (see Section 1.3.2), a compaction procedure which takes into account the *meshing* of instruction formats must be used.

### 3.3.5 Assessment of the approach

Although the rules for this type of compiler must be written by an experienced developer, the retargeting time is relatively short. Experience has shown that the retargeting time typically falls between one to six person-months. More on the

effort needed for retargeting is discussed in Chapter 6.

The main strength of rule-driven compilation is the inherent flexibility of the approach. The compiler developer has the means for describing specific rules and strategies for efficiently mapping higher level constructs onto the processor, based on his knowledge of the architecture idiosyncracies. Standard rules are put in place based on previous compiler experience, and primitives are available to manipulate the compiler for new architectures with unforeseen specialization.

When compared to a traditional compiler approach, the rule-driven approach allows for faster development time through the ability to retarget at each phase of compilation. The quality of the results depend on the compiler development effort. In the few cases when the code quality is inadequate, a custom optimization module is incorporated with little effort.

When compared to model-based retargetable compilation approaches, the rule-driven approach requires retargeting development time; whereas, in principle, a model-based compiler requires only a small change to the model to arrive at a new compiler. However, in our experience, the retargeting time is compensated by the applicability of the rule-driven approach to a very broad set of processor architectures, from low-end microcontrollers to VLIW DSPs (Very Large Instruction Word Digital Signal Processors). In addition, architecture specific idiosyncracies may be handled by case-by-case development strategies.

### **3.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter has presented two emerging examples of compiler systems aimed at application specific instruction-set processors (ASIPs). What sets them apart from traditional approaches is an instruction-set specification containing information about the processor. In the case of the model-based approach, the specification is a set of architectural properties which include the functional units, connectivity of storage resources, and a set of instructions. In the case of the rule-driven approach, the specification is the combination of processor information including instruction formats plus a set of transformation rules used at each phase of the compilation.

Both approaches have a set of strengths which make each a compelling approach for today's embedded architectures. A model-based approach can potentially provide a highly optimized mapping based entirely on properties of the archi-



ture. The model would also allow the designer to explore variations on the architecture by making small changes to the specification. The rule-driven approach can potentially provide a very wide retargeting range for a service-based compiler group. The flexibility of rules allows the developer to explore new compilation strategies for each new target processor.

## Chapter 4: Practical Issues in Compiler Design for Embedded Processors

This chapter discusses pragmatic issues in setting up a compiler environment for embedded systems. While the techniques presented in Chapter 2 form the basis of a compiler system such as the examples in Chapter 3, many other factors must be brought into consideration for a usable development environment. These factors may include:

- Language support: What ingredients of a programming language should be provided to the user?
- Embedded architecture constraints: What facilities should be provided to the user to control the specialized architecture?
- Coding style: What abstraction of coding style should be supported? What are the trade-offs?
- Validation: What level of confidence will be provided with a retargeted compiler?
- Source-level debugging: How does debugging on the host fit in with debugging on the target?

These as well as other practical considerations are often more important to the design engineer than simply the base technology of the design tools. Only a complete development system allows for efficient embedded software design.

### **4.1 Language support: choosing the right subset and extensions**

In the embedded industry today, the language of choice is C [33]. While there exist languages more suitable for certain domains (e.g. Silage/DFL [44] in the DSP domain), C remains the most widely used high-level language in embedded processors mainly because of the wide availability of compilers and tools on workstations and PCs (linkers, librarians, debuggers, profilers, etc.). Furthermore, many

standards organizations such as ISO (International Standards Organization) and the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) provide executable models in C. Some examples of these are: GSM (European cellular standard), Dolby (audio processing), MPEG (video and audio processing), H.261/ H.263 (videotelephony), and JPEG (still picture processing).

While C is an expressive language, many limitations [105] are imposed for the use in embedded applications:

- limited word-length support. The fixed point support in C is limited to 8 bit (`char`), 16 bit (`short int`), and 32 bits (`long int`). While this is sufficient in applications such as speech processing, it is insufficient in many other embedded applications, for example in audio processing where typically 24 bit types are needed and image processing where much larger data-types are needed.
- a limited set of storage classes. In many DSP systems, in addition to multiple register files, there are at least two data memories as well as a program memory. For certain applications, there can be even more [64]. ANSI C provides only the `auto`, `static`, `extern`, and `register` storage classes [33], which are insufficient in providing the user control over where the data is to be placed.
- a fixed set of operators. Embedded systems may have hardware operators which do not correspond directly to the operations found in C.
- limited scheduling and parallelism. The semantics of C impose a fixed schedule on the order of operations, which can be limiting for wide instruction machines (e.g. VLIW). Although it is possible to take a liberal interpretation of the schedule maintaining correct functionality, this is often difficult in the presence of pointers and the aliasing problem [1].
- separate compilation and linking. C allows modules to be compiled separately; the modules are then linked together in a separate phase. In the presence of limited register resources, this imposes an obstacle to efficient inter-procedural optimization, such as the passing of arguments in registers.

While there are limitations in C, the practical solution is to work within the constraints to provide the right compiler support for the architecture at hand. In many cases, the above-mentioned constraints are not limiting, while in others the difficulties can be managed. The way to work within the limitations is to make good

choices about the levels of support. For example, a subset of C could be chosen to allow a certain optimization. Once the user steps outside that subset, this optimization is no longer guaranteed. In other cases, a minimal extension to the C language gives the features desired. If handled carefully, this does not destroy the compilability of the code with other C compilers.

#### ***4.1.1 Data-type support***

Whereas general computing processors have evolved to support the data-types found in a high-level language, the architectures of embedded processors usually support only the data-types needed for a set of applications. These are typically few in number. Consequently, in the design of a retargeted compiler, all the tasks are made simpler if the number of supported data-types are kept to a minimum, since they must finally be mapped onto the data-types supported by the architecture. While it is possible to support larger data-types by providing libraries of larger data-types built upon smaller data-types, this elevates all the tasks in developing, maintaining, and validating the firmware development environment. Furthermore, the embedded processor programmer is most concerned with performance. Working at a level where the data-types match the register and memory widths of the architecture is the most natural level at which the designer can guarantee real-time performance. While working at a higher level (e.g. larger data-types) may simplify the programming, it is a secondary concern of the designer after the guarantee of meeting real-time performance constraints.

While there is a limited number of fixed data-type support in C, it is not often the case where the architecture supports an extensive number of fixed data-types. It is therefore possible to *re-map* certain C data-types to the types needed for the application. For example, in audio applications, a word-length of 24 bits is commonly used for sampled data. Whereas the 24-bit data-type does not exist in C, the 32-bit data-type may be used instead. This is assuming that the 32-bit type is not needed as well. The data-type may be reinterpreted by the retargetable compiler.

This approach leaves no visible consequence on the side of the target compilation path. However, within a methodology where the host compilation path is kept in sync with the target compilation path, the equivalence is broken. Section 4.3 describes the importance of keeping the two paths equivalent. With this approach of reinterpreting certain data-types, the operations of the host compilation would

not match the operations of the target compilation. In our experience, this can be solved in one of two ways:

1. the use of built-in functions (Section 4.2.1) and the provision of a bit-true library (Section 4.3.2). Built-in functions provide a common interface for compilation in both paths, allowing the correspondence between host compilation and target compilation to remain intact.

<b>C operator</b>	<b>Built-in function</b>
a = b * c;	a = MULT_24(b, c);

*Figure 4.1* Using built-in functions for unsupported data-types.

The function definition of the built-in functions may be provided in a bit-true library for compilation on the host.

While this approach may appear cumbersome for specifying operations, it is manageable, especially if the number of data-types which differ from those in ANSI-C are few.

2. extending the host compilation to the use of C++ data-types and operator overloading. The operators of C++ can be overloaded to provide the bit-true operations depending on the data-type. While, the retargetable compiler still treats the source as C, the mapping of the data-types is interpreted according to context as shown in Figure 4.2. The equivalent compilation on the host is interpreted using C++. Ideally, these C++ data-types could also be used by the retargetable compiler to offer an extendable set of data-types for any application. This approach is proposed in the Chess compiler developed by IMEC / Target Compiler Technologies [34].

### ***4.1.2 Memory support***

An increasingly common method to improve memory support in C, is to extend the storage classes in ANSI C to those needed for the architecture. For example, if two RAM data memories exist on the architecture, a storage class specifier `__MEMORY1__` could indicate the first memory and `__MEMORY2__` could indicate the second memory. This allows the designer to choose the location of his data variables. This is a pragmatic solution in contrast to providing a memory allocation algorithm in the compiler. In our experience, if more than one data memory is available on the architecture, this was done explicitly by the designer to organize

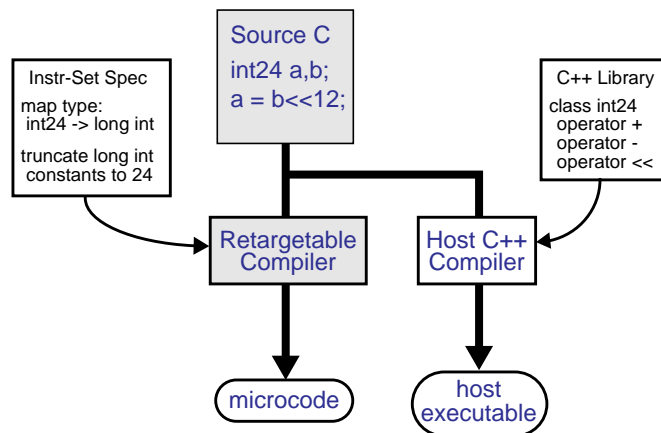


Figure 4.2 Supporting C++ data-types with a retargetable C compiler.

the architecture for a specific reason. For example, this may be to separate different types, memory-mapped I/O, or ROM from RAM. In each of these cases, the designer has a preconceived idea of where the data is to be placed. However, if the separation of memories is purely for reasons of speed and there are no large differences between two memories, the compiler would benefit from a memory allocation algorithm (see Section 2.6.2).

In the case of separate memories of RAM and ROM, it is also possible to use the type qualifier `const` to identify ROM values, instead of specifying the storage class. The compiler simply needs to intercept these variables for placement in ROM.

Extending the methodology further, the compiler can treat memory-mapped input/output (I/O) in the same manner. Memory-mapped I/O are locations in memory which are actually register interfaces connected to the core's hardware peripherals. Their addresses in memory form a convenient identification system for the processor. Storage class specifiers can also be used to identify memory-mapped I/O. However, in this case there are two further important characteristics of a memory-mapped I/O variable. First, as a specific address is required, the user must be able to force the variable into that location in memory, either through a `#pragma` or with an ANSI C extension. Secondly, the compiler must be made aware that it cannot remove accesses to the variable through optimization. The type qualifier `volatile` accurately defines this characteristic.

For memory-mapped I/O, sometimes further consideration about the behavior of the target compiler must be taken into account. The functionality of the architec-

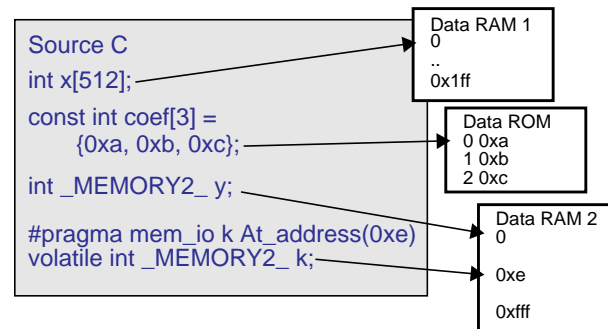


Figure 4.3 Storage class specification and type qualification for multiple memories.

ture may place constraints on the compiler. For example, depending on the protocol used for memory-mapped I/O accesses, scheduling and compaction of operations with the memory-mapped I/O access may be forbidden or in other cases obligatory.

### 4.1.3 Procedure calls

For small embedded applications, where the implementation of a stack is not justified, the extended use of pre-processor macros can give the user the appearance of procedure and function calls. Of course, the designer then pays the penalty of the in-line code expansion for each macro use. Alternatively, it is possible to provide one level of function call with minimal hardware support. This requires simply a jump-to-subroutine/return instruction pair and one register to guard the return program address. In our experience, we have found that for minimal architectures, this is a useful hardware addition despite the limitations of parameter passing only in registers and simply one level of calling.

When one level of procedure call is insufficient, certain hardware considerations need to be taken into account. A program stack provides the necessary functionality for nested subroutine calls. For parameter passing and local automatic variables, a data stack needs to be provided. The program stack and data stack may be merged into one if the program and the minimum addressing unit of the data are of the same bit-width. If they are not of the same width, using the same stack could be a considerable waste in memory.

If there is more than one data memory with different bit-widths, placement of the data stack is a difficult issue. If placed in the largest memory, it supports all the data-types, but at a waste when using the smaller data types. If placed in a smaller

memory, then the compiler must be able to store and retrieve the larger data-types without losing precision. Providing more than one data stack is another solution; however, very few of today's compilers are able to handle more than one data stack.

Usually, the depth of both the program stack and data stack is parametrizable. Choosing the best value for the depth can pragmatically be done by either:

1. simulation on the workstation while tracing the number of calls and automatic variables, or
2. a static analysis of the procedural call tree and number of local variables.

The first of these has the disadvantage that it may take a long time, given that the entire application should be simulated. In addition, the result is guaranteed only for the given test data.

The second of these has the advantage of being fast; however, to be accurate, the code generated from the target compiler should be analyzed to determine the number of automatic variables used locally. This value can vary greatly depending on the number of and the constraints on the available registers. In either case, the possibility of recursive procedure calls may cause the stack depth estimates to be inaccurate. However, many compilers for embedded processors disallow recursive procedures.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, separable compilation imposes restrictions on the results of the target compiler. As the compiler must account for procedures being compiled in any sequence, less optimizations are possible. For example, an interprocedural optimization such as the passing of parameters in registers are obliged to follow a convention (e.g. first argument in register 1, second argument in register 2, etc.). This is to allow any future and prior calls to know the location of parameters. Consequently, the architecture constraints on the use of registers may mean that these parameters must move location before being used. The example in Figure 4.4 illustrates this restriction.

Consider the procedure `filter` shown on the top left corner of Figure 4.4. It contains a call to the procedure `decode`, which is not yet compiled. This is permitted in C since the prototype for `decode` appears prior to the call. If the compiler chooses to pass the parameters of the call, `x` and `y`, by registers to the procedure `decode`, it must use a convention such as `x` into R1 and `y` into R2,



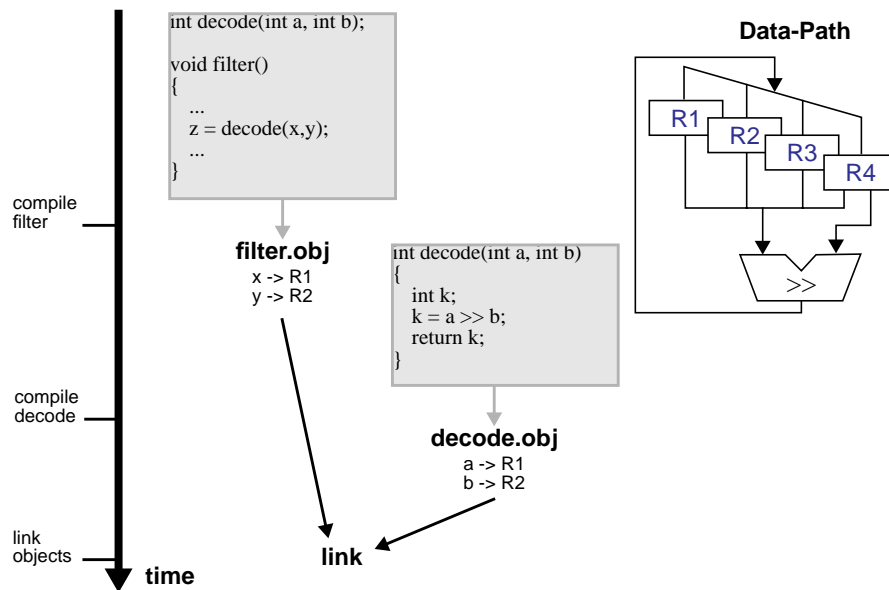


Figure 4.4 The implications of separable compilation on interprocedural optimization

since it has no previous knowledge of the interior of the function `decode`.

Now consider the procedure `decode`, which is compiled after `filter`. The parameters `a` and `b` are passed by convention, `a` into `R1` and `b` into `R2`. However, in the context of embedded processors, constraints on the use of registers can appear through architecture specialization. This allows the designer to streamline the instruction-set and hardware. The data-path shown on the right of Figure 4.4 shows an example of this type of restriction. The shift operation can be performed on any register `R1`, `R2`, `R3`, or `R4`; however, the number of shifts must reside in register `R4`. Therefore, this implies that in our example, the parameter `b` must be moved from register `R2` to register `R4` prior to the shift operation `k = a >> b`. This is an inefficiency inherent in the support of separable compilation and cannot be avoided. In some cases, the penalty can be great, for example if the call were located in the body of a critical loop.

This inefficiency can be side-tracked if the user is willing to use a lower coding style, as will be described in Section 4.2.2. For example, the user could assign the location of variables to registers himself, knowing how he intends to use them. This implies much more thinking on the part of the programmer and much less portable code.

Another implication of separable compilation is in memory assignment: the automatic positioning of variables in memory based on their use. For example, the offset assignment algorithms in [60] and [62] propose the positioning of variables

in memory based on their use in a data-flow context which allows a minimum of addressing arithmetic. If these algorithms were to be used for global variables, this precludes the support of separable compilation. This is because they assign memory positions based on the use of variables within procedures. For procedures which are compiled after this memory assignment, the variables will not be in optimal positions. The algorithms do apply to local static variables; however, in C, local variables usually reside in registers or are put on the run-time stack to support recursion.

In order to allow optimizations like the previous two examples, it would be necessary to disallow the separable compilation of C. This would have a large impact on the compilation times, requiring the equivalent of complete compilation and linking of an entire application every time. In addition, it would disallow the use of object-level libraries which is often a methodology used when providing hand optimized assembly-level functions. However, this is the only way to allow these type of optimization possibilities, which may be a useful methodology should the amount of total embedded firmware remain low. Also it could be provided as an option for a final, fully-optimized compilation pass.

## **4.2 Moving beyond assembly programming**

In this early phase of the acceptance of compiler technology for embedded processors, it is imperative that a compiler system provide simple mechanisms which allow programmers to reach all the functionality of an architecture. If a designer cannot meet his/her performance objectives through the capabilities of a compiler, he/she must have the ability to reach the equivalent quality of hand-written assembly code, while maintaining the ability to use a high-level of programming for parts of the code which do meet the objectives. For pragmatic reasons, it is essential that the bridge to higher levels of automation always be crossed as smoothly as possible.

### ***4.2.1 Built-in functions***

A built-in function is a compiler-recognized function which is mapped directly onto a set of instructions of the processor. These allow the execution of operations which are not found in C, for example: interrupt instructions, hardware do-loops, wait mechanisms, hardware operators, co-processor directives, the setting of

addressing modes (modulo, bit-reverse, etc.). In addition, built-in functions are useful for providing access to specialized hardware to which compilation is done inefficiently. In providing built-in functions, the compiler developer must ensure that any optimizations or manipulations of the control-flow and data-flow operations do not interfere with the behavior of the function.

#### *4.2.2 Coding styles on different levels*

A retargetable compiler should allow coding on various levels of abstraction as well as the mixing of these levels. This is to allow the designer to reach all the functionality of his/her processor, at perhaps the expense of code portability, when the compiler cannot provide it. Our experience has shown that while the development effort on optimizations is important to achieve a more portable level of code [69], the effort in ensuring that the compiler can handle lower coding levels is essential.

For C, we define four levels of coding styles as follows:

1. High Level

Behavioral ANSI C: This level is characterized by the use of variable, array, structure references and all the operations available in C.

2. Mid Level

This level allows the use of built-in functions. Any arrays or structures that are declared in memory must be accessed by pointers. Variables and pointers may be allocated into extended storage classes and register sets.

3. Low Level

This level allows the user-assignment of variables and pointers to specific registers.

4. Assembly Level

This level allows the programmer to write in-line assembly code directly in C code.

Level 1 is the goal for compiler technology. This is the level at which all optimization and retargeting capabilities should aim as it provides the most abstract and portable source descriptions. It is also the level at which a programmer can freely write algorithms without being concerned with the underlying hardware.

Level 2 is reached mostly by capabilities within a compiler. Built-in functions

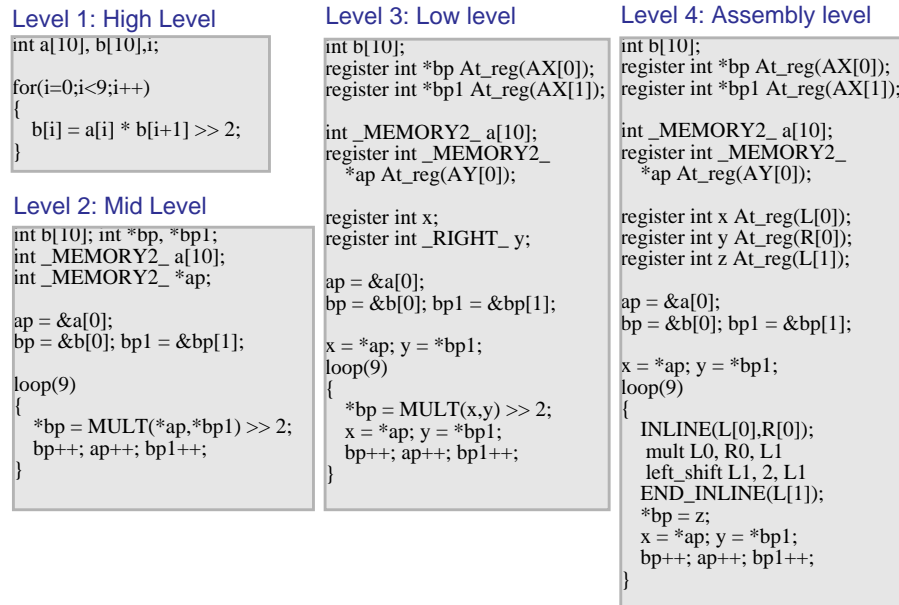


Figure 4.5 Examples of C code at different abstraction levels.

are exactly like any other C functions, but are mapped to specific instructions by the compiler. Extensions to the storage classes of C allow allocation into memories (Section 4.1.2) and register sets. The allocation to register sets allows the compiler to perform better register assignment.

Level 3 is arrived upon by small syntax extensions to ANSI C. These *C-like* extensions declare variables to reside in specific registers. It is important to note that C code which remains within these first three levels allows compilation on the host given the provision of the proper masking of extensions and a bit-true library.

Level 4, the assembly level allows assembly code to be mixed with C code. A function-like interface allows the programmer to directly write assembly instructions for the processor within the framework of the C code.

Examples for these 4 levels are shown in Figure 4.5. The high level example shows the use of behavioral C constructs like the for-loop and references to arrays. The mid level example shows the exclusion of array references replaced by pointers. It also shows the declaration of certain arrays into specific memories. As well, the built-in function, `loop` is used for a hardware do-loop, and `MULT` is used for a multiply operation. The low level example shows pointers assigned to specific registers. In addition, a manual loop pipelining operation has been done by specifying new variables allocated to register sets. Finally, the assembly level example shows two in-line assembly instructions specifying specific operations and registers. The

function interface shows which registers are used to pass values into and out of the in-line assembly block.

The support of lower abstraction levels of coding is a non-negligible compiler development effort, especially when styles are mixed. Lower level constraints must be propagated to all the mapping phases and algorithms used by the compiler. Algorithms are always easier to implement if they have more degrees of freedom; thus, new constraints can sometimes pose difficulties. For example, to mix the high level (Level 1.) with the mid level (Level 2.) requires the handling of both pointers and arrays. This means for the inclusion of any array optimization techniques, an *alias-analysis* [1] function is required in the compiler.

### 4.3 Validation strategies

The very definition of the term *retargetable compiler* suggests a countless number of targets and even targets that have not yet been designed. This places a huge importance on the validation methodology. The confidence that a compiler produces correct code is a significant factor that the embedded system designer cannot neglect.

Compiler validation is done today predominantly based upon simulation. While formal approaches are making in-grounds in the RTL (Register Transfer Level) and logic synthesis areas of hardware synthesis, they lag far behind for any behavioral level specification including C.

For simulation-based validation schemes, selection of a suitable test suite which covers possible faults is an issue which arises. Commercially available C test suites are available, such as Plum-Hall [119], Perennial, and MetaWare [118]. These suites are made up of examples which test all the facilities of C in a thorough manner. Unfortunately the test suites are not directly applicable to embedded processors because an embedded processor compiler typically uses a subset of C. For example, only some data-types (see Section 4.1.1) and some operations may be supported. Moreover, any extensions to C are not tested (see Section 4.2).

The key to a good test suite is organization. A test suite should be organized so that the language support can be parameterized. Therefore, the suite may be *personalized* quickly and efficiently for any new target of the compiler. The available coding levels of the compiler (Section 4.2.2) should be thoroughly tested; however,

target specific C extensions such as built-in functions (Section 4.2.1) have to be treated on a case-by-case method.

#### ***4.3.1 Instruction-set simulation***

While the subject of instruction-set simulation [99][114] is much wider than the mention given here, this section simply provides a definition as it relates to the compiler validation issue.

An instruction-set simulator is an execution model which runs the behavior of the embedded processor, on either the level of operations (instruction-accurate), machine cycles (cycle-accurate), or the netlist (ns-accurate). Any of these levels is sufficient for compiler validation.

Typically, the simulator takes microcode as entry and has interpretive functions which allow the user to run, step, and break the program and to look at register contents and memory. Typical methods used to build a simulator model are: hand-writing in C; or generating from an instruction-set description. From the perspective of validation, both methods are equivalent. However, the latter is naturally favored to reduce the effort in engineering development. The latter may also offer more confidence if the tool has been tested for a large number of processor models.

Having an execution model of the processor is essential to the methodology of validation by simulation. It serves as one side of the balancing scale for the comparison of functionality, as will be described in the next section.

#### ***4.3.2 Workstation compilation and bit-true libraries***

There are numerous advantages to including a parallel compilation path on the host platform in addition to the target compilation path. The development and debugging environment of the host is generally available prior to the availability of the target development tools. This means that application development can begin before anything else is in place. Even after the target compilation environment is in place, a host equivalent execution will run much faster than any instruction-set simulation of the target processor.

With this methodology in mind, it is important to provide host bit-true functions for:

- any built-in functions that are provided by the target compiler (Section 4.2.1),

- any operators with data-types differing from ANSI C (Section 4.1.1), and
- any other C operations that are implemented differently on the target hardware than on the host processor.

The construction of the bit-true library typically involves careful handling of bit-widths with shifts and bit-masking.

Once a bit-true library is in place, a validation methodology as shown in Figure 4.6 is possible. The function library contains functions which allow writing values to a pre-defined test buffer. After compilation on both paths, this buffer is compared for any differences, which indicate a discrepancy in the retargetable compiler, instruction-set simulator, or the bit-true library. In most cases, the host compiler is assumed to produce correct code, as it usually must pass its own validation phase.

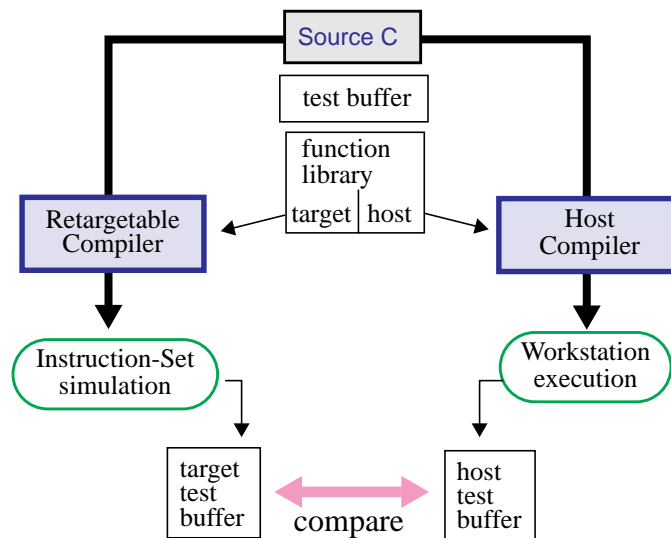


Figure 4.6 Compiler validation strategy

### 4.3.3 Compiled instruction-set simulation

An alternative approach to compiler validation is *compiled instructions-set simulation*, which, loosely defined, is the interpretation and reconstruction of microcode to be run on another target. One way to achieve this is to *de-compile* the target microcode to a form of C code so that it can be compiled onto the workstation. The result can then be compared to the original C execution on the workstation in the same manner as shown in Figure 4.6.

This methodology has also been used starting from the assembly level, which

can provide a faster instruction-set simulation compared to interpretive simulation [114]. However in this case, the source of the compilation is assembly, whereas in validation, it is also important to validate the final assembly step to microcode.

The program which performs the cross-compilation (de-compilation and compilation) can be either handwritten or generated from an instruction-set description. As far as confidence in the validation, using a compiled instruction-set simulation has the same number of steps outlined in the methodology shown in Figure 4.6, as the interpreting instruction-set simulator is either hand-written or generated from an instruction-set description.

#### 4.4 Debugging: how much is really needed?

A compilation path to the host workstation or PC allows standard source-level debugging tools to be used. An example public domain debugger is *gdb*, the GNU source-level debugger distributed by the Free Software Foundation [96], which has many user interfaces (e.g. *xxgdb*, Emacs, *ddd*). As the host compilation path is naturally the faster path and the tools are immediately available, functional validation and debugging of the source algorithms should ideally be done at this level.

After functional validation has been done on the host, debugging of the embedded processor may also be needed to debug the validation methodology as shown in Figure 4.6, as problems can arise in the target compiler, instruction-set simulator, or bit-true library. Furthermore, debugging may be necessary for the final system after the chip has been fabricated. Figure 4.7 illustrates a methodology whereby the host source-level debugging interface is reused in different modes. The interaction labelled *mode 1* is the familiar host debugging mode; the interaction labelled *mode 2* is the mode using the instruction-set simulator; and the interaction labelled *mode 3* is the mode which interfaces with a cycle-true model of the processor or the chip itself through an in-circuit emulator (ICE) interface.

Mode 2 of debugging is principally used for verifying the retargetable compiler. It is basically a debugging means for the validation strategy shown in Figure 4.6. Of course, bugs can occur in the instruction-set simulator or the bit-true library as well. In mode 2 of the debugging scenario, depending on the type of instruction-set simulator, the boundary of whether the debugging functions belong to the instruction-set simulator or the source-level debugger can become blurred. For



example, general purpose DSPs and MCUs are usually distributed with an instruction-set simulator rich in debugging functions. In this case, the source-level debugger needs simply to provide a user interface to those functions. One method is to detach a user interface (e.g. `xxgdb`, `ddd`, Emacs GUD) from a debugger (e.g. `gdb`, `dbx`) and attach the user interface directly to the instruction-set simulator. This can often provide a simple route to basic debugging capabilities.

Where the instruction-set simulator does not provide a rich set of functions, it is advantageous to interface the debugger to the instruction-set simulator. Some debugging functions can be quite complex; therefore, depending on the required functionality, this work should not be underestimated. For example, in our experience with the `gdb` debugger, the memory model has been conceived for VonNeumann type architectures (single memory). The extension to Harvard and multiple memory architectures requires significant re-engineering of the debugger. More efforts on retargetable debuggers are needed [88].

Mode 3 of Figure 4.7 is principally used to debug the hardware. The source-level debugger in mode 3 allows verification of the functionality of the VHDL cycle-true model of the processor. Unless this hardware model can be stopped artificially while retaining its context, interrupt functionality is necessary on the processor. Furthermore, this simulation can be extremely slow since there is an interaction with a hardware simulator (e.g. VHDL) on a detailed level (either RTL or netlist).

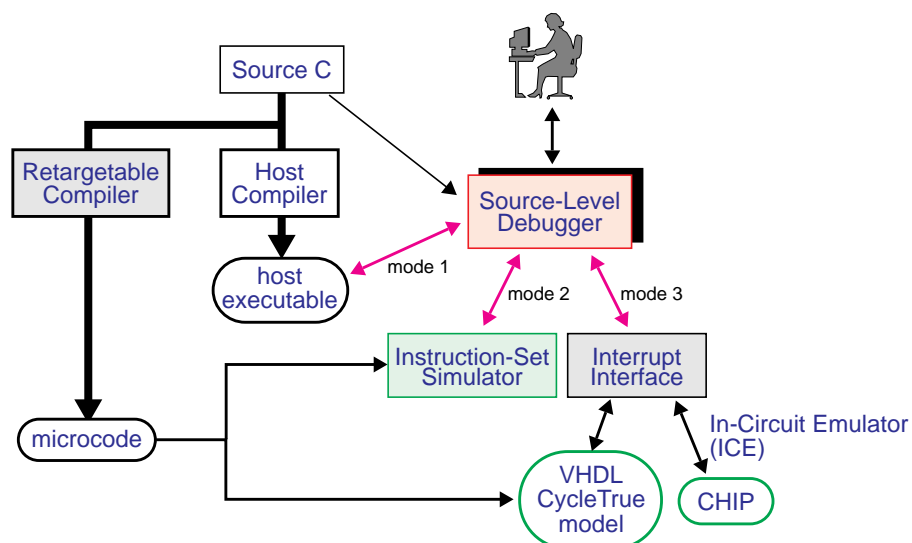


Figure 4.7 Embedded processor source-level debugging.

The second possibility of interaction in mode 3 is a real-time interface with the chip itself. In this case interrupt capability of the processor is mandatory. This emulation is typically one to two orders of magnitude faster than mode 2 and is even faster than operation in mode 1, since the chip is operating in real-time. However, in-circuit emulation is costly in terms of I/O pins to the exterior. It is typically a route used for verifying a standalone part or a test chip, especially since it is difficult to use an ICE for processor cores embedded on a single-chip system.

An interesting issue related to debugging is the organization of the program memory on a product containing an embedded processor. Since on-chip real-estate is expensive, programs generally reside in ROM since it takes much less area than RAM. This makes sense, since it is not expected that the program need to be changed in an embedded system. However, in test chips it is often the case that things go wrong; and therefore, designers may want to change the contents of the embedded program. One approach is a design to balance this trade-off. It is possible for a designer to enhance the program ROM with a small space of downloadable program RAM. Dedicated instructions may be included in the processor as a provision to execute this *patch* code when debugging the test chip. This method is beginning to show more frequently as a popular way to debug final systems. On the other hand, the decision on the sizes of ROM and RAM remains a difficult guessing game.

Although the mechanics of source-level debugging are well understood, practical implementation can still be a difficulty. The techniques of compilation for embedded processors produce optimized code which is specialized for the architecture. The symbolic debugging of optimized code is an enormous and complex problem. Even the simplest of compilation tasks can produce a tangling mess for the debugging symbols. For example, a register assignment algorithm which assigns the same variable to ten different registers at different points of its lifetime means that the object code must carry ten times the symbolic information than previously. Furthermore, if an aggressive scheduling algorithm is used, operations can move to different points in the code, including into and out of loops. As well, unreachable code optimizations can make code disappear completely.

In addition, older debug formats (e.g. COFF [102][96]) have no way of dealing with optimized code, which has given rise to company-specific variants (e.g. XCOFF, ECOFF, EXCOFF). Some efforts are underway for debugging standards

which address some of these concerns (e.g. ELF, DWARF [22][96]). However, for today's embedded processors, the debugging problem for optimized code remains largely unsolved, and users *take what they can get*. That is to say, source-level debugging can work well for some types of optimized code, and not so well for others.

## 4.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has presented a set of practical design considerations in the establishment of a firmware development environment centered around a compiler for an embedded processor target. First, a number of language issues were considered using C as the source language. Specifically, the areas of data-type support, memory support and procedure calls were discussed. For an application specific architecture, a subset of C data-types are typically chosen and can be interpreted with specialized bit-widths for the target. The support of multiple memories and sections is generally necessary for an embedded processor since the data interface to the peripherals is quite important. Finally, the support of procedure calls requires the consideration of issues such as stack implementation and allocation, as well as interprocedural optimizations.

Next, coding abstraction levels were discussed. It was stressed that performance for real-time systems is critical; and therefore, the support of various levels of coding abstraction is essential for the embedded processor user to reach all the functionality of the chip. Extensions to standard C include built-in functions, storage class allocation, user-register set allocation, and user-register assignment to specific registers.

Following, validation strategies based on simulation were discussed. The essential components of this form of validation include a thorough set of benchmarks which exercise all the parts of the architecture, models for instruction-set simulation, a host compilation path, and a bit-true library. This led to the succeeding topic of source-level debugging. A methodology was outlined which uses an interface connected in three debugging modes. The first is the standard debugging route with the host compiler, the second allows debugging of the target microcode with an instruction-set simulator, and the third allows debugging on a cycle-true model or the chip itself using an ICE. The first mode is typically used to function-

ally debug the source algorithm, the second mode is used primarily to debug the retargeted compiler, bit-true library, and instruction-set simulator, and the third mode is typically used to debug the design of the processor hardware.



## Chapter 5: Compiler Transformations for DSP Address Calculation

This chapter presents a retargetable approach and prototype tool for the analysis of array references and traversals for efficient address calculation for DSPs. Based on a retargetable architecture model, the approach serves as an enhancement to existing compiler systems or as an aid to architecture exploration. This model is a specification of the addressing resources and operations available on the processor which is used to drive the compiler transformations. In addition to providing the transformation for existing architectures, the model allows the designer to tune the operation of the Address Calculation Unit (ACU) toward the application constraints. Variations on the address registers, index registers and hardwired increment and decrement values may be explored for an algorithm by making simple changes to the specification.

### 5.1 Address calculation units for DSP

The key aspect of a Digital Signal Processor (DSP) is the ability for number crunching. As data intensive algorithms push for higher speeds and throughput, access to data memories becomes the limiting factor. In response to this, designers have conceived the Address Calculation Unit (ACU) (sometimes termed Address Generation Unit (AGU), Address Arithmetic Unit (AAU), Data Address Generator (DAG) or Memory Management Unit (MMU)), an arithmetic unit which works in parallel to the main Data Calculation Unit (DCU). The ACU works solely on address generation to ensure efficient retrieval and storage of data that is calculated on the DCU. In most cases, the ACU works in a post-modify (increment/decrement) fashion to ensure high speed. Pre-modify addressing is rare because this would require at least two operations to occur in the same instruction cycle, namely the address calculation, then the memory access. On a programmer's level, the difference is in the type of supported addressing modes. A post-modify address calculation unit offers the register direct mode with post-operations. Unsupported

pre-modify addressing would mean the disappearance of indirect or indexed addressing modes.

Post-increment/decrement address units are present on countless general-purpose DSPs and cores. Some examples include the SGS-Thomson D950 core [91], the Motorola 56xxx series [78], the Texas Instruments TMS320 series [100], the Analog Devices ADSP-21xx series [5] and the Lode DSP Engine [19]. They are also common in Application Specific Instruction-Set Processors (ASIPs), fine-tuned to application areas, such as MPEG audio [12], Dolby decoding [115], and DSP for telecommunications [65].

Let us consider some example post-indexing ACUs for DSPs. Figure 5.1 shows the address calculation unit of the Motorola 56000 series [78]. It contains two identical halves, each with an arithmetic unit which performs post-indexing on separate sets of registers. The two resembling halves of the ACU exist mainly for the two memories X and Y addressed by the address busses XAB and YAB. Therefore, in principle, both halves of the addressing unit may be active in parallel with the central data calculation unit (DCU) and accesses to each of the memories.

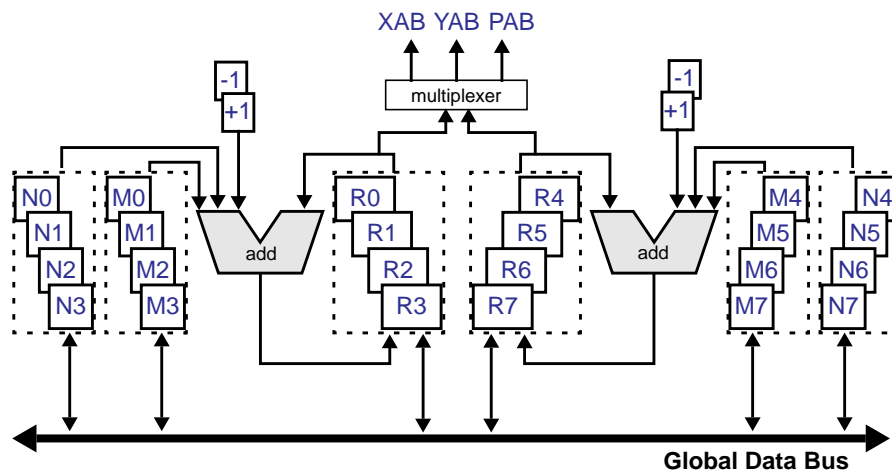


Figure 5.1 Address calculation unit of the Motorola 56K Series

Registers are treated as triplets (i.e.  $R_0 : N_0 : M_0$ ,  $R_1 : N_1 : M_1$ , etc.). An address register,  $R_n$ , may be post-incremented only with the index register,  $N_n$ , if both registers are within the same triplet. The available operations are summarized in the programming model of Table 5.1. Post-increment and decrement operations are available for the constant 1 or a value within the  $N_n$  register. The  $M_n$  register determines the type of address arithmetic: linear, modulo, or reverse-carry.

Table 5.1 Programming model for the ACU of the Motorola 56K series

Description of ACU Operation	Uses Mn Modifier	C-like operation	Additional Instruction Cycles
No Update	No	(Rn)	0
Post-increment by 1	Yes	(Rn)++	0
Post-decrement by 1	Yes	(Rn)--	0
Post-increment by Offset Nn	Yes	(Rn)+= Nn	0
Indexed by offset N	Yes	(Rn+N)	1
Pre-decrement by 1	Yes	--(Rn)	1

A second example is the SGS-Thomson D950 Core [91] shown in Figure 5.2. It also contains two halves with separate arithmetic units. In this case, the registers AX0, AX1, and SP address the X data-memory; registers AY0 and AY1 address the Y memory. Post-increment operations may be executed on AX0 and AX1 with any of the index registers IX0, IX1, IX2, and IX3. Similarly, post-increment operations may be executed on AY0 and AY1 with any of IY0, IY1, IY2, and IY3. The SP register can be used for a stack and has special operations such as push (pre-decrement) and pop (post-increment).

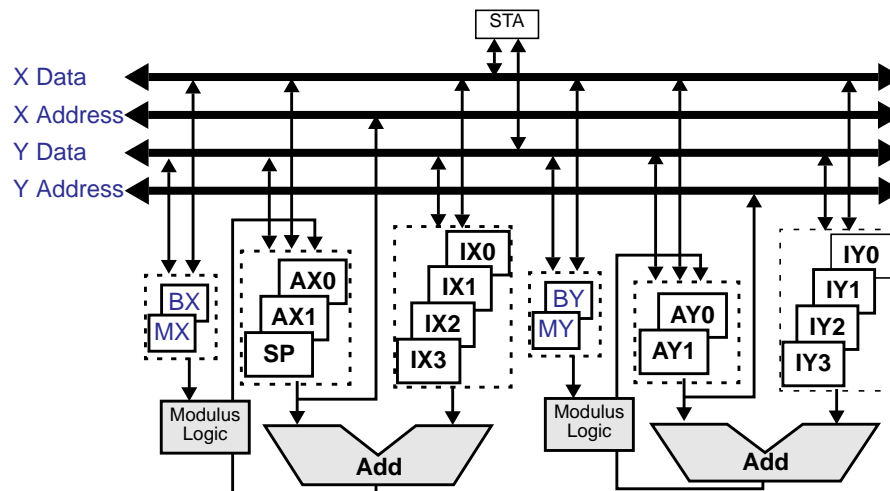


Figure 5.2 Address calculation unit of the SGS-Thomson D950 core

The available operations on the ACU of the D950 are summarized in Table 5.2. Post-increment operations are available for the address registers with index registers within the same half of the ACU. Post-increment and pre-decrement by the constant 1 are available for the SP register. Modulo and bit-reverse addressing is determined by the STA register and the bounds are set in the B and M registers.



Table 5.2 Programming model for the ACU of the SGS-Thomson D950

Description of ACU Operation	modulo addressing	bit-reverse addressing	C-like operation
Post-increment AXn by IXn	Yes	Yes	(AXn)+= IXn
Post-increment AYm by IYm	Yes	No	(AYm)+= IYm
Pre-decrement SP by 1	No	No	--(SP)
Post-increment SP by 1	No	No	(SP)++

Although at first glance, the ACUs of the Motorola 56000 and the SGS-Thomson D950 look very similar they have some very different characteristics. While both are designed for architectures with two data-memories, the 56K ACU allows either of its halves to point to either memory X or Y. The D950 ACU allows each half only to point to its respective memory X or Y. The number and available operations of the address registers differ: the 56K has 8 address registers which can perform post-increment with 1, -1, or its respective index register. The D950 has 4 address registers which can perform post-increment with any index register on its respective side, but not with any constants, with the exception of SP. (Post-increment with 1 or -1 can be performed on SP.) While the 56K has one index register per address register, the D950 has nearly two index registers per address register and also the ability to share an index register with any address register.

What is the impact of these differences? That is highly dependent on the addressing needs of the applications being run on the architectures (and even more dependent on the compiler!). Both companies claim high performance for *typical* DSP algorithms. However, DSP algorithms vary vastly in appearance. The only true way an algorithm developer can know which is the best architecture for an application is to measure the execution of code on each of the architectures. Unfortunately this is not very easy at an assembly-level of programming since an intimate knowledge of the architecture is required. Ideally, the comparison is possible if compiling from a high-level language like C; however compilation techniques have not kept pace with DSP architecture design.

In a further example, Motorola has recently introduced the DSP 56800, a low cost 16-bit DSP geared for consumer applications where price is critical. It is a marriage between a micro-controller and a DSP aiming for applications like digital answering machines, feature phones, modems, AC motor control, and disk drives.

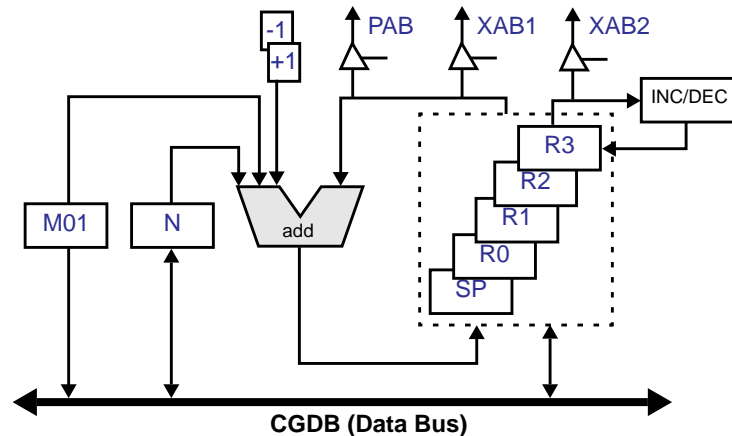


Figure 5.3 Address calculation unit of the Motorola 56800

Isolating the ACU of the 56800, one can see that it is based on the functionality of the 56000 ACU, but with variations. Shown in Figure 5.3, the ACU has five address registers, one designed to be used as a stack pointer (SP).

The available operations of the unit are shown in Table 5.1. Since there is one memory, only one half of the ACU of the 56000 is available. Although the unit has more addressing modes available, there is an instruction-cycle penalty for the indexed modes. The post-modify modes remain the more efficient. Note the restrictions in register uses: only R0 and R1 can perform modulo addressing (bit-reverse is not available); only R2 and SP can perform the short indexed mode.

In addition, register R3 has a special property as shown in Figure 5.3. A post-increment/decrement may be performed in parallel to post-increment/decrements on another address register in addition to up to 2 reads from data-memory.

Table 5.3 Programming model for the ACU of the Motorola 56800 series

Description of ACU Operation	Uses M01 Modifier	C-like operation	Additional Instruction Cycles
No Update	No	(Rn)	0
Post-increment by 1	R0, R1 optionally	(Rn)++	0
Post-decrement by 1	R0, R1 optionally	(Rn)--	0
Post-increment by Offset N	R0, R1 optionally	(Rn)+= N	0
Indexed by offset N	R0, R1 optionally	(Rn+N)	1
Indexed by short (6-bit)	No	(R2+xx) (SP+xx)	1
Indexed by long (16-bit)	R0, R1 optionally	(Rn+xxxx)	2 + extra word

Although these type of ACUs have existed for some time and continue to evolve, the compiler techniques for mapping high-level language constructs onto these register structures are very immature. This is immediately reflected in the poor performance of both commercial and publicly-available DSP compilers [112]. The problem of mapping high-level language structures such as array references onto post-indexing ACUs manifests itself in two ways:

1. difficulties of dealing with special-purpose register connections and operations.
2. difficulties in treating the disjunction in dependency between the use of addresses and the calculation of new addresses, inherent in the post-modify nature of the unit.

Previous experience [64] has shown that manually lowering array-based high-level code to pointer-based code can significantly improve compiler performance. This chapter addresses an automatic approach to this type of transformation with the introduction of an architectural model which specifies the resources and operations of an address calculation unit.

## **5.2 Traditional address generation techniques**

### ***5.2.1 Related work***

Approaches to improving the generation of addresses for array references include the work of Joshi and Dhamdhere [52], a strength-reducing technique for induction variables and other loop variables which builds upon the code hoisting techniques pioneered by Morel and Renvoise [77]. These techniques aim at replacing expensive operations such as multiplications with less expensive operations such as additions and subtractions (strength reduction) and moving as much as possible outside of loops (code hoisting). Since it is typical that array references are calculated upon induction variables, transformations on these variables represent the greatest gain. Although these techniques are important techniques for general-purpose processors, the gain for post-modify calculation units is marginal. The techniques are aimed toward pre-calculation of addresses.

Recently, offset assignment techniques have appeared to address post-modify address calculation units [60][63]. These approaches propose the placement of variables in memory based on the use of each variable in the data-flow calculations of the program. This placement is accomplished in a manner which minimizes the

number of post-increments on each address pointer. This ensures that the generation of addresses for static variables is optimized. This work does not address the following issues:

1. Optimization of address generation for higher level constructs such as arrays and structures. The majority of DSP programs manipulate arrays and structures for sampling streams, etc. Address generation for these constructs is of fundamental importance in DSP.
2. Optimization of address generation for a design flow which includes separable compilation and linking. As described in Section 4.1.3, memory assignment techniques based on data-flow usage preclude the use of a linking phase common for C compilers. A linking phase is fundamental for libraries of high-performance DSP functions.

Complementary to the work on address generation is the possibility of reordering array indices to improve the use of temporary storage. This is particularly important in video signal processing. The work using the polyhedral dependency graph model introduced by IMEC [29] and the PHIDEO compiler introduced by Philips [72] address these type of transformations. In addition to the reordering of array indices, this work also addresses memory placement which for the same practical reasons as mentioned above can be difficult to use with a linking phase (see Section 4.1.3).

### 5.2.2 Address calculation for arrays

**Address Pre-calculation.** A straight-forward method of calculating addresses for arrays is *on-the-fly* generation. For a simple array reference, this involves the addition of a base address with an induction variable (assuming the data size is 1; otherwise a multiplication by a constant is needed) as depicted in the example of Figure 5.4. The shortcoming of this approach is that the value of the address must be calculated before the reference because the operation is data dependent. Within the context of loop bodies, pre-calculations of this sort can have a significant performance penalty.

An improvement to this straight-forward approach is loop pipelining [37][55], where addresses for iteration  $i$  are calculated at iteration  $i-1$  (see a loop pipelining example in Section 2.6.2). This can be extended depth-wise for the number of

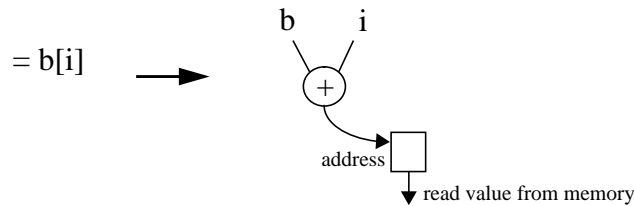


Figure 5.4 Pre-calculation of array addresses

operations of the induction variables. For this type of address calculation, the strength reduction and code hoisting work mentioned in Section 5.2.1 is also of use. However, it is important to note that even with these improvements the incremented *values* of the induction variables must still be calculated for each iteration of the loop (usually at the end of the loop).

While being an improvement over the straight-forward pre-calculation of addresses, this type of loop pipeline does not offer a natural mapping to a post-modify address calculation unit, especially within the context of the address register connections. For example, calculations for induction variables of integer type would normally be done on the DCU and would need to be transferred to the ACU for address calculations.

Different techniques are needed for post-modify address generation.

**Address Post-calculation.** A second approach to address generation involves reducing an array reference to an address (or pointer) reference and incrementing/decrementing the resulting address for the next reference of the array. This optimization has a two-fold advantage:

1. The address calculation can be done in parallel to any principal operations.
2. There is no more need for an induction variable or induction variable calculation (assuming it is not needed for other purposes).

On many DSPs, an available zero-overhead hardware do-loop can perform the loop function. An example is shown in Figure 5.5, where for instance, the next use of the pointer `bp` is one position higher than the current position of `bp`.

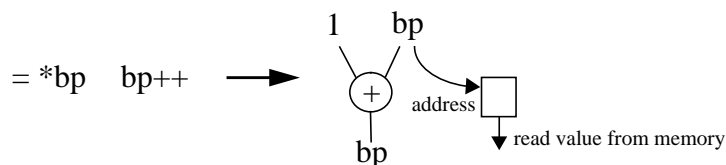


Figure 5.5 Post-calculation of array addresses

This approach maps most naturally to the ACU post-incrementing structure described in Section 5.1. The approach requires, as is also true for loop pipelining, a careful semantic analysis of the subscript dependencies through the various control constructs of the source program.

Figure 5.6 shows an example of the compilation of the code for a simple loop with one array reference before and after a pointer transformation to a post-calculation style of array addresses. The assembly code corresponds to a fictional load/store instruction-set architecture with a hardware do-loop and a simple post-increment ACU which runs in parallel. Note the difference in code size of each example. In addition, the assembly code after the pointer transformation will clearly run faster, as there are only 2 instructions in the loop body as opposed to 6.

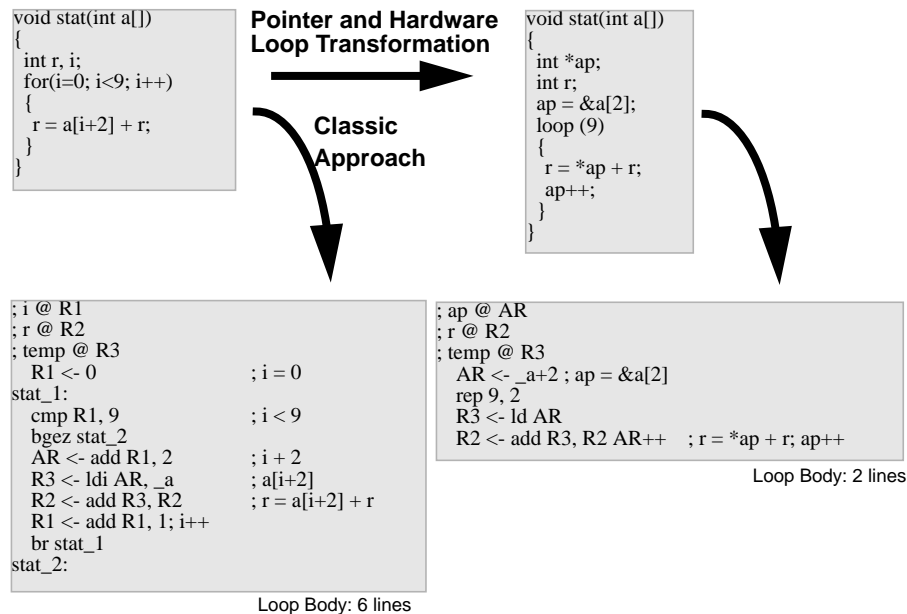


Figure 5.6 Compilation before and after pointer and hardware loop transformation.

For this example in Figure 5.6, it would also be possible to further improve the transformed microcode by performing software pipelining on the loop (see Section 2.6.2), if, for example, loading a register from memory in parallel to other operations were possible on the architecture ( $R3 \leftarrow ld \ AR$ ). The load could occur once before the loop body (the prologue) and in parallel inside the loop. The loop body could be reduced to one highly compacted line of microcode.

### 5.3 Address transformations for post-modify address calculation

The embedded DSP system is by definition a closed system, responding only to

real-time stimuli. Firmware is compiled separately on a desk-top host before residing on the system. In a typical embedded system development environment, this firmware is well simulated and validated before ever reaching the real system. When in the field, the DSP program responds solely to waveform signals through interfaces to its external world such as memory-mapped I/O (MMIO), shared memory, or interface peripherals. We summarize these two important properties of an embedded DSP system as follows:

- a thorough simulation step on the host before the running of the system in field.
- a well-defined boundary between program variables and data variables.

These are two properties which set an embedded DSP system apart from general computing applications. Consequently, they also provide opportunities for new approaches to compilation.

For an embedded DSP system, we propose a transformation of a program's address calculation model which is based on array to pointer optimizations, with the following goals:

- Retargetability: the ability to reconfigure the system for different architecture processors.
- Designer Feedback: a maximum of information useful for architecture exploration.
- Efficient Analysis: a minimum of complex semantic analysis.
- Facility to Integrate: an ease of integrating into existing compiler systems.

As the transformation targets embedded processors, we make use of the host compilation and execution environment for performance optimization.

### ***5.3.1 Overall flow***

The complete array analysis and transformation is depicted in Figure 5.7. From the user's viewpoint, only the shaded boxes are visible. He/she provides a C source file containing array references and a specification file indicating the addressing resources in the target architecture. The system then transforms the array references of the source to pointer references and appropriate increments and decrements of those pointers optimized for the address resource specification provided. If an address resource specification is not provided by the user, the transformation

of arrays to pointers (pointer creation) is still done; however, the register allocation (pointer combination) and register assignment phases are skipped. These phases could be done by the target compiler.

In addition, statistics are generated for the user during compilation and as comments embedded in the target (C source with addressing). These statistics include basic block frequencies, array reference frequencies, and the number of pointers created. For the created pointers (of which the number may not correspond directly to the number of arrays), the system also provides the reference frequencies and the frequencies of increment/decrement operations.

The choice of the C language as the target provides the following benefits:

- the target can be compiled and verified against the behavior of the source.
- the target can be used as an input to a dedicated architecture compiler.
- the semantics are easily understood by a human reader.

However, a drawback of using C is that fine-tuning for parallelism is not possible. Parallelization (compaction) is left for the target architecture compiler.

The central analysis block uses both a static and dynamic (run-time) image of the source algorithm. The advantages of using static and dynamic information versus only static information are:

- the ability to determine non-obvious linear relationships.

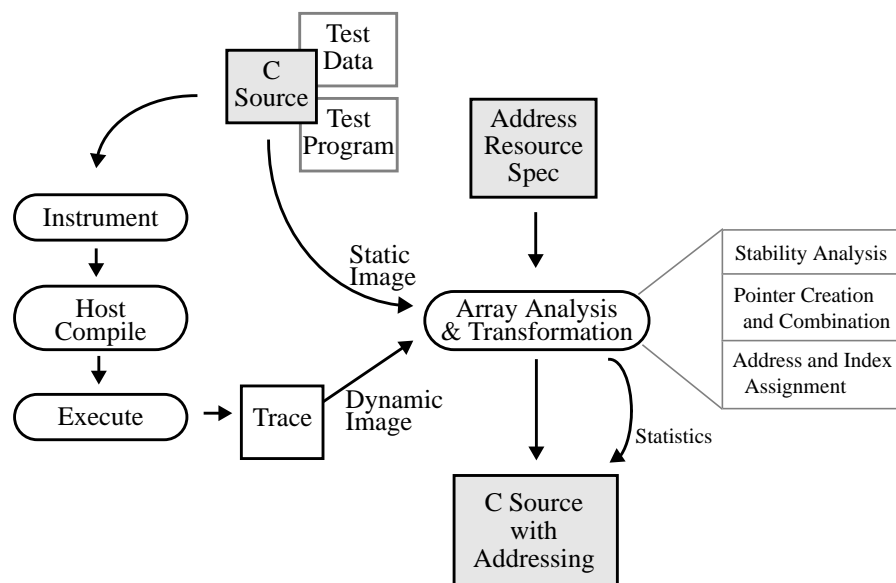


Figure 5.7 ArrSyn array analysis and transformation flow.



- the availability of relative frequencies of basic blocks, which indicate a realistic performance cost of the insertion of instructions.

The dynamic image of the source is created through instrumentation of the original source, compilation, and execution on the host. Details are provided in Section 5.3.3. As a result of this methodology, the following items are required:

- the source must be compilable and executable on the workstation.
- a test program must be provided that exercises all the basic blocks to be transformed.
- execution on the workstation should have reasonable run-time.
- induction variables may not be dependent on test data (i.e. data variables which may change from execution on the host to execution in the field).

In our experience, these items are common in an embedded systems development methodology, where firmware is simulated on a desk-top platform before being used in the field. This differs in nature from a general computing environment. For this last item, since the I/O of an embedded program is well defined and contained, induction variable dependency can be easily identified.

### 5.3.2 Address resource specification

An example resource specification is shown in the left side of Figure 5.8. The specification includes two main parts: a declaration of resources (address and index registers) and the operations that can be performed on these resources. This speci-

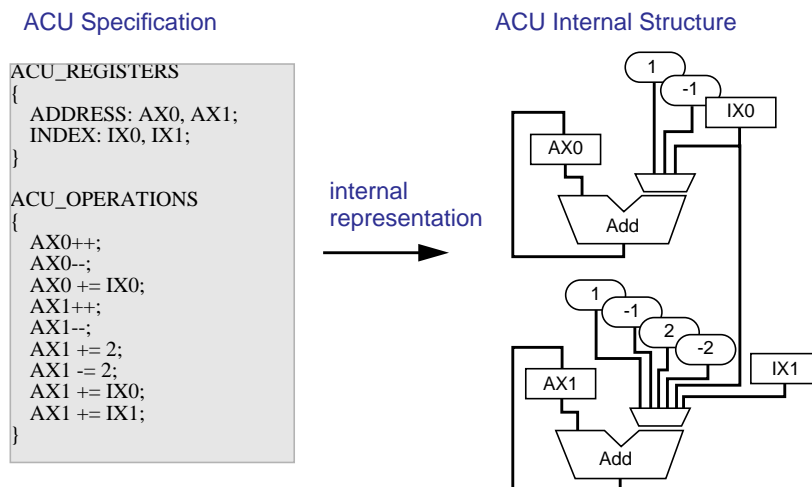


Figure 5.8 Address calculation unit specification and representation

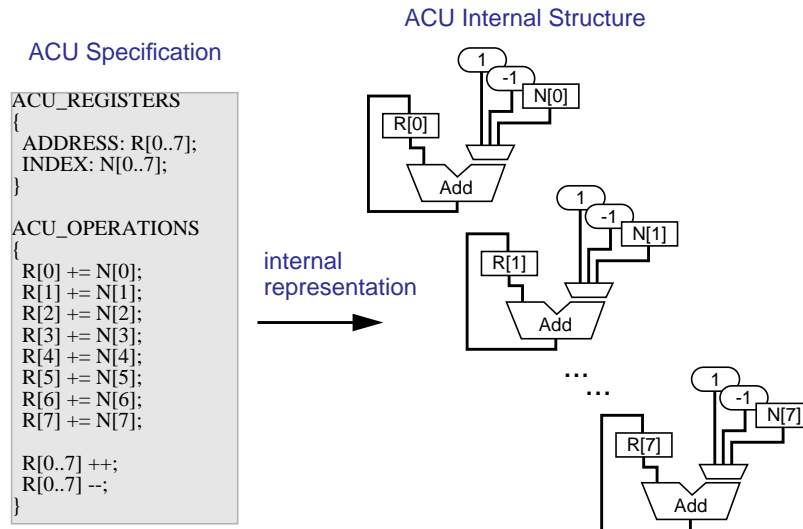


Figure 5.9 Address resource specification for the Motorola 56000

fication is represented internally as a structural connection of registers, adders, and constants. This behavioral representation describes naturally the full operation of the unit and it is useful for allocation and assignment, where pointers and increments can be bound to registers and constants.

A second example is shown in Figure 5.9 for the linear post-addressing portion of the Motorola 56000 DSP (see ACU diagram in Figure 5.1). The specification shows in a very simple manner the operations and resources of the functionality of the address calculation unit. This specification can be easily manipulated by a designer of the unit.

Further extensions to the specification model would include an identification of the functional units on which each operation is performed, as well as any encoding restrictions which are imposed by the instruction-set word. These considerations would naturally overlap with information needed by the target compiler for other phases of compilation including assembly, and would therefore fit it in best with a full instruction-set architecture model.

### 5.3.3 Instrumentation and tracing

In this context, instrumentation is defined as the transformation of the original source code to a duplicate plus the addition of tags. Tagging is formulated as a lexical and semantic analysis of the source program for the annotation of output statements that indicate run-time information. The tags include: function entries, function exits, loop entries, loop begins, loop-exits, array references including

induction variables and run-time *values* of induction variables. All other code is ignored. The run-time values of the array induction variables is the key component which allows the analysis of the array traversals.

Execution of the instrumented code produces a trace that is consumed by the main analysis block of the system. In this manner, the array access patterns can be determined quickly and with a minimum of semantic analysis. Note that tracing has also been used in other contexts to improve run-time performance [58]. The most important point about using tracing is that improvements to the code can be done *exactly* in the places where it is needed: the blocks of code which execute the most frequently.

#### **5.3.4 Stability analysis**

Given a reference to an array at a static position in the source program, stability analysis determines if this reference is visited in a linear fashion within a set of loops throughout the execution of a program. If so, it may be replaced by a pointer and an increment/decrement set. One could imagine two forms of stability analysis: static and dynamic. Each has its set of advantages and disadvantages. A stability analysis based on the static image of the program guarantees that the transformation is valid independent of the test data; however, the current state-of-the-art techniques are restricted to loops of very well-defined behaviors, for example loops whose boundaries are calculated by linear affine functions [29]. A stability analysis based on the dynamic image of a program has the advantage of the capability to analyze much more general loop structures, which contain non-obvious linear traversals of array references. Complicated array reference calculations can be determined to be stable, simply by examining the reference progression. However, the stability will only be true for a certain test program. If the test program does not exercise the entire program as it will run in the field, this stability analysis may not hold. Since embedded systems are usually simulated thoroughly on a desk-top before being downloaded onto the chip, a program not exercising all the loops would be a rare case.

The dynamic stability analysis has been implemented for the ArrSyn transformation. The analysis makes use of the dynamic trace of the program which quickly evaluates the characteristics of the array reference run-time progression. Induction variables may not be dependent on test data (values that are changed from execu-

tion on the desktop to execution in the field). Thus, a safe methodology is that the user ensures that no induction variables are dependent on data that resides on data memories, memory-mapped I/O locations, or interface registers.

For the dynamic stability analysis, an array reference  $A$  can be determined to be stable using the dynamic image produced by tracing. An array reference  $A$  is said to be stable within an inner-most loop  $IL$ , if the *stride* of  $A$  remains constant between every loop begin of  $IL$  without crossing a loop entry or exit of  $IL$ . The stride of an array reference  $A$ , is the difference in the value of the induction variable from one reference to the next. An array reference  $A$  is said to be stable within a loop  $L$  if it is stable for all its encompassing loops including the innermost loop. Array references which are stable within a loop may be eventually replaced by a pointer reference and a set of increment/decrement operations or combined with another pointer reference as described next.

### 5.3.5 *Pointer creation and combination*

Pointer creation and combination is the allocation phase of the analysis. The goal is to produce an appropriate number of pointers which match the capabilities of the address calculation unit. The approach begins by creating a pointer for each static array reference of the source program, given that the array reference is stable within a set of encompassing loops. This starting point uses the maximum number of addressing resources, one pointer for each array reference. From this point, static pointers are combined. Two references are made to use the same pointer through correctness preserving combinations. This is done until a reasonable number of pointers exist for the architecture at hand.

The combination strategy uses the following combining rules:

- pointers created for array references with exactly the same *signature* within the same nest of loops may be combined. The signature of an array reference corresponds to the programmer's view of the elements in the array. (e.g.  $b[i+2]$  and  $b[i+2]$  have the same signature, whereas  $b[i]$  does not).
- pointers with non-overlapping lifetimes may be combined.
- pointers referencing the same array at different relative positions and progressing in the same fashion within the same nest of loops may be combined.

As these transformations have various effects on the resulting code, rules are

```

for (i...          for (i...          for (i...          for (i...
{
  while (j...      while (j...      while (j...      while (j...
  {
    b[i] = b[i] + ...  *b_1 = *b_2 + ...  *b_1 = *b_1 + ...  *b_1 = *b_1 + ...
    b[i+1] = ...      *b_3 = ...        *b_3 = ...        b_1++;
    a[j] = ...        *a_1 = ...        *a_1 = ...        *b_1 = ...
  }                 a_1++;          a_1++;           b_1--;
  b[i] = ...         }                 }                 *a_1 = ...
}                   }                 }                 a_1++;
do                  *b_4 = ...      *b_1 = ...        }
{                  b_1++;          b_1++;           *b_1 = ...;
  x[j] =          b_2++;          b_3++;           b_1++;
} while (j...      b_3++;          }                 }
}                 b_4++;          do                 do
                  }                 {                 {
                  do                 *b_1 =           *b_1 =
                  {                 b_1++;           b_1++;
                  *x_1 =           } while (j...   } while (j...
                  x_1++;          } while (j...
} while (j...

```

a) Original Code    b) Pointer Creation    c) Pointer Combination    d) Pointer Combination

Figure 5.10 Pointer creation and combination example

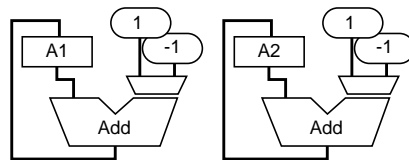


Figure 5.11 Example target ACU internal structure

executed with the following objective functions:

- reduce the number of pointers to an amount equal or below the number of available address registers.
- minimize the frequency of inserted increments/decrements of pointers.
- minimize the number of different valued increment/decrements for each pointer.

Figure 5.10 shows an example of the pointer creation and combining process. Consider a target ACU with 2 address registers, such as the one with the internal representation shown in Figure 5.11. Figure 5.10 a) displays the original C code; Figure 5.10 b) displays the creation of pointers, one for each array reference, a total of 6 pointers ( $b_1$ ,  $b_2$ ,  $b_3$ ,  $b_4$ ,  $a_1$  and  $x_1$ ) (Initializations of pointers are not shown so as to simplify the figure); Figure 5.10 c) shows a first application of pointer combinations, the array references with exactly the same signatures

and those with non-overlapping lifetimes. This results in a reduction to 3 pointers ( $b\_1$ ,  $b\_3$  and  $a\_1$ ). Figure 5.10 d) shows a possible second application of pointer combinations ( $b[ ]$  at different relative positions), reducing the number to 2 pointers ( $b\_1$  and  $a\_1$ ). This number of applications of pointer combinations depends on the availability of address registers in the ACU specification. For this example, the goal was to reduce the number of pointers to at most 2, to correspond to the number of address registers in the specification.

Notice that after pointer creation, the loop induction variables ( $i$  and  $j$ ) are no longer needed for referencing. Thus, the loops which use these induction variables may subsequently be mapped to any available hardware do-loops.

### 5.3.6 Address and index register assignment

Following their creation is the assignment of pointers and increments to address registers and index registers or constants (hardwired constant values). Lifetime analysis has already been done in the combination stage; therefore, the formulation of the problem is to find the best one-to-one matching of pointers to address registers and their respective increments to constants or index registers. If the number of pointers that exist after combining is less than the number of address registers, a direct mapping is usually possible. If the number of pointers happens to exceed the number of address registers, then some pointers must be assigned to memory and will be stored and loaded into a free address register.

Before we explain the assignment strategy, we shall define some terms. A pointer,  $p$ , is said to be *fully assigned* to an address register,  $A$ , when  $p$  is assigned to  $A$  and the increment/decrement values associated with  $p$  are assigned to index registers of  $A$ , ( $I_A$ ) and/or constants of  $A$ , ( $C_A$ ). This is depicted graphically in Figure 5.12.

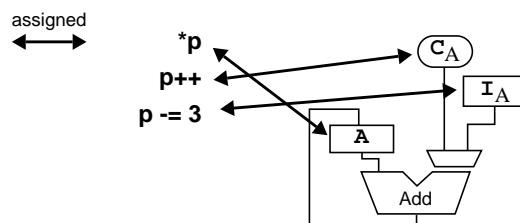


Figure 5.12 Pointer  $p$  fully assigned to address register  $A$

We define the *reference occurrence* (RO) of a pointer  $p$  to be the number of

times a value in memory is referenced by  $p$  in the execution of the program.

We define two objective cost functions for a pointer which is fully assigned to an address register. For a fully assigned pointer:

1. the *best assignment cost* (BC) is defined as the number of address calculation instruction executions in the final code.
2. the *estimated assignment cost* (EC) is defined as the best cost weighted by the probability that the indexing resources (i.e. index registers) be free for use.

The cost for an assignment is based on the frequency of increment and decrement instructions in the final code. This best assignment cost function reflects the number of times an ACU operation will eventually be executed in the final code.

These 3 values, RO, BC, and EC can be calculated by making use of the dynamic information provided by tracing, namely the frequency execution of basic blocks. The best assignment cost function (BC) does not correspond directly to the number of whole instructions that will be executed in the final code, since on most architectures many of these instructions may be compacted in parallel with other operations. However, it is a good reflection of the trade-off between different assignments. Similarly, the reference occurrence (RO) reflects the number of times a pointer will be used to store or retrieve data in the final code.

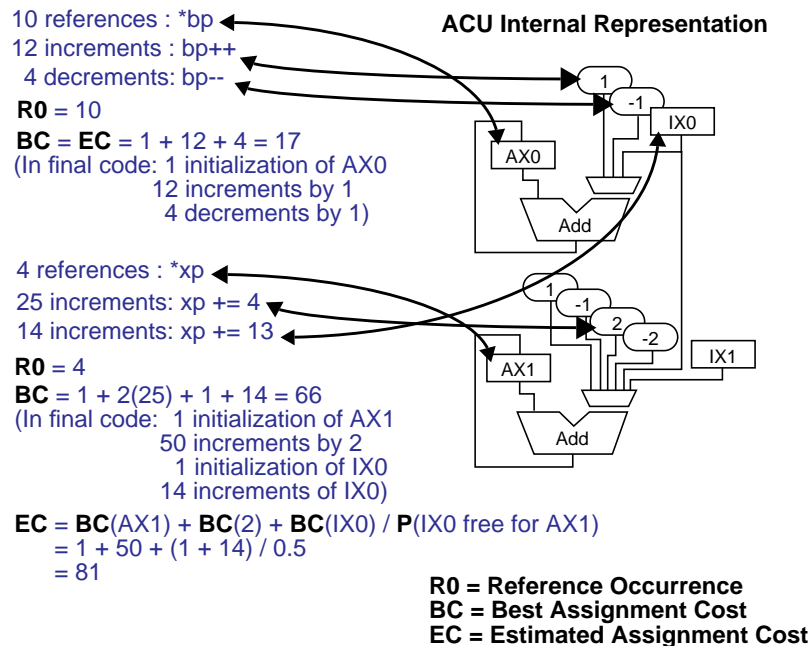


Figure 5.13 Examples of the reference occurrence (RO), the best assignment cost (BC) and the estimated assignment cost (EC).

Two fully assigned examples are shown in Figure 5.13. For the pointer `bp` which is fully assigned to `AX0`. The assignment to the address register `AX0` and constant indices of `+1` and `-1` results in a best assignment cost (BC) of 17, since an initialization `AX0 = &b[n]` will be executed once, the operation `AX0++` will be executed 12 times, and the operation `AX0--` will be executed 4 times. For this example we assumed that the initialization occurs once; the actual number of initializations and the value of the constant `n` are both dependent on the context in the program.

For the pointer `xp` in Figure 5.13 which is fully assigned to `AX1` (address register `AX1`, the constant `+2`, and the index register `IX0`) gives a best assignment cost (BC) of 66, since in the final code the initialization `AX1 = &x[n]` will be executed once, the operation `AX1 += 2` will be executed 50 times, the initialization `IX0 = 13` will be executed once, and the operation `AX1 += IX0` will be executed 14 times. The estimated assignment cost (EC) is calculated as the best cost formula weighted by the probability that the index register `IX0` be free for use for `AX1`. The probability  $P(\text{IX0 free for AX1})$  is 0.5 because `IX0` may be equally free for use with either `AX0` or `AX1`. The estimated assignment cost (EC) is 81, which reflects the fact that it is may be more costly to use `IX0` since it may not be free for use by `AX1`.

The assignment procedure is divided into 2 phases:

1. Determine a direct mapping feasibility: If the number of pointers is less than or equal to the number of available address registers (i.e. the pointer combination phase has succeeded), proceed to step 2. If not, assign the pointer with the smallest RO to memory. Repeat until the number of pointers is equal to the number of address registers.
2. For the direct mapping, fully assign pointers to address registers.

The assignment strategy of step 2 is subdivided into the following steps:

1. Exhaustively determine the lowest EC for each pointer supposing it were fully assigned to each address register.
2. Take the cheapest EC and execute the corresponding full assignment.
3. Update all the estimated costs (ECs) based on this assignment. Repeat step 2.

This estimated cost guides the assignment heuristic since it can determine the



best places for potential savings. As well, during step 3 of the strategy, if an index register is assigned, the algorithm keeps track of the value. It later attempts to share common index values wherever possible to reduce the number of initializations.

### 5.3.7 Transformation example

The array analysis flow described in the previous section has been implemented in a prototype called *ArrSyn* and tested on various benchmark examples for existing and possible address calculation units. A small detailed example of an *ArrSyn* transformation is described hereafter. Experimental results of *ArrSyn* used in conjunction with a dedicated compiler for a multimedia audio processor is described in Section 6.4.

A detailed example of the transformation process is shown in Figure 5.14. A close inspection shows many of the features of the system. All the array references have been changed to pointer references. Although there were 8 static array references in the original code, combination strategies have reduced the number of created pointers to 3. These pointers replace array references in the code with appropriate increments, decrements, and initializations. The pointers (and increments/decrements) have also been assigned to the address registers (*AX0*, *AX1*, *AX2*), index register (*IX*), and constants (+1, -1) in a manner best fitting the given architecture specification. The assignment of pointers to registers may be passed to a dedicated compiler using C extensions as described in Section 4.2.2.

In addition to the rewrite of code, the designer is given statistics: profiling frequencies of the execution of blocks, the number of occurrences of references of each created pointer and the number of occurrences of increments of different values (top-right of Figure 5.14). In addition, other statistics are printed at compile time, such as the frequency of reads and writes of the original arrays.

Note that after the replacement of arrays with pointer references, the loop counters (*i* and *j*) are no longer used within the two nested *for* loops. These loops are ideally suited to be mapped directly to zero-overhead hardware do-loops (if they exist in the architecture). A back-end process could recognize this in a control/data-flow analysis and produce the correct mapping. The *while* loop can also be replaced by a hardware do-loop, but care must be taken in the control/data-flow analysis because there are two possible exit points.

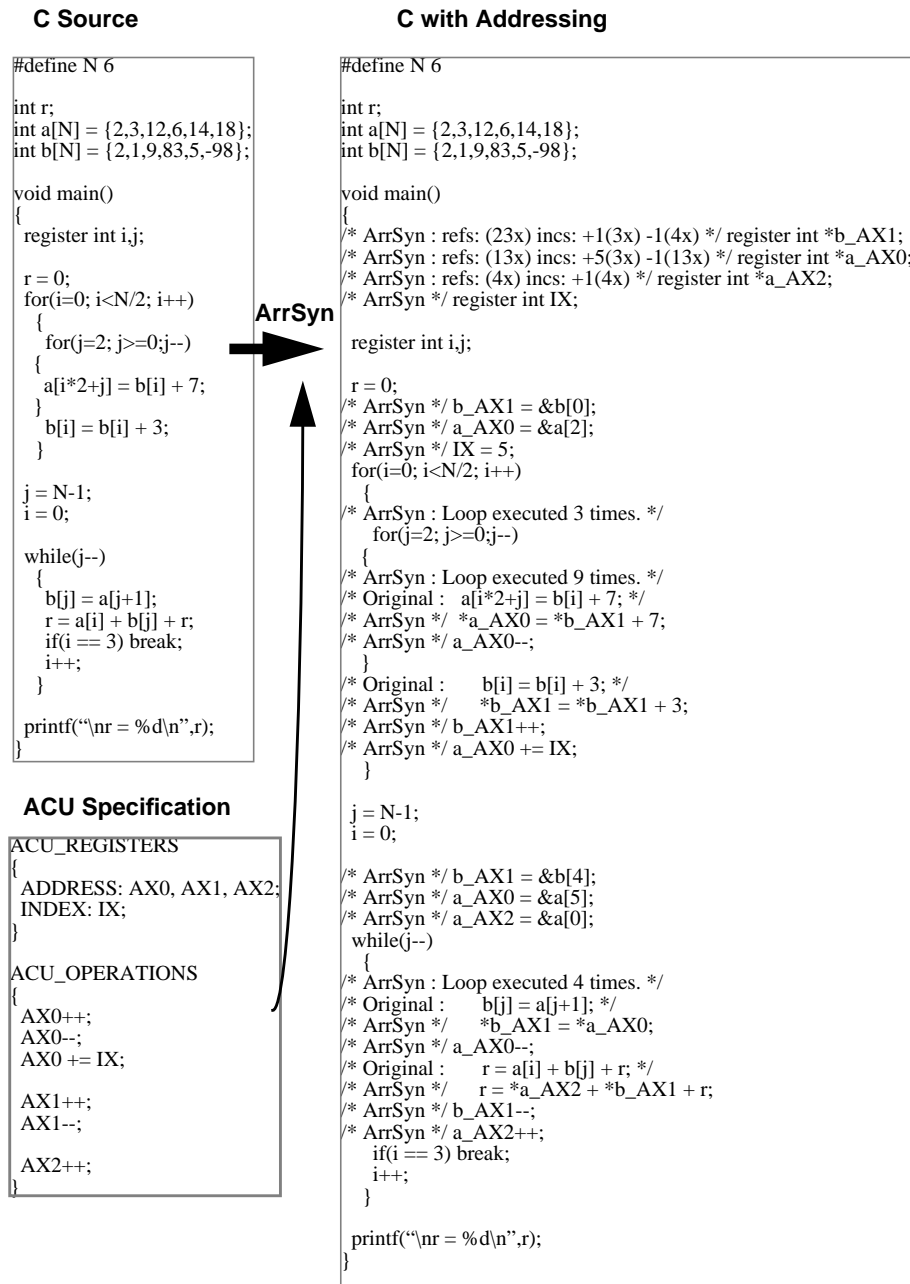


Figure 5.14 Example transformation: C source to C with addressing

## 5.4 Summary and future work

The contribution of this chapter has been to introduce an approach to transforming C code which makes efficient use of address calculation units (ACUs) on embedded DSP architectures. The strength of the approach is a specification model which describes the resources and operations of the architecture. This model allows the

designer to evaluate applications on different ACU architectures. A rapid evaluation can be performed by simple changes to the specification model. The output of the transformation is C code with explicit pointer addressing. The advantage of C code as the target is that the output may be fed to any processor-specific C compiler. Furthermore, the semantics of the output are easily understood by the programmer.

The main analysis portion of the transformation makes use of a dynamic trace from a host execution of the program. The ability to do this is a feature which sets the embedded application apart from a general computing application. Moreover, it is this feature which provides the fuel to the transformation algorithms to optimize the most critical portions of the code, which is clearly an advantage over static methods. The approach could be called *profiler-driven*, as the run-time is improved only after a host execution of the code.

The compilation approach has been implemented in a prototype tool called *ArrSyn* and tested on benchmark examples (discussed in Section 6.4).

Future work includes improvements to the combination algorithm to handle architectures with very few resources. Practical extensions to the tool include the provision for different sized data-types and the handling of multi-dimensional arrays and structures, which are important in areas such as video processing.

On the side of the specification model, common DSP Address Calculation Unit features such as modulo and bit-reverse addressing would be a significant improvement to the approach. As well, efforts to merge the specification with a complete model of the architecture sufficient for the entire compilation process would be welcome.

## Chapter 6: Pushing the Capabilities of Compiler Methodologies in Industry

For DSPs and ASIPs of many types, assembly level programming is common place; and therefore, experiences with compilation methodologies is an important step for the general acceptance of embedded software tools for specialized architectures. This chapter presents industrial experiences in three different projects using the two compiler systems described in Chapter 3. In each section, the architectures and compiler environments are presented followed by a discussion of the results and lessons learned. These lessons also include many of the practical issues discussed in Chapter 4. Following, experimental results of the DSP address generation approach of Chapter 5 are presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of the main principles of each compiler approach.

### 6.1 A Nortel ASIP for telecommunications

#### *6.1.1 Architecture description*

In Figure 6.1, a diagram is shown for a DSP which was developed in-house at Bell-Northern Research/Nortel. This Application Specific Instruction-Set Processor (ASIP) was developed for a private local telephone switch called a key system unit.

The architecture is inspired by VLIW principles. It is a Harvard, RISC architecture containing an ALU, Multiply-addition unit, ACU, and control unit. The 40 bit instruction word allows a significant amount of parallelism supporting: a control-flow operation, ALU operation, immediate, load-from or store-to memory, and an address calculation operation. The architecture has a number of features which set it apart from other DSPs. Bus connections have been reduced by making specific connections to registers, thereby reducing the instruction decoding but also the homogeneity of the register files. There is one register, R1, which can store

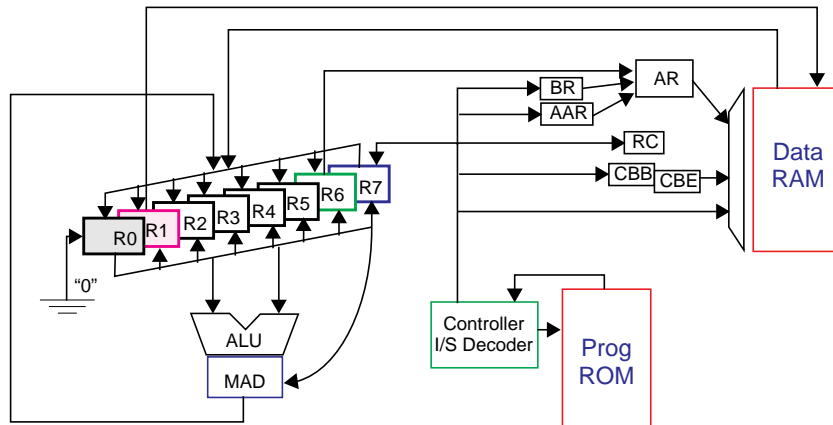


Figure 6.1 Nortel ASIP for a Key System Unit.

data from the ALU to memory; there is one register R6, which may be used to move a calculated address on the ALU to the address register, AR. One register, R7, may be used to hold an immediate value coming from the instruction word. Finally, the register R0 is a constant zero source and bottomless sink.

These measures place challenges on the development of software tools; however, they allow two significant architectural gains: speed through the reduction of multiplexers and shared busses, and fewer encoding combinations of the instruction word. The latter impacts directly on the needed instruction width; and consequently, the size and expense of the program ROM.

The ALU contains two barrel shifters, one at an input to the ALU and the other at the output of the ALU. This allows the support of various data-types which can be scaled at any moment without instruction delay penalty. Arithmetic instructions can be coupled with input and output shift instructions.

A post-modification address calculation unit is available for parallel execution. Addresses may be computed on the Auxiliary Address Registers (AAR) as well as the standard Address Register (AR). A Base Register (BR) is available for offsets in a custom addressing mode. A circular buffer mode is also available by means of the registers CBB (Circular Buffer Begin) and CBE (Circular Buffer End).

In addition to standard control-flow constructs like conditional/unconditional branches and subroutine calls, one level of hardware do-loop is available.

### 6.1.2 Compiler environment

As this is a custom architecture, no compiler had originally existed. Attempts to



of Figure 3.7, the read portion of Figure 6.2, a *write* portion similar to the read portion, and an extra set of address calculation patterns. A control-flow pattern set rounds out the full pattern set needed for the compiler.

The model-based approach brought two distinctive contributions which allowed compilation for the Nortel processor:

1. A pattern matching mechanism which allows the combination of multiply-accumulate and arithmetic/shift operations with no limitations on pattern-size. In addition the patterns support the concept of register classes and are organized in an efficient matching organization. More details can be found in [65].
2. A register assignment procedure which supports overlapping register roles. The special treatment of the constrained register resources was key to the ability to compile to this architecture. More details can be found in [66].

### 6.1.3 Experimental results

A variety of representative benchmarks were run for the Nortel architecture, of which a subset is shown in Table 6.4. This is a set of subroutines for a conference-call application. The CodeSyn results are compared directly to hand-crafted code with regard to code size. Notice that there is a fairly small difference between the number of lines of C code and the number of micro-instructions needed for implementation. This is indicative of the processor's large instruction word. Each micro-instruction usually contains two to four parallel micro-operations.

Table 6.4 Code size results of CodeSyn for the Nortel ASIP

Subroutine	Number of C-lines	Number of Instructions (Hand)	Number of Instructions (CodeSyn)	Percentage Overhead
Loudest	16	16	21	+ 31%
selectLoudest	39	65	75	+ 15%
selectSpeakers	23	21	36	+ 71%
linearize	11	15	19	+ 26%
sum	14	17	12	- 29%
compander	22	23	25	+ 9%
Overall	125	157	188	+19%

For this very specialized architecture, the benchmarks are an important indication that a compilation methodology can succeed even for processors with highly constrained register files. These initial results do not show superiority over hand

coding in assembly; however, as the compiler contains few optimization passes, it does show promise for the approach.

The rest of the examples that were run on this architecture are not reported here mostly because hand code was not written for the equivalent C sources. The main message was that compilation was successful for all of the examples thanks to the treatment of overlapping register classes.

## 6.2 The SGS-Thomson Microelectronics Integrated Video Telephone

The SGS-Thomson series of videophone systems (e.g. STi1100 [92]) is an example of a system-on-a-chip which contains a set of operators which communicate through a set of busses. The block diagram is shown in Figure 6.3.

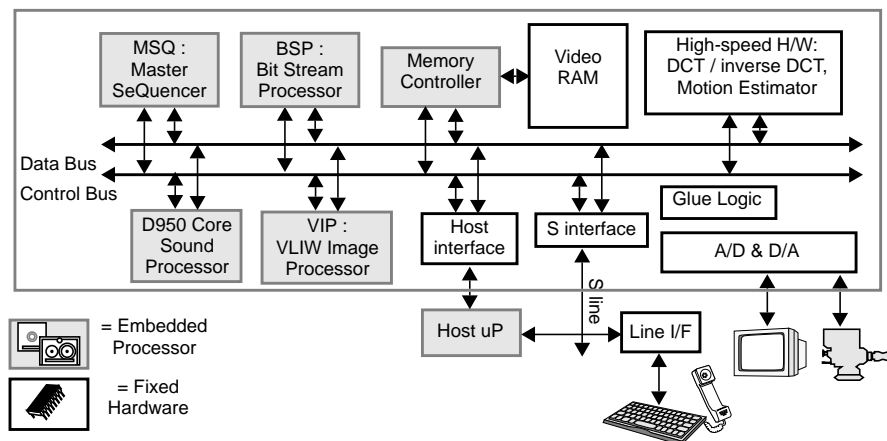


Figure 6.3 The SGS-Thomson single-chip Integrated Video Telephone

Some of these operators are designed as fully hardwired blocks to meet the performance requirements. In this case, behavioral synthesis methodologies are important for hardwired blocks (Architectural synthesis for the Motion Estimator of the IVT is discussed in [14]); however, to keep pace with the evolving standards, many of the IVT operators are designed as ASIPs [39] (Application Specific Instruction-Set Processors). With the constantly changing standards (e.g. H.261, H.263), block functions in software allow for late design changes and modifications, which are important in meeting the current market requirements.

With a wide variety of processor operators, the requirements for the compiler system is that it be easily retargetable to control-flow dominated architectures as well as to data-flow dominated architectures. It must adhere to strict hardware



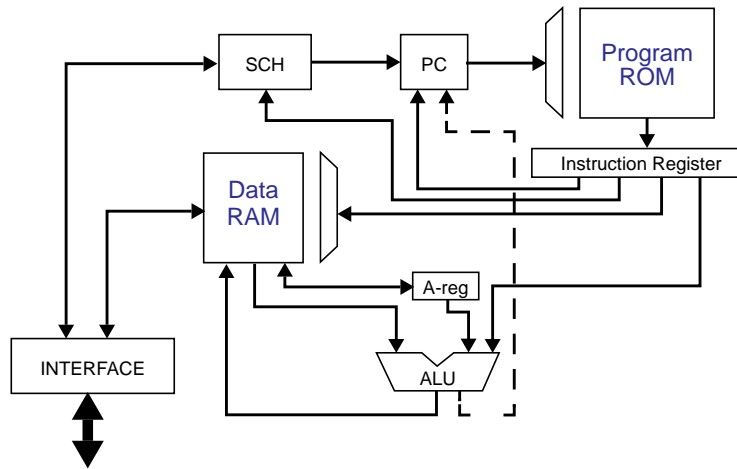


Figure 6.4 MSQ controller of the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone.

requirements like bus interface protocols as well as handle architecture specialization. Furthermore, since the system is real-time reactive, a performance overhead with respect to hand code cannot be tolerated.

Compilers were developed for three embedded processors of the videophone system shown in Figure 6.3: the MSQ (MicroSeQuencer), the BSP (Bit-Stream Processor), and the VIP (VLIW Image Processor). The D950 core is also sold as a stand-alone part and already has a C compiler. The memory controller, is a highly specialized block for memory-handling and has its own dedicated compilation utility.

### 6.2.1 Architecture descriptions

Figure 6.4 shows the architecture of the MSQ (Micro-SeQuencer), which is the top-level control unit of the videophone system. The architecture is a single execution stream controller providing standard ALU operations (ADD, SUB, AND, OR, CMP, SHIFT); as well as standard control operations (BR conditional/unconditional, BR indirect). Reserved instructions perform the function of the bus interface protocol. A unique property of this block is a unit known as the scheduler (SCH) which can affect the position of the program counter independent of the natural execution order of the program. The scheduler can access the interface directly and make decisions depending on values from the exterior.

The Bit Stream Processor (BSP) is a processor used mainly for the variable length decoding of macroblocks. As one part of the videotelephony decoding process requires many intricate bit-manipulations, the ALU of the BSP can perform a

number of bit-level functions. Apart from this feature, the BSP shares a similar architecture template with the MSQ including the bus interface and excluding the scheduler.

The VLIW Image Processor (VIP) is an embedded processor used for prediction routines. The highly-parallel architecture allows the video telephone to do the advanced motion compensation suggested in the H.263 standard. The architecture again shares the same bus interface as the MSQ and BSP; however, in contrast there are several functional units which work in parallel and allow a high throughput of calculations.

### ***6.2.2 Compiler environment***

The rule-driven compilation approach described in Section 3.3 was used to develop the compilers for the Integrated Video Telephone. For each of the architectures, a functional rule base was typically developed in two person weeks, or roughly half of the total targeting time. This allows early feedback to the architecture design team before the final refinements are made. Each compiler supports a subset of C; however, support of the entire functionality of the architecture is always available.

For the MSQ, the mapping of the C source to standard arithmetic and control operations was relatively straightforward. The architecture supports only one data bit-width and therefore only one C data-type is supported. Issues that arise are in the routing of data to the special A-register and appropriate scratch locations in the RAM. This is easily handled in virtual code selection. Architecture specific features required special attention, such as the mapping of case statements onto the indirect branching instruction, which requires alignment upon specific bits. This is handled in the mapping to the target machine, where a rule emits an alignment directive along with the assembly code. Other similar features exist and were handled just as easily with the appropriate rules.

For the interface, volatile register variables were defined for use in the hardware operations. In this manner, compiler rules map reads and writes of these variables onto the appropriate special instructions. It is important that the variables are defined as volatile, otherwise compiler optimizations could remove seemingly redundant read and write accesses.

The C compiler for the BSP (Bit Stream Processor) (Figure 6.3) had similar targeting issues to that of the MSQ. The main differing issue was the treatment and optimization of bit manipulation operations. The handling of the register interface was reused from the MSQ.

For the VIP, the declaration of compaction resources was a fundamental development issue, due to the very large instruction word (VLIW) and multiple execution streams. In addition, several built-in functions which correspond directly to hardware functions needed to be designed (see Section 4.2.1). Often, a hardware function of the processor does not correspond directly to C operations. Again, the register interface was reused from the MSQ. In this case, compaction is disallowed with interface functions. This can be guaranteed through a careful definition of the compaction resources (see Section 3.3.4).

### 6.2.3 Experimental results

**Compiler Validation.** The validation strategy used for the IVT processor operators is slightly different from the procedure presented in Section 4.3. As the processors of the IVT are an integral part of the entire system, the most important aspect to verify is the function in the system. The validation of the processor functionality was done as shown in Figure 6.5.

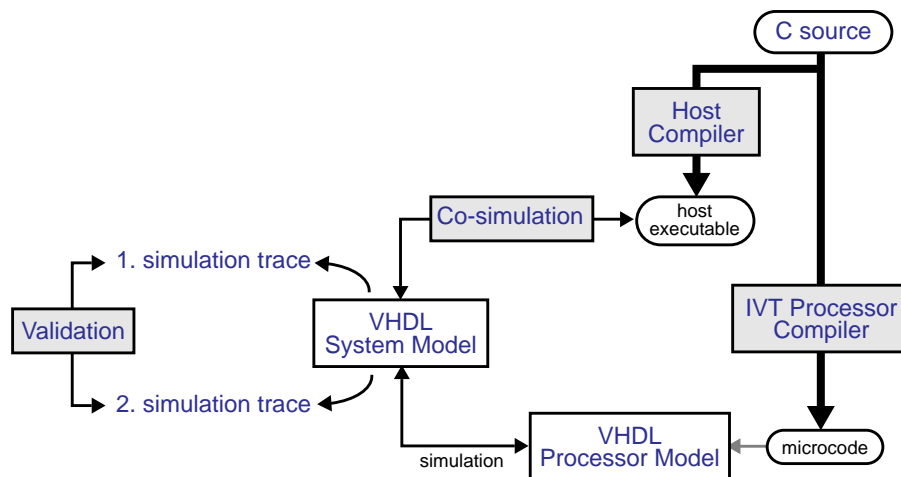


Figure 6.5 Validation of the processors of the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone

The key to the methodology is the presence of a co-simulation approach which allows the simulation of C code on the behavioral level integrated with a VHDL model of the system [67][80][104]. Individual simulations of the system replacing the co-simulation model with a VHDL model of the processor generates two simu-

lation traces which can be compared. The simulation methodology validates both the processor compiler and the VHDL processor model, given a test bench which thoroughly exercises the application C code. Notice that the methodology is similar to the one presented in Section 4.3 since the two principal elements are present: the host compiler and the target compiler.

**Compiler Results.** For the MSQ architecture, a subset of the H.261 code was taken from a prior design of the chip. This code had previously been written in process-level VHDL and was hand-translated to assembly. The examples contain a cross section of the different types of tasks the MSQ performs. This code was rewritten in C nearly line-for-line and compiled using the rule-driven C compiler. We then compared the compiled code with the hand-translated code written in assembler. The results are shown in Table 6.5.

*Table 6.5* Code size results of FlexCC for the SGS-Thomson IVT MSQ

H.261 Example	Number of C-lines	Number of Instructions (Hand)	Number of Instructions (FlexCC)	Percentage Overhead
grabber	209	189	203	+ 7%
motion	120	318	311	- 2%
idct_out	293	592	587	- 1%
host_interface	485	710	676	- 5%
<b>Average Overhead</b>				<b>- 1%</b>

On average, the compiled code size is roughly equal to the hand written code size. This indicates that for this processor, the compiler performs as well as an assembly-level programmer. This was possible because of the natural mapping from C to the instruction-set of the controller architecture. Only special cases needed to be addressed using the flexibility of rules.

For the BSP and VIP video processors, C compilers were also developed. The compiled code met all code size and performance constraints. Although we have no comparisons with hand code, this is a positive outcome of the previous benchmark which led to a decision by the design team to write all the code in C.

**Conclusion.** The strength of the rule-driven approach for the operators of the SGS-

Thomson Integrated Video Telephone is in its wide flexibility and rapid set-up time. Each of these compilers required roughly one person-month of development. The key lies in the well-bounded functionality of the hardware of each processor. Each programmable operator performs a limited number of tasks. This simplifies the development of the compiler and all the software development tools. At the same time, the performance of the hardware is quite high since it is streamlined for certain operations. However, the performance streamlining is not restrictive since flexibility is still available through the programming of the embedded software.

### **6.3 The Thomson Consumer Electronic Components Multimedia Audio Processor**

The MMDSP multimedia processor was developed at Thomson Consumer Electronic Components (TCEC) for high fidelity audio processing including the decompression and decoding of MPEG2, Dolby AC-3 and Dolby Pro-logic. In addition to being a stand-alone product (the STi4600 [94]), the architecture can also be embedded as a core for integrated products. The processor is used in applications such as Digital Video Disk (DVD), multimedia PC, set top boxes (satellite), High Definition Television (HDTV) and high-end audio equipment.

This project begins with a history of using a well-defined design process for an instruction-set architecture [12]. This methodology includes the use of a special macro-assembler known as *RTL-C*. Source code is written in a form which follows the syntax of C with a number of strict guidelines. Variable names refer to specific registers of the architecture and C operators map directly onto operations in the architecture. For operators that do not exist in C, built-in functions are used

(see Section 4.2.1). Each line of C refers to parallel executing operations on the processor.

While this style is restrictive for high-level coding, it has strengths over pure assembly coding, specifically in the architecture refinement phase. The use of the C language syntax allows a second path of compilation on the workstation in order to validate the algorithm behavior. In addition, it allows the use of standard Unix profiling utilities to measure real-time performance before the processor is designed. These utilities include the profiling functions of the `cc` and `gcc` compilers and profiling utilities such as `tcov`, `prof`, and `gprof`. More about profiling is discussed in Section 7.5.

While this approach is effective for architecture exploration, when no further changes are made to the hardware design, software development productivity is low since application code must be written on a level comparable to macro-assembly. With the increasing complexity of the MPEG audio standards, the need for an optimizing C compiler had arisen. The requirement for the compiler is that it allow higher productivity by allowing code to be written on a more abstract level and that it not compromise the quality (performance and size) of the code which can be written at the assembly level.

### ***6.3.1 Architecture description***

The architecture designed by TCEC is a Harvard, VLIW, load/store instruction-set processor and is shown in Figure 6.6. Communication is centralized through a bus between the major functional units of the ALU (Arithmetic and Logical Unit), ACU (Address Calculation Unit), and memories. The controller is a standard pipelined decoder with the common branching capabilities (jump direct/indirect, call/return), but also including interrupt capability (goto/return-from interrupt) and hardware do-loop capability. Three sets of registers are used to provide three nesting levels of hardware do-loops; however, this can be increased without limit by pushing any of these registers onto the stack.

Although the basic design of the unit can be compared to many classic processor architectures, there are certain features which allow it to perform well in this application domain. The post-modify ACU includes custom register connections and increment/decrement capabilities which allow addresses to efficiently traverse the special memory structures. This includes not simply increment by one, but

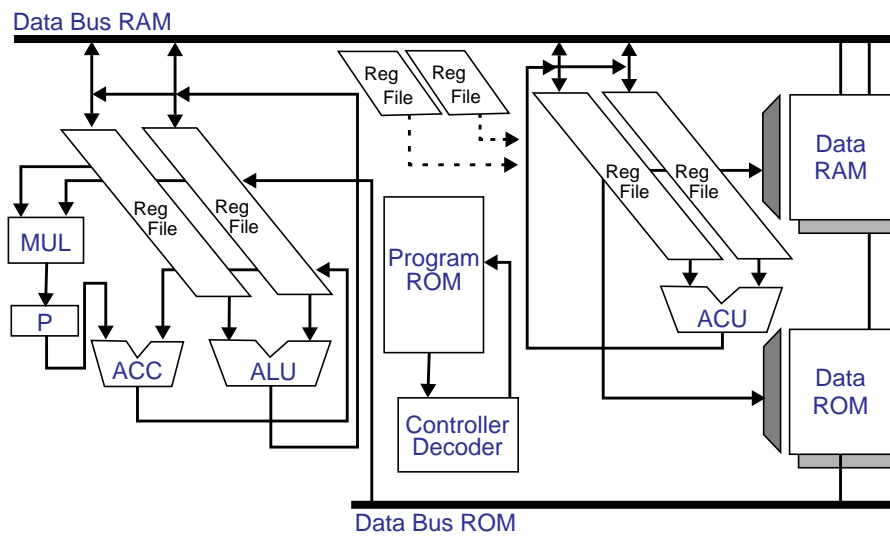


Figure 6.6 Thomson Consumer Electronic Components MMDSP architecture block diagram

increment and decrement by selected constant values. As well, the increment and decrement values may be held in dedicated registers. One last possibility is the capability to use a constant increment value coming from the instruction register. With this large number of possible operations that can be performed on the ACU, certain combinations are chosen to be encoded in the instruction set such that they execute in parallel to other operations.

The ACU has been designed to work in concert with the memories. The memory structure has been developed around the data-types needed for the application and anticipating future applications to be run on the architecture. A first partition separates memory into ROM mostly for constant filter coefficients, and RAM to hold intermediate data. For each of these memories, several data types are available, some are high precision for DSP routines, others are lower precision mainly for control tasks. In addition to the standard memory locations, there are memory-mapped I/O addresses for communication with the peripherals.

The MAC (multiply-accumulate) unit was designed around the time-critical inner-loop functions of the application. The unit has special register connections which allow it to work efficiently with memory-bus transfers. In addition, certain registers may be coupled to perform double precision arithmetic.

### 6.3.2 Compiler environment

The rule-driven approach described in Chapter 3 was used to develop the compiler

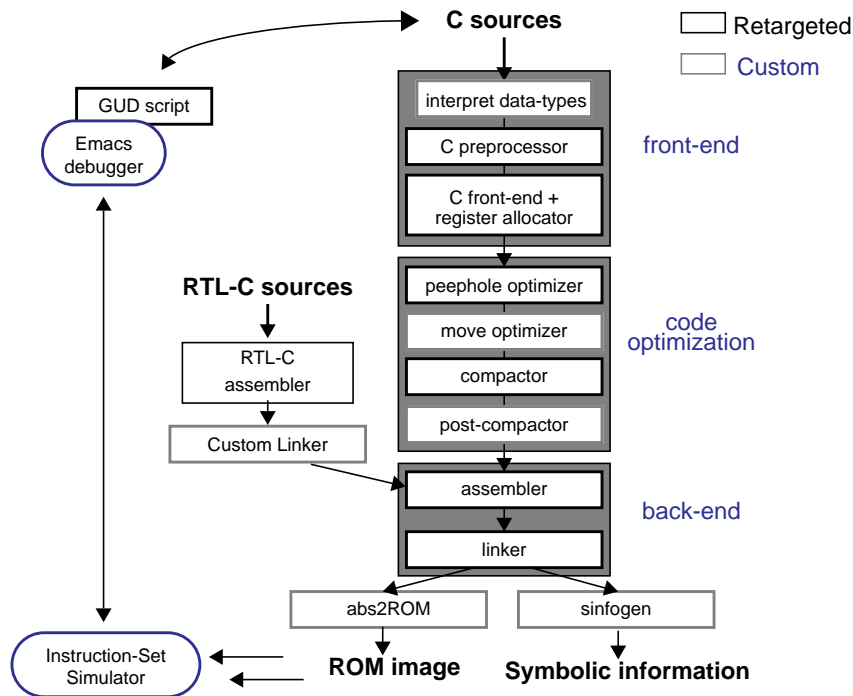


Figure 6.7 Full C Compiler suite and development environment

environment. In addition to the retargeting effort of the standard suite of tools, custom optimizations and interfaces were developed to provide a complete, firmware development environment. Some of these are custom optimization modules required for higher performance; many of these are simply tools required to interface into the design environment of the hardware team. The complete environment is shown in Figure 6.7.

**Custom Data-type Mapping.** For this architecture, the first key item to resolve was the support of the custom memory structure. This memory structure posed a unique challenge which stems from the multiple data-types and memories with varying addressing strides.

Inherently, the retargetable compilation system handles multiple memories and multiple data-types. However, it is required that all memories be of the same bit-width. This implies that data-types of increasing widths take either the same or more memory spaces. For example, if there are three data types  $dtype1$ ,  $dtype2$ ,  $dtype3$  where the corresponding bit-widths are such that  $dtype1 \leq dtype2 \leq dtype3$ . This implies that if  $dtype1$  takes 1 memory space and  $dtype2$  takes 2 memory spaces, then  $dtype3$  must take 2 or more memory spaces. For this architecture, this is not always true. There exists a larger data-type ( $dtype3$ ) which takes fewer memory spaces than a smaller data-type ( $dtype2$ ). It is in a separate memory space and



designed this way in order to meet the hardware timing requirements.

Many solutions were proposed. The first was to change the hardware. This was not possible because of timing restrictions. The second solution was to extend the memory handling of the compiler. A proposal was written for this solution which was to take several weeks to implement.

Instead of this solution, a third one was adopted. Although it took some time to conceptualize, it required only a small change to the compiler and took a relatively short time to implement. The details are somewhat complex, but the basic principle is as follows. The solution was to make the compiler interpret the larger data-type (*dt3*) as a smaller data-type (*dt2*) and vice-versa. Therefore, the smaller data-type would use more memory spaces than the larger data-type. The solution had only small side-effects. One was the requirement to make a small change to the compiler in interpreting constants so that constants used with the larger data-type were not chopped prematurely. A second concerned automatic variables placed on the stack, which would result in the waste of some memory spaces in some cases. This was partially resolved by providing some simple coding style rules.

**Data-flow Optimization.** As shown in Figure 6.6 the target architecture offers a considerable amount of parallelism. For example, the ALU and the ACU can work in parallel if they do not occupy the data bus at the same time. The instruction format provides orthogonal fields for parallel operations, so that compaction is rather straightforward (see Section 2.5 and Section 3.3.4). However, there are cases where data-flow optimizations must be performed in order to best exploit the available parallelism. The most important one is related to data moves within the ALU registers, which can be implemented either through the ALU, or through the data bus. The best choice is the one that allows another operation to be performed in parallel with the move, e.g. an ALU operation if the move is performed through the data bus, or any other operation occupying the data bus if the move is performed through the ALU. A custom *move optimizer* was implemented to improve the results of classic compaction. The utility keeps track of the operations that can be implemented in parallel with any move, while keeping track of the data-dependencies. It then selects the best move operation by evenly distributing the resource occupation, maximizing the potential parallelism, which is physically done later in the compaction phase.

**Post Compaction.** Although the processor has a 61 bit instruction word, the high amount of parallelism means that not all processor operations can be coded orthogonally. This means that certain sets of operations are chosen for parallel operation, while others must be sequential. In addition, the designer has chosen to implicitly encode operations into the instruction word by imposing restrictions on register usage, functional units, data-paths, etc.

This processor has a few encoding schemes which are beyond the capabilities of the compactor described in Section 3.3.4. To enhance the capabilities, a post-compaction phase was added which immediately follows compaction. This post-compaction phase is built upon the peephole optimization approach. Rules are provided which search for sequences of assembly operations and replace these sequences with compacted sequences. Resources may be defined as part of a rule so that no data-dependencies are violated during compaction. We applied the post compactor to the specific encoding restrictions specific to this instruction-set. It performs well for all those regions of code where optimization is possible; however, the classic problem of coupling with other phases of code generation remained (e.g. register assignment is determined before compaction). While this cannot be avoided, we have found that the problem occurs rarely in practice.

**ROM Generation and Custom Linker.** Customizing the ROM contents for both the program and data memories was done to interface to the hardware environment. This was a straight-forward task of format conversion and was anticipated from the beginning of the project.

What was not anticipated was the development of a custom linker to integrate the macro assembly code (RTL-C) with the C application code. As explained earlier, the hardware refinement was done by means of writing time-critical portions of the code on a low level (RTL-C). This historical code investment is tapped only by integrating it with the application code written in C.

The linking strategy which was developed is shown in Figure 6.7. The binary code produced by the RTL-C compiler is treated as absolute data in a specific location. The assembler passes this block along with the code produced by the retargetable compiler to the linker. Since the code produced by the retargetable compiler is relocatable, the linker is able to find an absolute position other than the position of the RTL-C code.

**Bit-True Library Development.** Our methodology includes a path to compilation on the workstation for validation of the compiler and simulator, as described in Section 4.3. For algorithm verification, this is also an important path since compilation and execution on the host is typically an order of magnitude faster than execution on the instruction-set simulator.

For compilation on the workstation, the behavior must match the bit-true behavior of the processor. This implies the provision of a C library for the workstation which contains functions for each of the built-in functions defined for the retargetable compiler. For this architecture, the most important of these are the multiply-accumulate functions which have different behaviors depending on the data format being used. In addition, some functions perform automatic rounding and limiting operations.

**Source-Level Debugging.** The instruction-set bit-true model, developed to simulate the processor architecture, was implemented with a standard interpretative interface. It contains a set of interactive textual commands to run simulations, watch registers and memory contents, load data-files, etc.

Although it was not a priority at the departure of this project, a debugging interface for running the instruction-set simulator was desired. However, as the tools were maturing, this interface was re-evaluated as an essential part of the environment. It was the important piece that allowed the verification of correct operation of both the compiler and the instruction-set simulator.

The debugging interface was developed as an extension to the popular editor *Emacs*. It runs both under GNU Emacs (available from the Free Software Foundation [116]) and XEmacs (available from [122]). It is based on the GUD (Grand

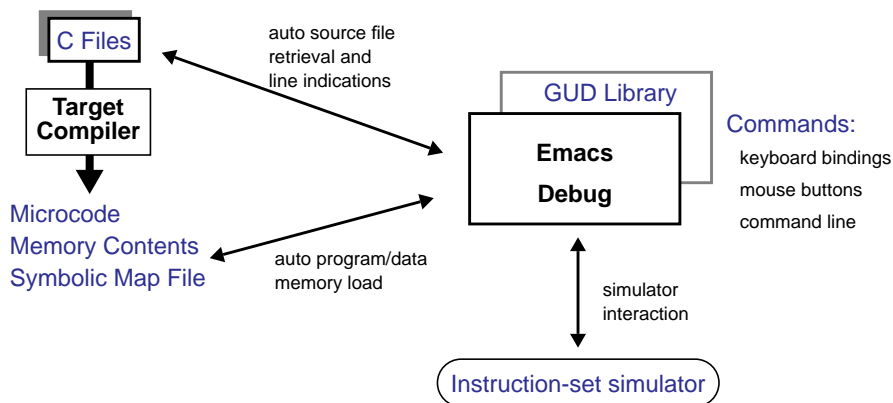


Figure 6.8 Debugging interface for the MMDSP C compiler

Unified Debugger) library which comes with Emacs. GUD also has similar interfaces for other debuggers (e.g. `gdb`, `sdb`, `dbx`, `xdb`, `perldb`). The interface is capable of setting break-points, cycle-stepping, C line-stepping, watching/printing registers, and printing global variables. The interface also includes an automatic retrieval of the appropriate source file with automatic C line indications as shown in Figure 6.8.

To our surprise, only a minimum of source-level debugging information is needed in the symbolic map file to have a usable system (generated by *sinfogen* in Figure 6.7). The first version of the debugger contained only source line number information. This allowed running of a simulation by stepping through the source code as well as to set and run to break points, ensuring the correctness of the control-flow which was generated by the compiler. The second version of the debugger also contains global variable information.

**Lessons in HW/SW Co-development.** Throughout the development of this embedded system, a high interaction between the hardware and software teams took place. In addition to the high educational value of this concurrent design exercise, one main conclusion can be stated. Each side of the development has its set of complicated constraints. For problems on one side of the coin, the only way to reach a change on the other side is to push a little until the other side either finds a second way within his constraints, or pushes back.

This scenario was indicative in finding a solution to the memory and data-type problem described earlier. From the software side, the simplest solution would have been to change the hardware; however, from the hardware side, the simplest solution would have been to change the software. A formal negotiation following a study of the difficulties on each side was needed to resolve the problem, which by chance fell on the software side.

A similar issue arose which involved the operation of the program stack pointer. The original hardware operation of the pointer caused some very inefficient operation of function calls and returns on the compiler side. This would have resulted in slow operation and a waste of either program or data memory. Again, the easiest solution was to modify the operation of the hardware. In this case, this was a simple change in the hardware and was immediately carried out.

There are no straight-forward answers in the process of concurrent hardware/

software co-design. The process is an on-going challenge of staying within the constraints of both sides. The important aspect is a high-level of communication. And, at the very least, the interaction between the hardware and software teams allows solidification of the instruction-set specification, which serves as the formal contract between the two teams.

### 6.3.3 Experimental results

**Compiler Validation.** The compiler validation strategy that was used is described in Section 4.3. A set of validation tests was assembled in various categories which are summarized in Table 6.6. The first categorization breaks up the tests into two large categories: tests which can be used by a broad range of architectures, and others specifically for this architecture. The second categorization separates unit tests and full algorithmic type of tests.

Table 6.6 Compiler validation tests for the TCEC MMDSP

Type of Test	Category	Operations, Functions	Number of C lines
Generic ANSI C	Unit Tests	bit-op, arith, relation, control, stack, ....	8742
	Integration Tests	bsearch, bubble, btree, gcd, wordcount, malloc, charcount, initptr	2842
Architecture Specific	Low/Medium Level Unit Tests	hardware loops, built-in functions, register sets, special registers	919
	Application Example	FFT	381
		<b>Total</b>	<b>12884</b>

Over 12000 lines of C code were run through the validation system, covering all the functionality of the processor that was expected to be used. This validates the stream of the firmware development environment including the retargetable compiler, instruction-set simulator, and bit-true library.

Table 6.7 Code size results of FlexCC for the TCEC MMDSF

Example	Number of Instructions Hand RTL-C	Number of Instructions FlexCC	Percentage Overhead
depack	80	High-Level (1) Source: 101	+26%
		Mid-Level (2) Source: 84	+0.5%
		Mid-Low Level (2-3) Source: 79	-0.1%
FFT	235	Mid-Level (2) Source: 261	+11%
		Mid-Low Level (2-3) Source: 228	-3%

**Compiler Results.** In successfully retargeting the compiler to this processor, the requirements set out at the beginning of the project were met. The compiler supports various levels of coding for different types of algorithms. We were able to evaluate the effects of these coding levels on two examples which were manually coded before the availability of the retargetable compiler. These results are shown in Table 6.7, which shows that for a high-level coding style a code size overhead of 26% is obtained. For a mid-level coding style, a code size overhead between 0.5% and 11% is obtained. The mid-low level coding style matches the code size of the manual code. While level 1 is the ideal level in the interest of clarity and portability, we have found that a mixture with levels 2 and 3 are necessary in time critical portions of the algorithms. For portions of the code which are not time critical, level 1 provides adequate code quality. It is interesting to note that level 4 (assembly-level) was never necessary, although it is a feature provided by the compiler.

**Recap of Human Effort.** Table 6.8 shows a breakdown of the effort spent on the various activities in the development of the compiler environment. The strong message from this breakdown is that roughly 30% of the effort was spent on validation of the compiler. This is an essential part of the design flow.

**Summary.** The MMDSF firmware development environment includes a retargetable compiler, an instruction-set model, a source-level debugger, a validation strategy, and interfaces into the hardware environment.

Table 6.8 Distribution of human effort by activity

Activity	Effort in Person-Months
Compiler Suite Retargeting	3.5
Custom Compiler Development	1.4
Compiler Validation	2.5
Support / Integration / Porting / Documentation	0.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.2</b>

The key lessons learned in this project are as follows:

1. Full environment: Although the compiler is the enabling technology, other tools are important to support the entire design activity. An instruction-set simulator and interfaces into the hardware design environment are critical parts. As well, the value of a source-level debugger cannot be underestimated.
2. Validation: A thorough validation test suite is mandatory, independent of the compiler approach. This constitutes nearly one third of the development effort, which includes the development of a bit-true library. If the application algorithms are available, these are of course the best validation benchmarks.
3. Compiler provision for low-level coding: Our experience shows that a code size overhead of about 30% is common for a high-level coding style. Our lesson was that the effort put into developing optimizations is a secondary priority after the requirement of the compiler to handle low-level coding styles. The designer must have control over the compiler so that he/she can meet his/her timing constraints when the compiler results are not satisfactory.
4. Concurrent design: Hardware and software should be developed concurrently in order to objectively evaluate the constraints on each. Concurrent development between hardware and software teams is always profitable.
5. Techniques which allows higher levels of coding are needed: Although point 3 is the industrial reality, compiler research should continue to find techniques which free the hardware designers from the software constraints.

#### 6.4 Moving to higher coding levels

A behavioral level of C for embedded processors can only be supported by

advanced compiler techniques which perform transformations based on the constraints of an architecture. For an effective transformation, the key elements are an architectural model and an explicit intermediate representation of the source algorithm. This next section describes experimental results of the address generation transformation for DSPs presented in Chapter 5.

#### 6.4.1 DSP address calculation: experimental results

For an early version of the processor architecture described in Section 6.3.1, experiments were run using the ArrSyn array transformation approach. The specification and internal representation for that architecture is shown in Figure 6.9.

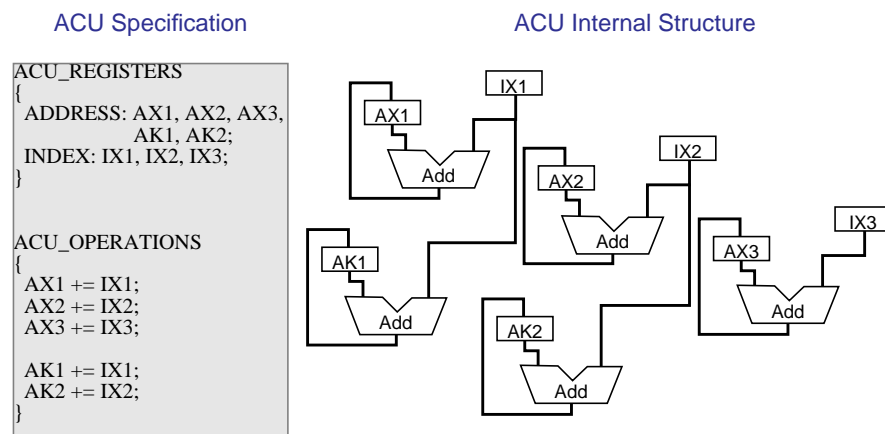


Figure 6.9 ArrSyn ACU specification for TCEC evaluation architecture

Working with a target compiler similar to the one described in Section 6.3.2, we compiled examples containing array references (1. High Level) with and without the prototype ArrSyn utility. These examples include various DSP functions, some specific to MPEG audio, others for standard DSP tasks such as interpolation and noise addition. Table 6.9 shows code size results, while Table 6.10 shows performance results. The values for Table 6.10 were calculated by assuming one cycle per instruction multiplied by the number of times a basic block was executed. This provides a first estimate of the performance, not taking into account conditional paths.

Table 6.9 and Table 6.10 show that a significant improvement in both the code size (23% reduction) and the performance (39% speed-up) resulting from the ArrSyn transformation. The explicit pointer addressing in the C code translates into a better utilization of the address calculation unit. Note that in these examples,



Table 6.9 Code size results of C compiler augmented by ArrSyn

Example	Number of Instructions C compiler	Number of Instructions ArrSyn + C compiler	% Improvement in Code Size
simple_loop	31	21	32%
median	83	56	33%
interpolate	72	49	32%
addnoise	59	48	19%
alloc	80	75	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>23%</b>

Table 6.10 Performance results of C compiler augmented by ArrSyn

Example	Number of cycles C compiler	Number of cycles ArrSyn + C compiler	% Improvement in Time
simple_loop	103	69	33%
median	715	350	51%
interpolate	1017	499	61%
addnoise	1219	802	34%
alloc	10309	8526	17%
<b>Average</b>			<b>39%</b>

the hardware do-loops which are available on the architecture have not as of yet been utilized. This will lead to an additional improvement because of both the replacement of expensive branch instructions for hardware loop instructions as well as the removal of looping variables.

The conclusion that can be drawn from these results in combination with the results of Section 6.3.3 is that the calculation of addresses is the largest major factor which results in the inefficient compilation of C code in a high-level style for this type of architecture. We believe that this also applies to many DSP architectures with post-modify address calculation units. Furthermore, we have shown using the ArrSyn prototype that it is possible to improve the results of compilation with an automatic high-level transformation based on an architectural model.

## 6.5 Conclusion: compiler case studies in industry

This chapter has presented several case studies applying compiler techniques to a

wide variety of embedded processor architectures in the fields of telecommunications and multimedia. Two compilation approaches have been used: model-based and rule-driven. While it is difficult to make a direct comparison of the two approaches as different architectures have many different needs, we can present some advantages and disadvantages of each approach. We attempt to keep our objectivity; therefore, comments will be restricted to the fundamental principles of each approach as there are many alien factors which contribute to the development of a project including software engineering and maintenance, company directions, and the constant changes to a development team.

It is possible to develop compiler algorithms well-adapted to architecture styles with a model-based approach. With a proper abstraction of the processor, a compiler can map source algorithms onto the architecture in a manner best suiting the data movement allowed in the structure. The ASIP developed at Nortel displayed a set of register characteristics canted toward special-purpose needs. As the CodeSyn compiler allows the description of register classes and structural abstraction of the architecture, it was possible to develop an instruction-set selection and register assignment approach driven toward special purposes. For a traditional approach to compilation, this task was shown to be very difficult as the homogeneous treatment of registers meant that registers in special roles could only be treated through reservation. The CodeSyn compilation results were shown to approach the quality of hand coded assembly programs, although further optimizations would be necessary to achieve the full performance of manual code.

In a setting where a compiler service is provided for a wide range of processor styles, the rule-driven approach has the advantage of covering the largest spectrum of machine types. It was shown to be possible to build compilers for architecture types varying from microcontrollers to VLIW DSPs. The approach has shown that the prototyping period is relatively short when setting up a compiler for a minimized architecture. For small architectures geared for very specific tasks such as the operators of the ST Integrated Video Telephone, retargeting time was shown to be on the order of one person month. However, the retargeting time has also been shown to be a strong function of the complexity of the architecture. Larger architectures such as the TCEC MMDSP supporting many data-types, multiple memories, and special operations needed a significant effort of approximately eight person months. In addition to the development time, roughly one third of the

development time is needed for validation, independent of the compiler approach.

Furthermore, while the rule-driven, open programming based approach allows a development team to offer a compiler service to a wide range of processors, the support of architecture exploration is relatively low. Designers are less willing to modify an instruction-set specification for a compiler which has taken many months to develop. The user reconfiguration of a compiler for architectural modifications can only take place through a simplification of the instruction-set specification.

It is the author's belief that approaches founded upon architectural models describing the behavior of the processor are key to user retargetability. In the prototype work of the address calculation transformation ArrSyn, the strength of the approach was shown to be in the resource-based analysis. The mapping of the source algorithm to the target is best done using a behavioral abstraction of the mechanics of the architecture. The compilation algorithms are then based on the unique aspects of the processor operations.

On a final note, while model-based approaches show a great promise for a high degree of both architecture-based optimization and the ability for architecture exploration, we have learned from the experiences of using a rule-driven approach that it is important to maintain flexibility. The variation in existing processor design styles, architecture mechanics, special-purpose operations, and idiosyncracies can only be described as immeasurable. By consequence, a compiler developer must be *ready for anything*. Perhaps, a level of open programming which allows rules to be incorporated into a model-based compiler may be an effective route to the ultimate retargetable compiler. Just as embedded software allows late design changes for the system-on-a-chip, rules could allow late design changes for retargetable compilers!

## Chapter 7: Tools for Instruction-Set Design and Redesign

While a retargetable compiler represents the principal implementation technology for the design of embedded systems, design exploration tools are also of great use for the development of a system. For example, a retargetable compiler does not provide many metrics to the designer of the processor, to measure how well the conception of the instruction-set has been done. Ideally, a maximum of feedback indicating the static and dynamic use of instruction codes is the type of information a designer would like to see during the design of the processor, and most certainly, as the processor evolves and is reused.

This chapter presents two new instruction-set design aids which allow a designer to analyze application code and conceptualize instruction level codings for a custom processor. Furthermore, a profiling tool is presented which permits algorithm exploration. The tools work together with a retargetable compiler methodology to allow the designer to explore design solutions of the instruction-set.

### 7.1 Tuning an instruction-set for different needs

For consumer electronics applications in multimedia and telecommunications, the most attractive feature of a programmable solution is the ability to track evolving standards with the flexibility provided by software. However, at what cost does a programmable solution have on the final product? Once in the product, the embedded system has a program which is *firm*, i.e. changed infrequently. Many questions can be posed: Are there available instructions of the processor that are never used? Is there hardware that could be taken out? Are there places where a new instruction could significantly improve the performance of the code?

The root of the issue is that an embedded processor's lifetime is extremely rich and long. In addition to the original design, many *flavors* of the architecture may be spun off for different reasons such as: modified applications, low cost versions,

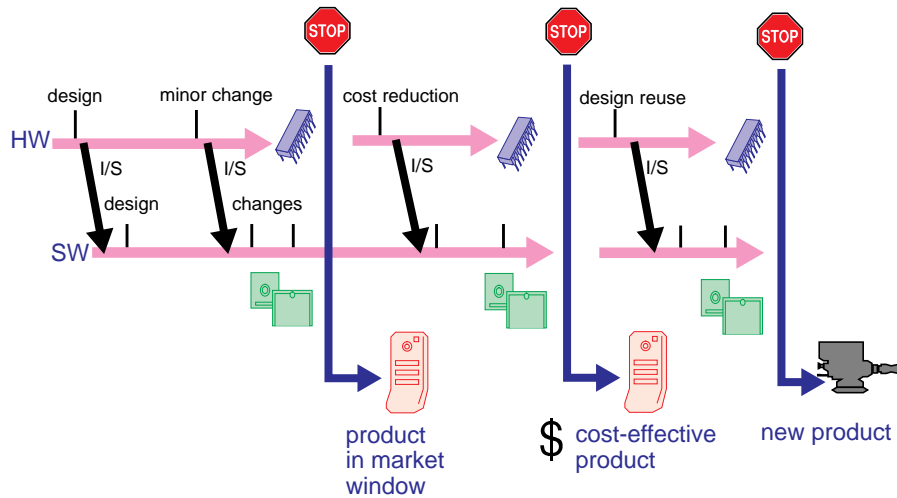


Figure 7.1 The rich lifetime of an embedded processor

and in particular reuse for other products. This idea is shown pictorially in Figure 7.1.

When a product hits its market window, typically, the project does not stop. A designer may need to redesign a low-cost version of the product or simply need to evolve the product. The designer is then faced with the challenge of better refining the architecture with an understanding of how well it fits the existing application code.

The needed tools in this area are those which furnish feedback of application code on a given architecture. This is shown in shaded blocks in the diagram of Figure 7.2, which is a subset of Figure 1.6 in Chapter 1. Ideally, the analysis tools should guide the designer by providing relevant statistics, and the possibility to make effective design changes based on those statistics.

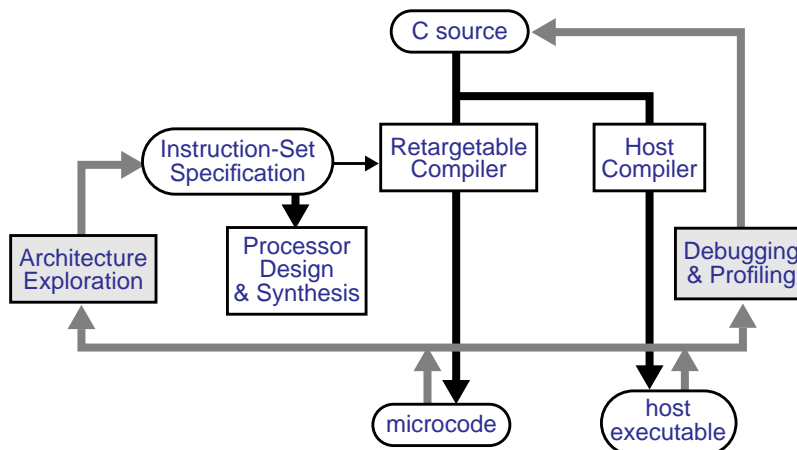


Figure 7.2 Tools for the design exploration of instruction-sets

## 7.2 Related work

Since the advent of instruction-set processors, quantitative approaches to architecture design have been proposed [43]. While these pioneering principles still hold for general computing systems, the constraints of embedded processor systems are putting an even larger importance on performance related architecture improvements.

The refinement of an instruction-set from a base superset of instructions have been proposed by Huang [48] and Holmer [45][46]. The main idea is to determine the most useful instructions from a base formula including parameters such as the execution profiles of compiled benchmarks. A model of the architecture data-path and the performance metrics allows the system to suggest good instructions to keep and to remove instructions of marginal benefit. While the statistical use is an important base principle, the approach has not yet been applied to embedded processors with architecture specialization and real-time constraints.

A similar approach has been proposed for the implementation of ASIP architectures in the PEAS system [4][50]. This approach attempts to minimize both software and hardware costs based on the compilation of source algorithms. A set of primitive operations allow compilation by the GNU gcc compiler, while a basic and extended set of operations may be included, based on the performance measures. For an objective area and power constraint, the performance is maximized by the system. However, optimization of the architecture below the primitive set of operations is not possible. The work of Breternitz and Shen [16] concentrate on a similar approach which uses a scalable Wide Instruction Word (WIW) architecture as an architecture template. A compiler and hardware allocator make the choices of functional units to include in the architecture.

The high expense of program memory for embedded processors has given rise to efforts of program width reduction such as instruction-word encoding (see Section 1.3.2). Some have approached the problem using a technique which reduces the width of the final program memory by exploiting redundancy [89]. Assuming all the application code is available, the entire program memory is divided into columns. Each instruction column which can possibly be generated from another instruction column is eliminated. This can be done through small hardware modifications such as exchanging multiplexer control lines and adding small pieces of

logic. Nevertheless, this is a *last ditch* optimization that is not likely to allow the compiler to add any new software.

### 7.3 Overall flow

This section introduces two prototype design aids called *ReCode* and *ReBlock* shown in Figure 7.3. ReCode allows the exploration of the relationship between the instruction-set and the corresponding application code of custom embedded processors. After analyzing the instruction-set and code, the designer can then use the rich set of editing functions to adjust the instruction set to the application code. The designer can make gains by removing unused hardware, relieving bottlenecks in the hardware, removing unused instructions, and adding higher performance instructions. In conjunction, the utility checks the consistency of the instruction word while changes are being made. The tool works together with the instruction-set specification used by a retargetable compiler and can automatically regenerate the specification changes.

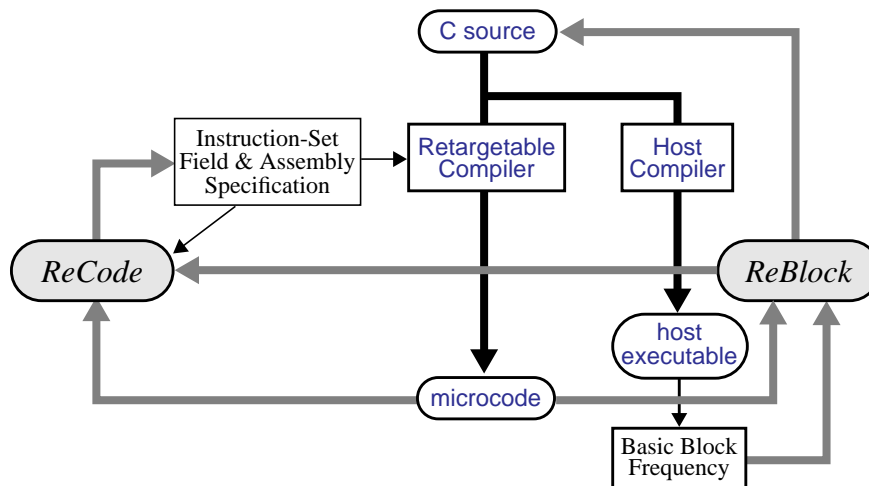


Figure 7.3 ReCode & ReBlock: tools for the analysis of application code.

In addition to static analysis of the application code, the tool can perform dynamic analysis with the link to the second tool ReBlock. ReBlock is a profiler requiring only the retargetable compiler and a host compiler for profile information. It automatically performs links between the microcode and the basic block executions on the host. Functions are available which estimate real-time performance based on the host execution. ReCode is able to work together with ReBlock to perform dynamic analysis of the instructions on either the basic block level or

Field Comments	28	24	20	16	12	8	4	0
ALU_BINARY_OP						XX	XX	
ALU_DEST								XX
ALU_IMM_OP							XXX	
ALU_LEFT							XX	
ALU_MAC_DEST								X
ALU_MAC_OP							XXX	
ALU_MAC_X								XX
ALU_MAC_Y								X
ALU_RIGHT								XX
ALU_SRC							X	XX
ALU_UNARY_OP						XX	XXX	
CONTROL_ADDR			XXXX	XXXX	XXXX			
CONTROL_IMMED			XXXX	XXXX				
CONTROL_OP							XXXX	XXXX
DIRECT_ADDR			XXXX	XXXX	XXXX			
DIRECT_OP							XXXX	XXXX
FORMAT	XX	XX						
IMMED			X	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX	X	
MMU_OP_X					X			
MMU_DEST_Y						X		

Figure 7.4 ReCode main window: display of instruction fields

globally on a set of application files.

## 7.4 Analysis of application code

The user interface to ReCode is window-based and visually displays instruction-words in table form. The tool shares the instruction field and assembly specification file of the retargetable compiler. Alternatively, field and assembly encodings may be entered manually through the graphic interface.

Figure 7.4 shows the main window which displays the instruction word of the processor. Fields are shown as horizontal groupings of instruction bits with labels such as 'XXX' indicating the use of a set of bits within the instruction word. Each field has a set of assembly codes, which correspond to an encoding of the field. (Examples of assembly codes are shown in Figure 7.6.)

The user has a set of commands which allow him to navigate through the field and assembly codings with an understanding of how the compiler uses the instruction-set. The compiler uses a set of micro-operations (*MOPs*) which expand into the different instruction fields. Micro-operations are higher-level compiler operations which are described in Section 3.3.1. *MOPs* are displayed as a set of buttons, each containing a function which highlights the expansion into the field entries of the main window as shown in Figure 7.5.



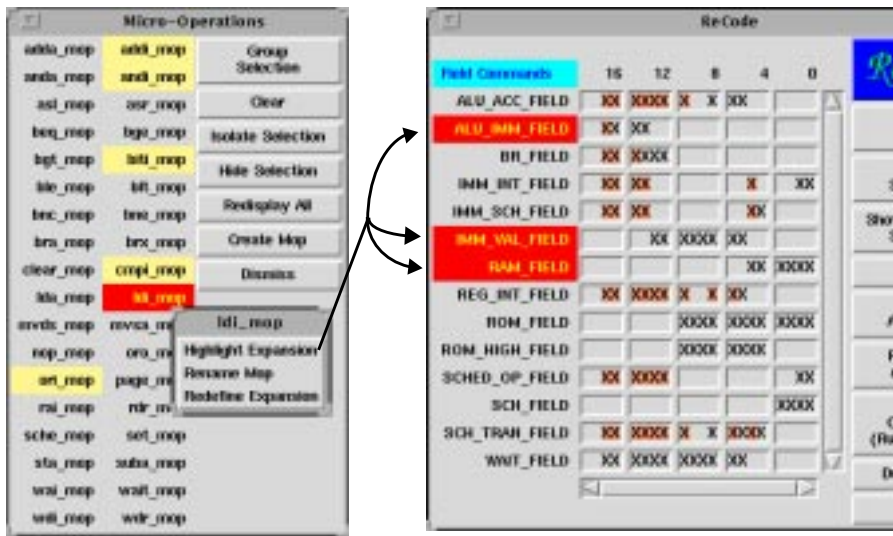


Figure 7.5 Expansion of micro-operations into instruction fields

Following, fields and/or assembly lines may be shown or hidden from view which allows the developer to isolate one section of the instruction-set that can be worked upon. Analyses may be performed at this point and changes may be made to the coding using a set of editing functions. An example of field and assembly code isolation is shown in Figure 7.6.



Figure 7.6 ReCode main window: isolation of fields and display of assembly

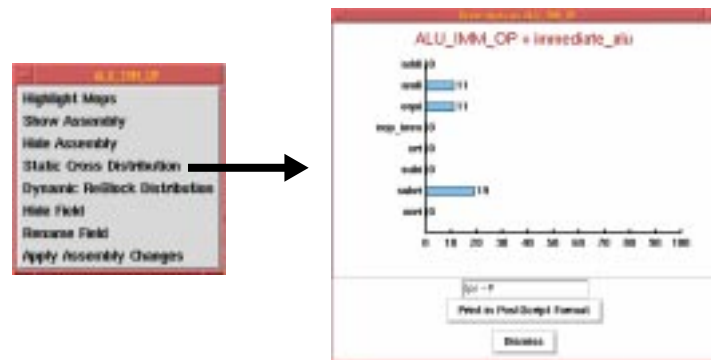


Figure 7.7 Field pull-down menu and static distribution plot

There are two main categories of functions:

**Analysis Functions:** These functions show the relationship between the instruction-set and the application software:

- **Static Use of Assembly Codes:** The frequency in which assembly codes are used may be generated in a distribution plot. Any combination of assembly codes may be used to compose the search pattern. This search pattern is matched to the machine code in vertical slices.
- **Dynamic Use of Assembly Codes:** Linking to the ReBlock profiler, dynamic use of assembly codes may be shown in a distribution plot. This can be done on selected regions in the code to resolve bottlenecks, or on all the application code to identify critical points in the hardware.

The distribution plots are activated by a pull-down menu on each of the fields in the main menu. Figure 7.7 shows an example of the pull-down menu and a distribution plot for the ALU\_IMM\_OP field combined with the `immediate_alu` assembly code of the instruction-set shown in Figure 7.6.

Static and dynamic analyses may also be done on resource activation fields, for example, busses and register files. For example, the distribution of data which moves from one register file to another over a data bus is information useful for the hardware designer. This allows the identification of both low resource use and the appearance of congestion spots.

**Editing Functions:** Working together with the analysis functions, the designer is able to use the editing functions to modify the instruction-set according to his/her requirements. These functions include:

- Consistency checking of assembly bit changes: The user is free to make changes which when applied will be directly reflected in the specification file. Verifications are made after the application of changes. Shortcut button touches are provided for autocoding ascending, descending and other fill patterns as well as the removal of unused assembly codes.
- Bit-field width reduction: Given a reduced number of assembly codes within a field, the width of the field may be reduced automatically.
- Regeneration of the instruction-set specification. Following an interactive session of ReCode, the instruction-set specification can be regenerated for the re-targetable compiler. A repass of the re-targetable compiler for all the application code is then possible. The resulting code can once again be analyzed by ReCode.

## 7.5 Profiling without a simulator

Basic block frequencies may be generated by the profile function (option `-a`) of many host compilers, including the publicly available GNU gcc [96]. This function adds extra code to a source file which counts the execution of basic blocks. After execution on the host, the frequency of occurrence of each basic block is written to a file. These basic blocks can be linked to the basic blocks of the re-targetable compiler machine code through the C line numbers intended for debugging. Figure 7.8 shows this process with an example.

Putting the pieces together allows the construction of a profiling browser: the ReBlock profiling interface is shown in Figure 7.9. The left highlighted column shows the correspondence to microcode addresses of the target compiler. The user can see the number of microcode instructions which correspond to each part of the C source. The second highlighted column shows the profile executions for each basic block of the host execution. These two columns may be shown or hidden from view allowing the interface also to be used as a simple editor.

As a consequence of the available information, this methodology can be used to effectively estimate real-time performance. Counting the number of assembly lines within each basic block and multiplying by the frequency gives the number of instruction cycles to be executed. Subsequently dividing by the instruction clock rate (either estimated or real) can give an excellent first order approximation of the

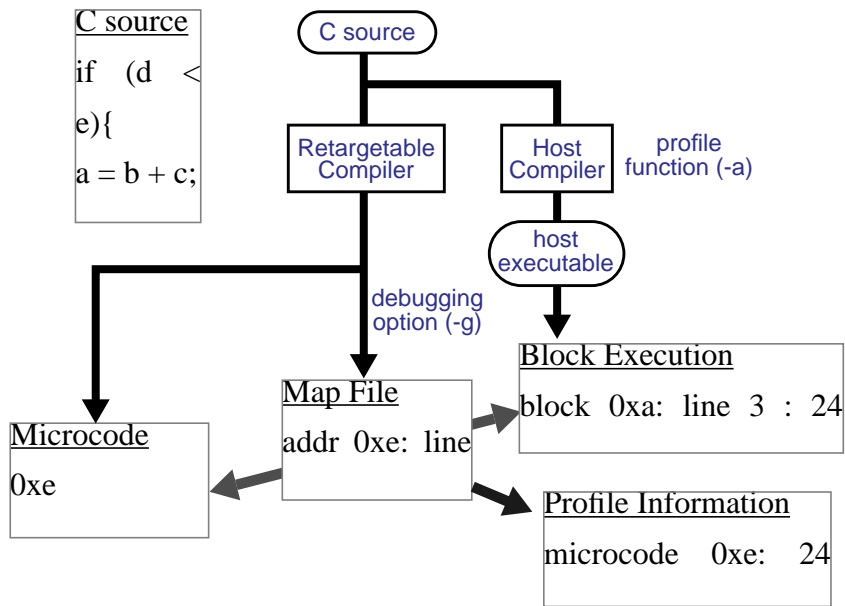


Figure 7.8 Generating profile information through basic block links.

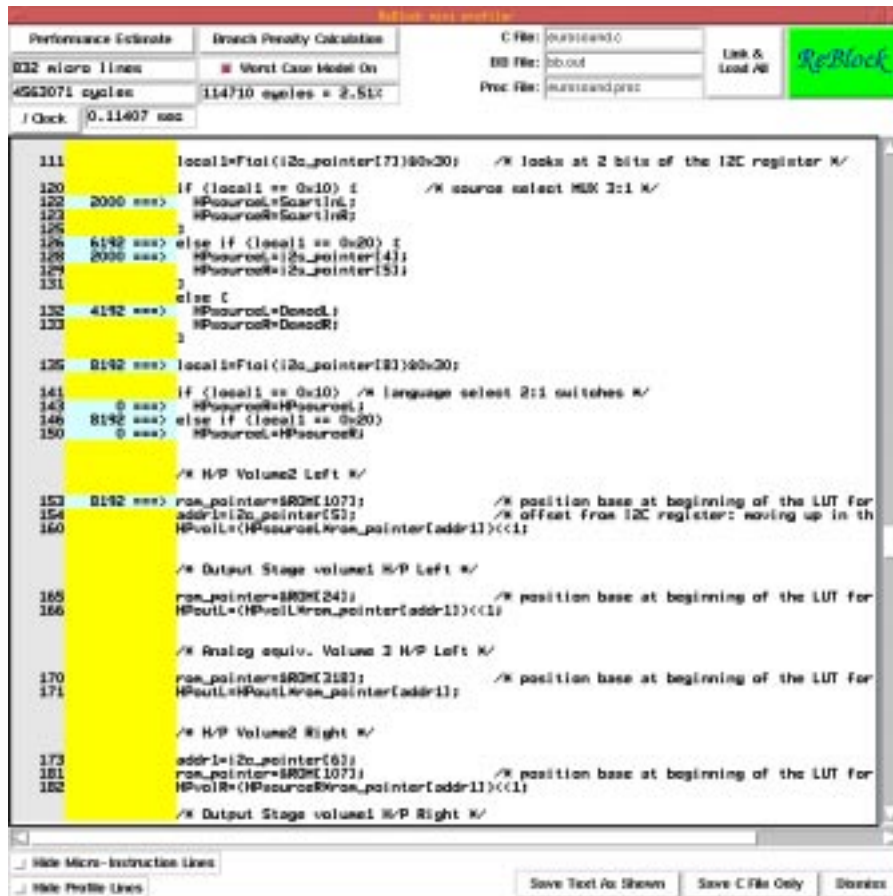


Figure 7.9 User-interface for the ReBlock profiler

final speed of the code. This real-time performance information can be used to redesign either the processor or the algorithm. Note that this methodology generates an estimate of real-time execution without the existence of an instruction-set simulator. This is important since the approach can be used in the design stage before a simulator is implemented. Furthermore, long simulations would favor this approach as an instruction-set simulator will run, at best, an order of magnitude slower than execution on the host processor.

The method assumes that instructions have a fixed cycle count. For processors with instructions of varying cycle count (e.g. CISC), a more precise correspondence to the instruction-set is necessary. This would be possible with a precise link to the instruction-set specification (e.g. via ReCode), but has not yet been implemented.

The ReBlock approach produces an estimate of real-time performance which does not take into account dynamic effects. For example, should the processor contain an instruction or data cache, cache-misses would incur delays. Another more common feature in embedded processors is a pipelined execution controller. Jumps or branches of the program incur an instruction-cycle penalty if the jump is taken. In ReBlock, a worst-case branch penalty model has been incorporated. Based on the basic block profiling executions, all the points where a branch has been taken are identified. The user can then specify the number of extra instruction cycles that each branch may take. This worst case model is useful for determining the upper and lower bounds on the total branch penalty.

This worst-case branch model does not take into account delay slots that the compiler has filled for delayed branches and returns that may exist in the instruction-set. A more precise branch penalty model would be possible; however, this requires a semantic knowledge of the branch instructions. This again could be furnished by the instruction-set specification. In this case, a branch penalty would be added only for those instructions which trigger a pipeline stall.

## **7.6 Experimental results**

Preliminary testing of ReCode and ReBlock has been done using five existing embedded processors, four from SGS-Thomson Microelectronics and one from Thomson Consumer Electronic Components. These processors include three

blocks of the Integrated Video Telephone developed in the Central Research & Development Group at SGS-Thomson and described in Section 6.2.1: the BSP (Bit-Stream Processor), the MSQ (MicroSeQuencer), and the VIP (VLIW Image Processor); the DAP (Digital Audio Processor) developed in the Dedicated Products Group of SGS-Thomson; and the MMDSP developed at Thomson Consumer Electronics Components described in Section 6.3.1.

This section will show just a skeleton of the possible uses of ReCode and ReBlock, illustrating with examples from the aforementioned architectures. The following does not provide suggestions for changes to these architectures, instruction-sets, or the algorithms. The compiler environments and the application code are all in some intermediate phase at the time of this writing. The examples are merely illustrations of the use of the ReCode and ReBlock tool set so that designers can perform similar analyses.

### 7.6.1 Operation instruction code usage

The ReCode utility may be used to determine how well instruction codes for a given machine are matched to the application code. We present examples using the MSQ architecture of the ST IVT and a number of H.261 algorithm benchmarks covering 1825 lines of assembly code: `grabber`, `idct_out`, `motion`, `scheduler`, `polling_loop`, and `host_if`. Figure 7.10 shows examples from two of the main functional units of the architecture, the ALU (Arithmetic and Logical Unit) and the branch commands of the sequencer unit. For the ALU, Figure 7.10 a)

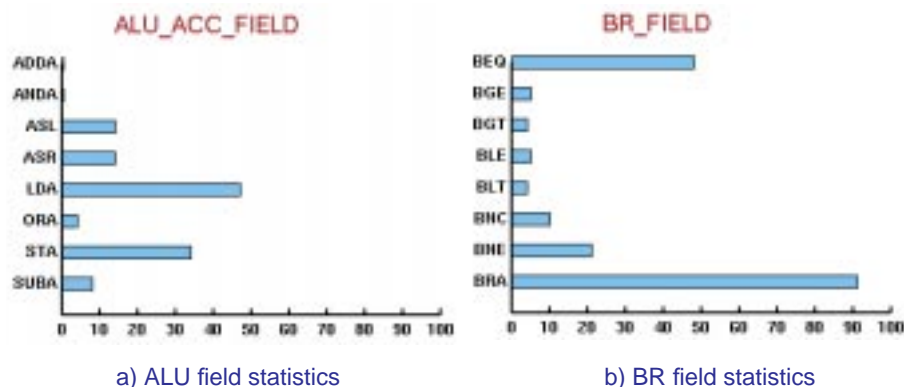


Figure 7.10 Distribution usage of assembly instructions for the ST IVT MSQ core.

shows that both the ADDA and ANDA operations are entirely unused in all of the application code. Because immediate operations ADDI and ANDI are used in the software means that the hardware operations cannot be removed from the func-

tional unit; however, the designer can make the consideration of removing these assembly codes for use elsewhere or for eventual reduction of the instruction width. The second aspect of note is that the LDA (load accumulator) and STA (store accumulator) codes are used more than twice the amount of times than any other operation. This high memory access for the accumulator may be a reason for considering an increase in the number of accumulators.

For the BR field (Figure 7.10 b), it is interesting to note that the BRA (unconditional branch) code is used nearly twice as much as any other branch code. This could indicate to the compiler designer that branch or block reorganization optimizations may be a wise area for investment. On the other hand, it could also indicate to the hardware designer that a delayed branching mechanism may be of use.

For the MMDSP processor, we conducted similar experiments on a small set of available examples (574 assembly code lines). For the DCU (data calculation unit), we found that only 22 of the available 64 operations were used. This means that a reduction of the field width by one (from  $2^6=64$  to  $2^5=32$ ) would limit the number of operations supported. However, it would still leave 10 opcodes for operations in the application code yet to be written. In further investigations, we performed an analysis of immediate operations with the DCU. These operations take one of 2 operands directly from the instruction-word. The analysis showed that although the unit is capable of routing the immediate value from either the left or right side of the DCU, it only ever uses the left side for immediate values. Removal of the immediate to the right of the DCU would give a one bit savings, with the additional savings of hardware. Using only the left immediate of the DCU is a heterogeneous characteristic of the compiler which illustrates an area of possible instruction-word savings.

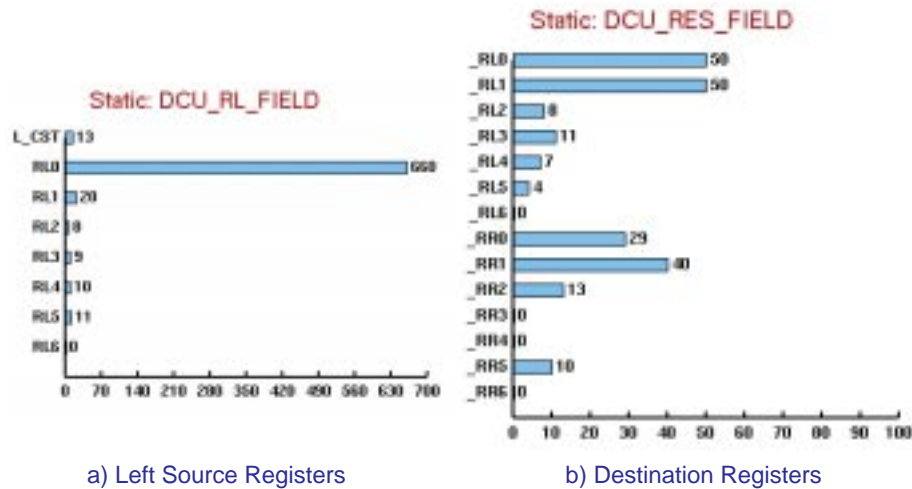


Figure 7.11 Static DCU register usage distribution

### 7.6.2 Data occupation and movement

ReCode can be used to statistically measure the characteristics of a compiler-machine relationship. For example, the register file usage indicates how data is routed through the machine according to the application code. Results indicate two things:

- How the compiler uses the available registers.
- How restrictive the instruction-set of the machine is on register usage.

Analyzing the MMDSMP architecture, we show a part of the register file usage of the DCU (Data Calculation Unit) in Figure 7.11. The left plot (Figure 7.11 a) shows the use of registers in the left source register file and the right plot (Figure 7.11 b) indicates the register usage of the output of the DCU. For the left source, removing the number of times the DCU was not used (NOP) from the default case (RL0) still leaves RL0 used roughly 100 times, which is 5 times more than any of the other registers (RL6 is not used at all). This is partly because the processor has special-purpose uses of RL0, and partly the choice of the register allocation of the compiler. For the destination registers, the distribution is also leaning toward the first registers in the set; however, it has a much more distributed use of the available registers than the DCU input. For this set of code, the input of the DCU requires much less freedom of register choice than the output. This is an interesting result for both the compiler developer and the hardware designer who may want to measure the trade-off of constraining more registers for other special purposes.

In further analyses of this architecture, we turned our attention to general data



movement. This processor allows register to register movement by means of a bus. This includes registers of the DCU, ACU, sequencer unit and processor interface. The bus instructions use  $2^6 + 2^6 = 64 + 64 \Rightarrow 12$  bits to specify the transfer, meaning 64 registers may move to any other 64 registers. Again, doing similar statistics on the application code, we determined that only 24 distinct registers are used as sources and 30 distinct registers are used as destinations. This means that by choosing a good subset of transfers, this field can possibly be reduced to  $2^5 + 2^5 = 32 + 32 \Rightarrow 10$  bits. Of course, this must be done with care, always allowing the needed data movement used by the compiler. Other (possibly slower) data paths exist in the architecture and can be easily matched to the less frequently used paths in the application code.

### 7.6.3 Algorithm and instruction-set profiling

Using the ReBlock profiling approach described in Section 7.5, a number of performance calculations can be made on source algorithms very early in the architecture development. For example, Figure 7.12 shows a report summary generated by ReBlock after an interactive use of the profiler for the Eurosound application running on the SGS-Thomson Digital Audio Processor (DAP). The top part of the

```

ReBlock Report Summary Date: 12/3/97 Time: 17:8:58
Directory: /users/sls/liem/ReCode/Eurosound
C File: stv.c Date: 5/1/97 Time: 10:21:39
Basic Blocks File:bb.out Date: 5/1/97 Time: 11:16:42
Symbolic Info:stv_dap.procDate: 5/1/97 Time: 10:58:49
HISTORY:
Performance estimate 1:
Block of C lines: full file
Total: 5319154 cycles
Total instructions: 924 micro lines
Clock: 28000000 Hz
Time: 0.18996978 sec
Performance estimate 2:
Block of C lines: full file
Total: 5815830 cycles
Total instructions: 924 micro lines
Clock: 28000000 Hz
Time: 0.20770821 sec
Worst case branch model: 2 extra cycles per branch
Branch penalty: 496676 cycles = 8.54%
Performance estimate 3:
Block of C lines: 263 to 370
Total: 719015 cycles
Total instructions: 107 micro lines
Clock: 28000000 Hz
Time: 0.02567910 sec
Worst case branch model: 2 extra cycles per branch
Branch penalty: 161132 cycles = 22.41%

```

Figure 7.12 Report generated by ReBlock profiler on Eurosound application

report shows the files being analyzed and their respective timestamps, while the bottom part of the report contains information on which performance analyses have been run. The first estimate shows the full C file being analyzed and a calculation of the real-time performance based on the user-specified clock. The second estimate shows the same analysis, this time with the addition of the worst-case branch penalty (2 cycles per branch) which would account for nearly 9% of the total application performance. The third estimate is focused on a region of C code (lines: 263 to 370) where the worst-case branch penalty would account for over 22% of the performance of this region. The user is free to make estimates on any parts of the code, playing *what if* games with the parameters such as the clock frequency and the number of cycles for each branch penalty.

In addition to speed calculations, the link from the instruction-set analysis tool, ReCode, to the profiler, ReBlock, allows the statistical use of assembly codes to be augmented by their dynamic use. For example, in Figure 7.13, we show both the static versus dynamic use of ALU immediate operations in the same ST DAP architecture for the Eurosound application. Notice that although the `equi` instruction appears the most frequently in the microcode, it is executed many thousands of times less than the other instructions `andi` and `subri`. These may be important measurements for improving the performance of the instruction-set architecture.

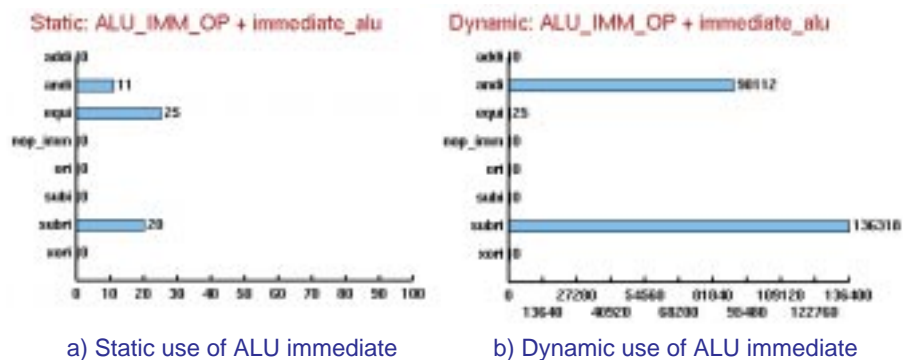


Figure 7.13 Example of static versus dynamic instruction statistics for DAP architecture

## 7.7 Chapter summary: instruction-set exploration tools

This chapter has presented a toolset for instruction-set design of embedded processors. These design aids serve to support the naturally long lifetime of an embedded processor architecture as it evolves from an initial product to a cost reduction and

is possibly reused for new products.

The ReCode instruction analysis tool allows a designer to perform measurements of the instruction-set of an embedded processor with regard to the existing application code. The analysis functions include the ability to show distribution of assembly codes, both in static and dynamic form. Using this information, a set of editing functions are provided to the designer such that the instruction encoding may be modified and the specification for the retargetable compiler be automatically regenerated. At this point, a compilation may be re-run for the modified instruction-set.

The ReBlock profiling tool allows performance analyses of microcode, linking the results of the retargetable compiler with the execution on a host. Thus, the dynamic information is generated without the use of a dedicated simulator, which means the analysis can be done before the simulator is implemented. Furthermore, the execution run-time would normally be an order of magnitude faster than interpretive instruction-set simulation. The ReBlock profiling information is also used to support the dynamic analysis functions of ReCode.

Experiments have been done with a set of existing processors. Example analyses were presented showing results which are both useful for the embedded system designer and programmer. These include aspects of functional unit usage, register and data-bus occupation, and performance-oriented calculations including worst-case branch penalties and dynamic use of instructions. The information generated by these analyses may also be useful to the compiler developer wishing to improve his/her algorithms.

Many avenues for future work lie ahead. The natural first step is to conduct more experiments with new architectures. The tools are currently being explored by two design groups at SGS-Thomson Microelectronics. With the number of possible new features, additions will be made with priority to designer requests. The set of current requests include the addition of an application programming interface (API) to ReCode, more possibilities on the reorganization of statistics, and the ability to perform critical path analysis with ReBlock.

As well as these incremental improvements to the toolset, the approach has opened some avenues for larger projects in ASIP design. One of the most tedious tasks in the implementation of the processor hardware is the HDL description of

the instruction-word decoder. This is especially true if there are changes to the instruction-set during the refinement of the architecture and throughout its lifetime. A link from the instruction-set to the functional unit behavior of the architecture could possibly be a way to generate this description.

A second project is in the area of low power coding. Given that both the instruction-level coding and the execution profiles of the application are available with the ReCode/ReBlock toolset, it would be possible to implement an instruction-set recoding algorithm which minimizes the power utilization of embedded software on a processor. This could even be brought one step further taking into account the power draw of functional units, should the previously mentioned project be in place. The largely untouched domain of ASIP design is open for new ideas in research and development.



## Chapter 8: Conclusion

### 8.1 Summary and contributions

This book has presented a wide range of aspects regarding the application of compiler methodologies to embedded processor systems. Retargetable compilation techniques have been shown to be an important design technology for the constraints of today's embedded architectures. To begin, an evolution of embedded processor architectures was presented, showing the application pull on the characteristics of instruction-set architectures. It is recognized that real-time constraints put significant demands on the performance of embedded processors such as DSPs. This is manifested in RISC, pipelined, and VLIW principles for architectures with specialized functional units and register structures.

Furthermore, memory real estate is being acknowledged as one of the most important resources, especially for the system-on-a-chip. This has given rise to instruction-word encoding schemes for DSP architectures which improve the program memory utilization. For DSP as well as MCU architectures, instruction-word minimization is also manifested in unusual program memory management like program paging.

These new embedded architectures have brought about new challenges for modern compilation techniques. An overview of traditional and emerging compiler techniques have been presented with respect to these embedded processors. A wealth of appropriate techniques have been discussed; however, a number of areas need to be further researched and developed.

Following, two practical retargetable compiler systems were presented. The CodeSyn compiler developed at Bell-Northern Research/Nortel is based upon a model of the architecture including the behavior of instructions, the structural connectivity, and a set of resource classes. The advantage of the approach is the ability to automatically retarget the system by changes to the model. The algorithms for compilation are all centralized by the architecture model. In particular, enhanced

pattern matching and selection algorithms as well as register allocation and assignment algorithms for special-purpose registers were shown possible. A disadvantage of the approach is that processor targets must lie within the boundaries of the architecture model and any peculiarities of a new target must be treated by updating the algorithms.

The FlexCC compiler used by SGS-Thomson Microelectronics is based on a rule-driven approach. The compiler has many traditional compilation steps that have been reorganized in an open-programming environment. Each step allows the execution of parameterized rules which manipulate the transformation of code to the target. The advantage of the approach is the flexibility for a very wide set of architectures. Standard rules can be put in place for most cases, while the developer can concentrate on processor idiosyncracies. Results are heavily dependent on the development effort put into optimization and retargeting time is strongly dependent on the complexity of the architecture. A disadvantage of the approach is that it requires an expert's development time, which makes architecture exploration difficult.

Next, practical issues for firmware development environments were discussed. These include language support, coding styles, compiler validation strategies, and source-level debugging. All of these are important considerations for projects in industrial environments.

In Chapter 5, an approach was proposed targeting the address calculation units of DSP architectures. As memory access is a particularly important performance consideration for signal processing, this type of transformation is critical for an effective compiler. The approach introduces a flexible architectural model and a compiler transformation for address generation. The system can be easily integrated into any target compiler to improve performance results. Furthermore, the simplicity of the specification allows a designer to do architecture design space exploration.

Chapter 6 summarizes the application of many of the principles and techniques presented in Chapters 2 to 5 to a set of processors used in industry. The processors include a telecommunications ASIP developed at Nortel, a set of operators for the Integrated Video Telephone at SGS-Thomson Microelectronics, and the MMDSP developed at Thomson Consumer Electronics Components. The main conclusion

is that model-based transformations show a promising avenue for high performance compilation to embedded processors. However, it remains important to have a significant level of open-programming, the strength of the rule-driven approach. A number of lessons came out of the experiences including the need for full firmware development environments, the need to reserve approximately one third of the development time for validating a compiler environment, the need for the low-level coding style support in a retargetable compiler, and the need for high communication of hardware and software development teams.

Finally, Chapter 7 introduces a set of application and architecture exploration tools which provide feedback and analyses to the designer of an embedded system. These tools allow the statistical analysis of instructions in application code in both static and dynamic modes. Furthermore an approach for performance profiling was proposed which does not require the full development of an instruction-set simulator. The methods fit into a retargetable compiler methodology providing a means for exploration to the embedded system designer.

For the area of embedded system design, the projects and developments described in the text have made its main contributions in three principal areas:

- Practical methodologies and experiences with retargetable compilation in industrial applications of embedded systems.
- A model-based transformation which performs efficient address generation for post-modify based address calculation units.
- A set of exploration tools which permit a designer to refine either an architecture or algorithm within its application domain.

## 8.2 What's ahead?

In comparison to compilation for general purpose processors, the *savoir-faire* in retargetable compilation for embedded processors is currently in its infancy. The industry is slowly making steps which are improving the situation; however, the advances can only be described as a *crawl* in comparison to the advances in the technologies of embedded processor architectures. Today's popular solution to the poor state of embedded software development tools is simply to hire more engineers who inevitably code on the assembly level. It is surprising to see the large number of job opportunities today for engineers with embedded processor assem-



bly experience. As more and more assembly lines of code are written, companies become locked to old architectures, systems become more sophisticated, and the embedded software crisis mounts. A revolution of compilation techniques is needed to revise the electronic industry's traditional view of embedded software.

On the other hand, the designers of embedded processors are the first to see the importance of software tools for both the design *with* and the design *of* embedded architectures. Even they are beginning to put together their own embedded software tools from scratch. The need for tools for embedded processor systems coupled with the emerging popularity of hardware-software co-design leaves us little doubt that the revolution in design technology for embedded processors will indeed arrive.

How this technological revolution will present itself is an open question. The research community appears to be resting its hopes on the path toward completely retargetable compilers, where a simple specification of the processor is enough for the tool to reconfigure all its transformations. I remember some discussions back at Nortel wondering how far we could take this concept. We imagined this ultimate tool that could take anything a designer could stuff into it: behavioral descriptions, RTL descriptions, netlists, even the chip itself plugged into a socket and - *wham, zap, presto* - out comes a brand new optimized compiler for the hardware!

Having seen the wide variety of architectures that exist today, it is not likely the case that this extreme goal will be achieved. If we were to compare retargetable compilation to the growing area of behavioral synthesis, while they are analogous on the level of techniques they perform their respective tasks based on two very different premises. The behavioral synthesis process *constructs* an architecture from a set of components with a nearly unrestricted set of resources. The only constraints are those imposed by the designer, such as a time deadline or a power budget. On the other hand, a retargetable compiler does not have the freedom to construct. It is obliged to *conform* to the fixed architecture. The transformation algorithms do not merely have constraints as objectives; these constraints *are* the specification! A programmable processor could function on any wide number of principles that some ingenious (*or nutty!*) designer has dreamed up. The chances that a compiler specification can adequately describe any possible processor design style are slim.

While we can abandon the idea of a fully retargetable compiler, we can well imagine the possibility of restricted retargetability within architecture *flavors*. Once one category of processors is handled well by a compiler, it is foreseeable that flexibility be incorporated so that it can be parameterized; and therefore, the range of compiler retargetability would be restricted to a well-known set. This point makes Goossen's work [36] on the classification of instruction-set processors by their properties an important contribution.

Just as we identified the importance of customizing an architecture to the needs of an application, software tools which can easily match the processor customization through compiler parameterization will be an added competitive factor. By the way, that applies not only to instruction-set processors but to any programmable system design which includes hardware and software.



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## Glossary of Abbreviations

ACU	= Address Calculation Unit
ALU	= Arithmetic and Logic Unit
ASIC	= Application Specific Integrated Circuit
ASIP	= Application Specific Instruction-Set Processor
BDS	= BNR Data Structure (an internal form for the CodeSyn compiler developed at BNR/Nortel)
BNR	= Bell-Northern Research (now Nortel)
BSP	= Bit Stream Processor (an operator of the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone)
CDFG	= Control-Data Flow Graph
CISC	= Complex Instruction-Set Computer
CODEC	= Coder / Decoder
COFF	= Common Object File Format (a debug format)
dag	= directed acyclic graph
DAP	= Digital Audio Processor (a processor developed at SGS-Thomson Microelectronics)
DCC	= Digital Compact Cassette
DCU	= Data Calculation Unit
DECT	= Digital European Cordless Telephone
DMA	= Direct Memory Access
DSP	= Digital Signal Processor <i>or</i> Digital Signal Processing
DWARF	= Debug With Arbitrary Record Format (a debug format)
ELF	= Embedded Linker Format (a debug format)
FFT	= Fast Fourier Transform
FIR	= Finite Impulse Response (a type of DSP filter)
gcc	= GNU C compiler
GNU	= GNU's Not Unix (recursive definition)
GSM	= Groupe Special Mobile (European cellular standard)
HDL	= Hardware Description Language
ICE	= In-Circuit Emulator <i>or</i> In-Circuit Emulation
IIR	= Infinite Impulse Response (a type of DSP filter)
ILP	= Instruction Level Parallelism <i>or</i> Integer Linear Program
IMEC	= Interuniversitair Micro-Eleektronica Centrum / Interuniversity Microelectronics Centrum (a Belgian research institute)
INPG	= Institue National Polytechnique de Grenoble / National Polytechnical Institute of Grenoble

ISG	= Instruction Set Graph (a model used by the Chess compiler developed at IMEC)
ISO	= International Standards Organization
ITU	= International Telecommunications Union
IVT	= Integrated Video Telephone
MAC	= Multiply Accumulator
MAD	= Multiply Adder
MCU	= Microcontroller Unit
MI	= Micro-Instruction
MIPs	= Million Instructions Per Second
MIT	= Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MMDSP	= Multimedia Digital Signal Processor (a processor developed at Thomson Consumer Electronics Components)
MMIO	= Memory-Mapped Input / Output
MOP	= Micro-Operation
MPEG	= Motion Picture Experts Group
MSQ	= MicroSeQuencer (an operator of the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone)
nML	= not a Machine Language (an instruction-set specification language)
RAM	= Random Access Memory
RISC	= Reduced Instruction Set Computer
ROM	= Read Only Memory
RTL	= Register Transfer Level (a hardware description level) <i>or</i> Register Transfer Language (gcc internal representation)
SPAM	= Synopsys Princeton Aachen MIT (a joint compiler project)
ST	= SGS-Thomson Microelectronics
TCEC	= Thomson Consumer Electronics Components
TI	= Texas Instruments
TIMA	= Techniques de l'Informatique et de la Microélectronique pour l'Architecture d'ordinateurs / Techniques of Informatics and Microelectronics for computer Architecture (a French research laboratory)
VHDL	= VHSIC (Very High Speed Integrated Circuit) Hardware Description Language
VIP	= VLIW Image Processor (an operator of the SGS-Thomson Integrated Video Telephone)
VLIW	= Very Long Instruction Word
VLSI	= Very Large Scale Integration <i>or</i> Integrated Circuit
VOP	= Vertical Operation

## Appendix A: Description of Addressing Modes

### Common Addressing Modes

This section describes some commonly used addressing modes for instruction-set processors. It is important to note that the names of each mode often vary from architecture to architecture. For example, for some architectures the term *Register Pre-Indexed* may be shortened to *Indexed*, if no other register or indexed modes exist.

**Immediate.** The data is found in the instruction. In assembly programs, this is commonly denoted by a hash mark (#).

e.g. `addi R2, #0x1a, R3`

The second operand is in the immediate mode.

**Register Direct.** The data is found in a register. In many architectures, there are more than one register set which are usually denoted in assembly programs by different prefixes. In some architectures, a notion of *working registers* may overlap a set of absolute registers.

e.g. `xch R0A2h, r4`

The first operand is in the direct register mode for an absolute register. The second operand is in the direct register mode for a working register.

**Register Indirect.** The data is found by means of an address pointing a second register file.

e.g. `ld (r11), R200`

This example is for the ST9 architecture. If register 200 contains 178 and working register 11 contains 86 then this instruction loads the value 178 into register 86.

**Memory Direct .** The data is found in memory by means of an absolute address.

e.g. `ld 1234, r9`

Load the value found at address 1234 into register r9.

**Memory Indirect (or simply Register).** The data is found in memory by means of an address found in a register.

e.g. `st #0x3f, *AX[0]`

Store the immediate value (0x3f) into memory at the address found in register AX[0].

**Register Pre-Indexed.** The data is found in memory by an address found in a register plus (or minus) an immediate offset.

e.g. `ld (AX2+2), R4`

The value found at the address in register AX2 offset by 2 is loaded into register R4.

**Register Post-Indexed.** The data is found in memory by an address found in a register. Additionally, the address is post-incremented or decremented following the memory operation.

e.g. `st RR3, *AR++`

Store the value in RR3 to memory at the address in register AR, then post-increment the address in register AR by 1.

e.g. `ld *AY2 -= IY2, R6`

Load the value at the address in register AY2 into the register R6, then post-decrement the address in register AY2 by the value in register IY2.

## Appendix B: Compilation Examples

### **High-level vs. Mid/Low-level C code**

This section presents an example of a C code algorithm written on a high level of abstraction compared with the same algorithm written on a low level of abstraction. While both algorithms perform the same function, it is clear that the first (high level) is much more independent of an underlying architecture than the second.

The characteristics of the first are high-level control structures, array references, and all the operations found in ANSI-C (All High-level). The characteristics of the second are built-in functions (Mid-level), references to arrays by pointers (Mid-level), allocation of registers and pointers into register sets (Mid-level), and assignment of registers in specific registers (Low-level).

```

/*-----
= `radix_high.c'
=
= - written on a high abstraction level
-----*/
#include "mpeg.h"
long tcl[256];

void radix4(long* fftbuf, int loopcnt, int top, int bottom, int pos_inc, int
neg_inc)
{
    int i;
    int descend, ascend;
    int offset=64;

    long ar,br, ai,bi, yin;
    long cr,dr, ci,di, yan;

    descend = top;
    ar = fftbuf[descend];
    br = fftbuf[descend-offset];
    cr = fftbuf[descend-(2*offset)];
    ascend = bottom;

    for(i=0;i<loopcnt;i++)
    {
        dr = fftbuf[descend-(3*offset)];

        ai = fftbuf[ascend];
        bi = fftbuf[ascend+offset];
        ci = fftbuf[ascend+(2*offset)];
        di = fftbuf[ascend+(3*offset)];

        yan = ar + cr;
        yin = br + dr;
        fftbuf[descend] = yin + yan;
        fftbuf[descend-offset] = yan - yin;

        yan= ar - cr;
        yin= bi - di;
        fftbuf[descend-(2*offset)] = yan - yin;
        fftbuf[descend-(3*offset)] = yan + yin;

        yin= ai + ci;
        yan= bi + di;
        fftbuf[ascend] = yin + yan;
        fftbuf[ascend+offset] = yin - yan;

        yin= ai - ci;
        yan= br - dr;
        fftbuf[ascend+(2*offset)] = yin + yan;
        fftbuf[ascend+(3*offset)] = yin - yan;

        bottom += pos_inc;
        ascend = bottom;
        top += neg_inc;
        descend = top;

        ar = fftbuf[descend];
        br = fftbuf[descend-offset];
        cr = fftbuf[descend-(2*offset)];
    }
}

void main()
{
#ifdef VALIDATION
    int i;
    for(i=0;i<256;i++) tcl[i]=(long)i;
    outinit();
#endif

    radix4(tcl, 16, 254,0, 4,-4);
    radix4(tcl, 16, 255,1, 4,-4);
    radix4(tcl, 32, 255,0, 2,-2);

#ifdef VALIDATION
    for(i=0;i<256;i++) outl(tcl[i]);
    outdump();
#endif
}

```

```

/*-----
= `radix.c'
=
= - written on a low abstraction level, specific to the MMDSP
=   architecture
-----*/
#include "mpeg.h"

long tcl[256];

void radix4(int loopcnt, long* AAd1, long* AAd2, int _IX Id2, int _IX Id3)
{
  register long *Ad1 At_reg(AX[1]); /* Assigned explicitly for parallel dec */
  register long *Ad2 At_reg(AX[2]); /* and ACU assignments (AX[2] = AXX[2]) */
  register int   Id1 At_reg(IX[1]);

  long   ar,br, ai,bi, yin, ping;
  long  _RR cr,dr, ci,di, yan, pong;

  Ad1 = AAd1;
  Id1 = 64;
  ar  = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;
  br  = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;
  cr  = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;
  Ad2 = AAd2;

  loop(loopcnt)
  {
    dr = *Ad1;  Ad1=AAd1;    yan = ar + cr;
    ai = *Ad2;  Ad2+=Id1;   yin = br + dr;
    bi = *Ad2;  Ad2+=Id1;   ping = yin + yan;
    ci = *Ad2;  Ad2+=Id1;   pong = yan - yin;
    di = *Ad2;  Ad2=AAd2;   yan = ar - cr;

    *Ad1 = ping; Ad1--=Id1;  yin = bi - di;
    *Ad1 = pong; Ad1--=Id1;  ping = yan - yin;
    *Ad1 = ping; Ad1--=Id1;  pong = yan + yin;
    AAd1 += Id3;            yin = ai + ci; /* negative increment */

    *Ad1 = pong; Ad1=AAd1;   yan = bi + di;
    ar = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;   ping = yin + yan;

    *Ad2 = ping; Ad2+=Id1;   pong = yin - yan;
    *Ad2 = pong; Ad2+=Id1;   yan = br - dr;

    br = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;   yin = ai - ci;
    cr = *Ad1;  Ad1--=Id1;   ping = yin + yan;
    *Ad2 = ping; Ad2+=Id1;   pong = yin - yan;
    AAd2 += Id2;            /* positive increment */

    *Ad2 = pong; Ad2=AAd2;
  }
}

void main()
{
#ifdef VALIDATION
  int i;
  for(i=0;i<256;i++) tcl[i]=(long)i;
  outinit();
#endif

  radix4(16,&tcl[254],tcl,4,-4);
  radix4(16,&tcl[255],&tcl[1],4,-4);
  radix4(32,&tcl[255],tcl,2,-2);

#ifdef VALIDATION
  for(i=0;i<256;i++) outl(tcl[i]);
  outdump();
#endif
}

```





## Appendix C: ArrSyn Prototype Software

The ArrSyn prototype software has progressed in two phases. The first phase included a rapid set-up of a skeleton which was used to test ideas. It is shown in Figure C.1.

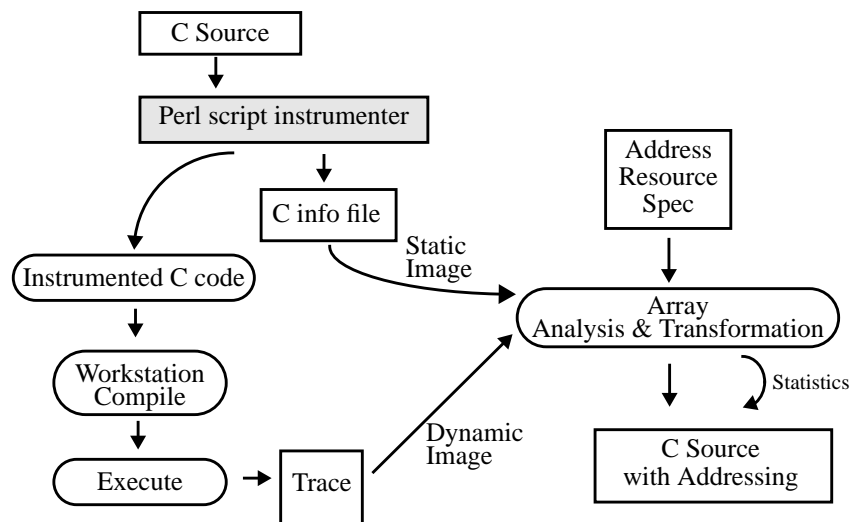


Figure C.1 ArrSyn prototype software: phase 1

A Perl script instruments the source C code at function calls, loop entries and exits, basic blocks, and array declarations. This produces an information file containing the static information of the C structure and a copy of the C code in instrumented form. The trace produced by execution of the instrumented code and the static image are fed to the analysis engine which is written in C++. It then transforms the code based on the address resource specification. The entire process is driven by a top-level Perl script.

The major weakness with this prototype was the front-end, which is based on a simple Perl tokenizer and only recognized certain styles of C. For the second phase, the front-end was replaced with a true grammar-based front-end: the SUIF compiler. This decision was based on an in-depth study of two good candidates which was done by a student on work-term at INPG<sup>1</sup>. The PCC compiler (provided by Miguel Santana of SGS-Thomson Microelectronics) and the SUIF compiler

1. see TIMA internal report, "Analyse Comparative des Compilateurs PCC et SUIF" par Ahmed Ounaissa.

(from Stanford University) were evaluated on many criteria including ease-of-use, intermediate representation, possibilities for optimization, user interface, robustness, size of code, etc. Each compiler had its strengths and weaknesses; however, SUIF had been chosen mostly in response to its strength in forming an evolving platform. SUIF is a research compiler being used in many industry and university locations for various purposes. It is well supported by the compiler group at Stanford University and provides many analysis capabilities, with new capabilities being added each day. Furthermore, SUIF contains a set of useful functions, algorithms, and full compiler passes which can be integrated effortlessly into a compiler stream.

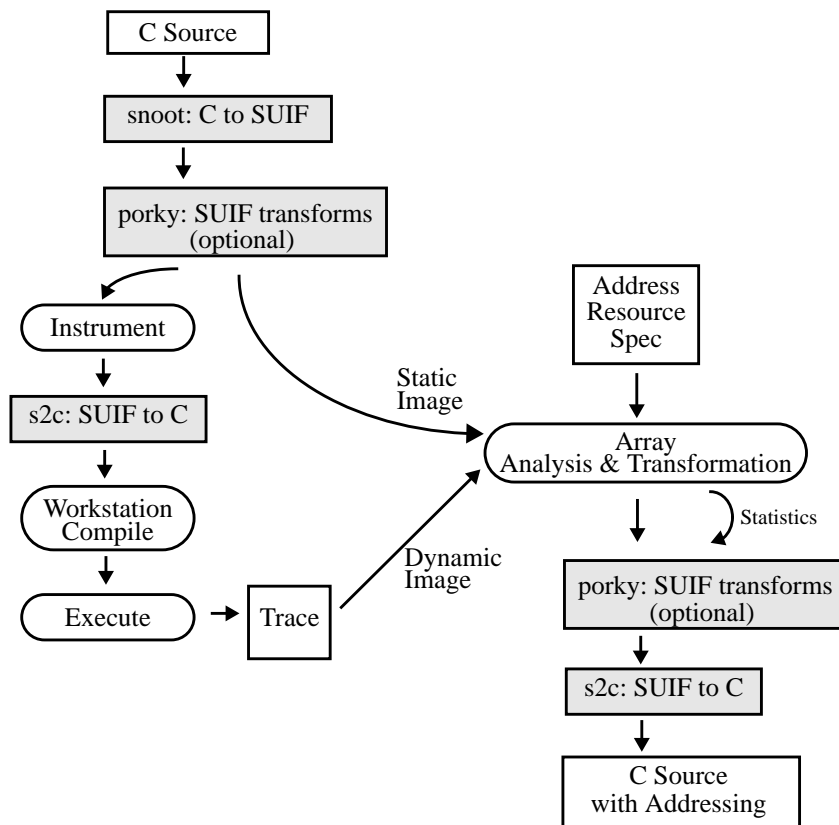


Figure C.2 ArrSyn prototype software: phase 2

The modifications for the use of SUIF are shown in Figure C.2. The C source is initially transformed into SUIF by *snoot*. The following passes then work on the SUIF intermediate format. The *porky* passes are optional. They can provide analyses and transformations such as: constant propagation, constant folding, dead-code elimination, dismantling of empty structures, removal of unused symbols, symbol-

table manipulation, hoisting of if conditions, etc. These are standard transformations which can improve the characteristics of the code for analysis as well as improve the performance and size of the final code.

One merged C++ executable performs either the ArrSyn instrumentation or array transformation. Information from the SUIF objects are mapped directly onto the objects used by ArrSyn. Following each transformation, *s2c* is used to reconvert the SUIF representation to C.

Although this is a very robust train of passes, there are some drawbacks using the SUIF compiler. SUIF can represent anything that can be described in C; however, it is not a one-to-one high-level representation. Some different C-level constructs are translated into the same SUIF-level representation. Expressions which cannot be exactly represented in SUIF are transformed to a logically equivalent form which may be less efficient with regards to size and/or execution speed, depending on the architecture target. This is the case for some structures such as: nested logical expressions, case statements, and while loops, among others.

In addition to a batch mode, a graphical user interface has been provided to the ArrSyn transformation, which allows developers to experiment with different parts of the transformation passes without having to re-run all the phases of the compilation. In addition, alternative SUIF optimization passes can be easily tried to evaluate their effect on the ArrSyn transformation. The user interface is shown in Figure C.3 and a typical run in batch mode is shown in Figure C.4.

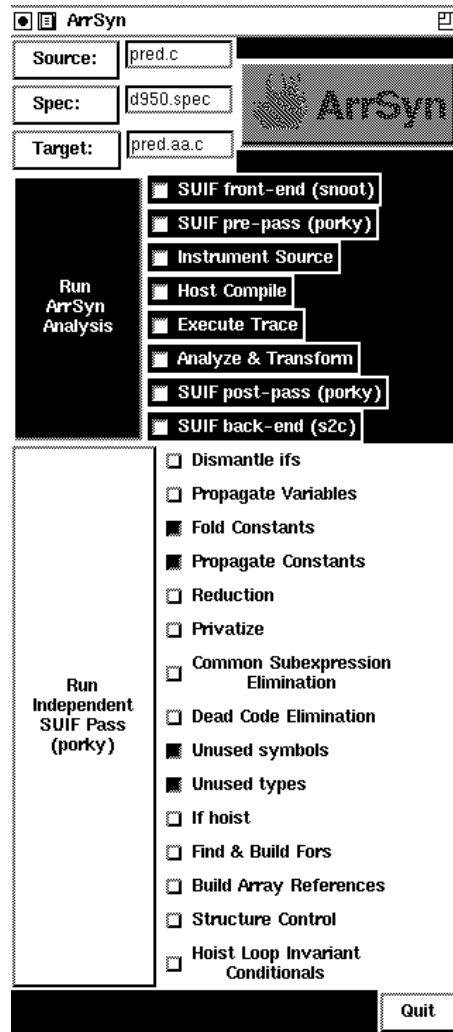


Figure C.3 ArrSyn development user-interface.

```

** ArrSyn ** :: Array Code Synthesis Transformation... vs 0.3

SUIF front-end...
/usr/ccs/lib/cpp -P -B ex2.c ex2.i
snoot -keep-comments ex2.i ex2.suif
SUIF pre-pass...
poriky -forward-prop -const-prop -fold -dead-code -fix-ldc-types \
_recode_.tmp ex2.suif
Instrumenting Source...
annotate -instrument ex2.suif ex2.inst
s2c -omit-header ex2.inst ex2.i.c
Host Compiling...
gcc ex2.i.c -o ex2.i
Tracing...
ex2.i > _recode_.tmp.trace
Running Analysis and Transformation...
/usr/ccs/lib/cpp -P -B acu.spec | annotate -arrsyn a _recode_.tmp ex2.suif
Parsing ACU specification...
  AX0 += 1, -1, 2,
  AX1 += 1, -1, 3, 5,
  AX2 += 1, -1, 2, -2,
Reading Trace File... _recode_.tmp.trace
Linking Array References and C Constructs...
Array Accesses:
  b   24 accesses  18 reads 6 writes
  a   24 accesses  24 reads 0 writes
Doing 'Static Reference' Pointer Analysis...
  6 static pointers created...
  Reduced and combined to 3 pointers...
Pointer Accesses:
  b_17_6 24 accesses  12 inc(-1) 6 inc(+1) 3 inc(+4)
  a_17_5 18 accesses  18 inc(-1) 3 inc(+5)
  a_27_16 6 accesses  6 inc(+1)
Doing Pointer Assignment...
Candidate Assignments and Estimated Cost...
  b_17_6 : AX0(24) AX1(24) AX2(24)
  a_17_5 : AX1(21) AX0(27) AX2(27)
  a_27_16 : AX0(6) AX1(6) AX2(6)
Best Assignment...
  b_17_6 @ AX0
  a_17_5 @ AX1
  a_27_16 @ AX2
Total Cross Cost: 51
Doing Pointer Insertion...
  3 pointers inserted...

SUIF post-pass...
poriky -unused-syms _recode_.tmp ex2.suif
SUIF back-end...
s2c -omit-header ex2.suif ex2.aa.c
interpret_pragmas _recode_.tmp ex2.aa.c

```

*Figure C.4* ArrSyn batch run



## Appendix D: ReCode/ReBlock Prototype Software

### Organization of Software Modules

The ReCode/ReBlock prototype software was written entirely using Perl 5 and the Tk package for widget graphics. The suite is composed of several routines and modules using object-oriented notions to organize data. The full organization of the software is shown in Figure D.1.

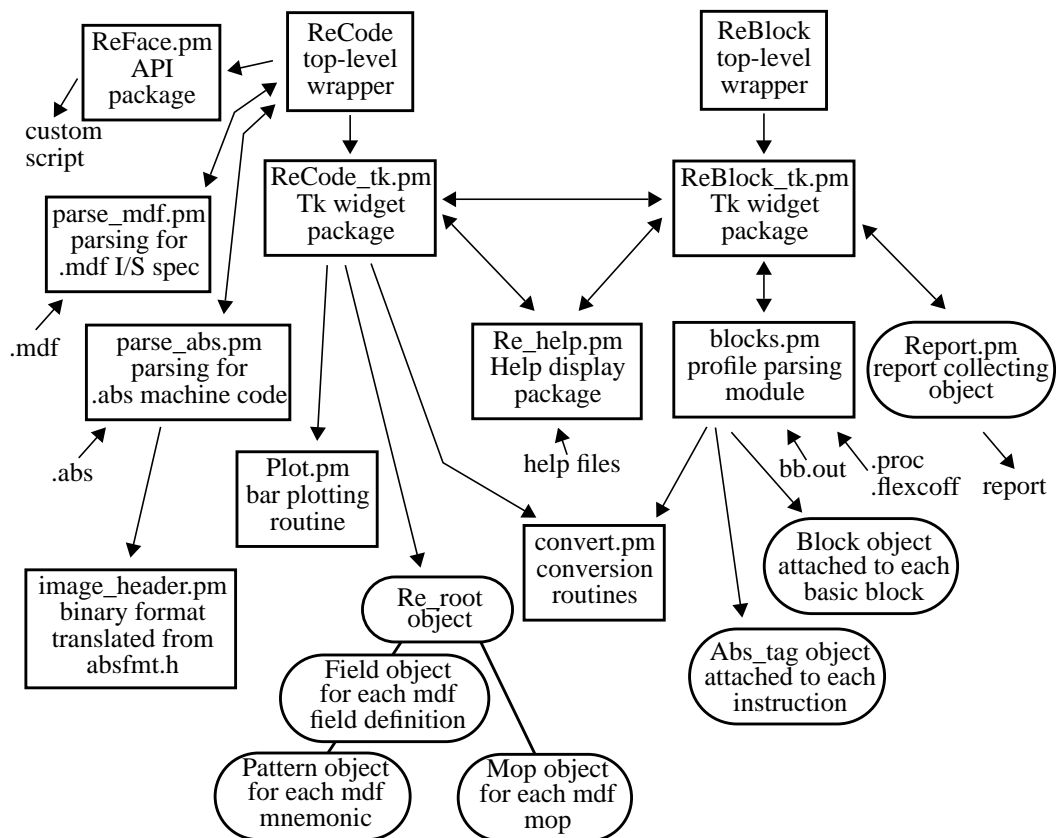


Figure D.1 ReCode/ReBlock software organization

The Perl 5 programming language allows the developer to mix-and-match any number of different modules in a transparent manner. Consequently, ReBlock and ReCode can be executed separately or in an integrated fashion. Software modules can also be shared among the two applications.

The use of Perl also allows the rapid set-up of an application programming interface (the ReFace API). The user can call API functions and integrate his/her



own functions into a script using primarily Perl 4 constructs. Moreover, the user's functions can be called from the ReCode graphical interface.

## ReCode and ReBlock Help Documents

-----  
 -----  
 ReCode Main Help Document  
 -----

This is a HYPertext Document. Press the mouse <Button-3> on any highlighted text to open a new Document.

-----  
 INDEX: Assembly Button Field Machine Mop Spec Coding\_aids ReBlock  
 -----

Overview:  
 -----

ReCode is a utility designed to aid in the development and redevelopment of an instruction-set of a processor. It is intended as a guide for the designer of the architecture or to the developer of the firmware tools. ReCode is most useful for refining an existing instruction-set as it has analysis capabilities of compiled code. However, it can also be used to set up the coding of an instruction-set from scratch.

The event-driven tool has one main window which consists of a table and a set of buttons. On the left of each table row is a menubutton controlling each Field.

Fields:  
 -----

A Field is a placeholder for a set of bits at specific locations and widths in the instruction-word. A Field consists initially of a row of entries which may contain the key-character "X" which denotes the use of the specified bit in the instruction-word. The 'salmon'-color highlighting denotes the bits which are common to all of the assembly words in the field (only if there are 2 or more words).

A Field is generally assigned by one or more Mops. A Field contains a set of Assembly Words.

Mops:  
 -----

A Mop is a micro-operation which may expand into a set of Fields. Each Field location is assigned a specific bit value.

Assembly:  
 -----

An Assembly Label is a keyword representing the bit values assigned to a Field. An Assembly Word consists of the assembly label and bit values.

-----  
 Assembly Code  
 -----

Assembly Code is shown for a corresponding Field when the 'Show Assembly' option is activated either for a specific Field or for the selected fields using <Button-3> and the 'Show Assembly Selection' button on the main window.

An Assembly Word consists of the assembly label mnemonic and corresponding bit values. The 'salmon'-color denotes the bits which are common to all the assembly words (only if there are 2 or more). This is likely (but necessarily) to be the opcode.

Editing  
 -----

At any time, both the names of the assembly words or the bit patterns may be changed by the mouse and the keyboard. Care should be taken so that no more than four characters (1, 0, or space) are present in each line of bit-pattern window. Values will not take effect until 'Apply Assembly Changes' is executed from the Field menubutton.

Should the number of assembly words be numerous for the current Field, a scrollbar will appear on the left of the assembly mnemonics. This should be used rather than cursor movements to keep the labels and bit-patterns in sync. Alternatively, <Button-2> in <Motion> may be used to scroll up and down.

An assembly line may be selected by <Button-1> Triple clicked, in either the assembly label window or the bit-pattern windows. Subsequently, the line may be deleted by <Button-3> on the highlighted section.

(NOTE: Changes do not take effect until 'Apply Assembly Changes' is activated in the Field menubutton.)

#### Analysis

-----  
 If the 'Count Usage' button is activated, the static frequency of each assembly word is counted in the current machine code files. Those words with zero occurrence will be highlighted.

#### ----- Mouse Buttons

In the main ReCode window:

Button-1 = activation of buttons.  
           = showing of menus of Field menubuttons.  
           = activation of menubutton entries.  
           = scrollbar activation  
 Button-3 = select/unselect of Field menubuttons.

In a ReCode plot distribution window:

Button-2 = select a section of the plot to be printed.

In a ReCode assembly label window:

Triple-1= select assembly word  
 Motion-2= scroll up and down  
 Button-3 = delete selected assembly word  
           (must be on selected word)

In any ReCode assembly bit window:

Motion-2= scroll up and down

In the ReCode Mop window:

Button-1 = activation of buttons.  
           = showing of menus of Mop menubuttons.  
           = activation of menubutton entries.  
 Button-3 = select/unselect of Mop menubuttons.

In any Help window:

Button-1 = scrollbar activation  
 Motion-2= scroll up and down  
 Button-3 = HYPERTEXT activation of highlighted keywords

In any text window:

Button-1= unselect section  
 Double-1= select current word  
 Triple-1= select current line  
 Motion-1= select section  
 Button-2= insert selection at cursor point  
 Motion-2= scroll up and down / left and right

In the ReBlock text window:

Button-3= rotate basic block frequencies highlighted in ORANGE

(Motion == hold button and drag)

(Double == click 2 times)

(Triple == click 3 times)

-----  
 -----  
 Fields  
 -----

A Field contains a main controlling menubutton on the left of the main window associated with each of the Field names. It contains a series of options:

- Highlight Mops: Highlights the Mops which use the current Field in the Mop window. If the Mop window is not yet shown, it is opened.
- Show/Hide Assembly: Shows/Hides the assembly mnemonics and bit patterns associated with this Field
- Count Usage: Counts and displays the number of static occurrences of assembly words in the machine code files.  
 (Note: the button 'Display Code Files in the main window will show the current active code files.)
- Static Cross Distribution  
 Plot the distribution of static occurrences of assembly words in a separate window. The plot may be printed directly to a printer (command 'lpr -P<printer\_name>') or to a file. A section of the plot may be chosen with <Button-2>  
 Alternatively, the statistics can be printed textually to a file.
- Dynamic ReBlock Distribution  
 The static occurrences of assembly words are multiplied by their respective frequency of occurrence, linked with the bb.out file provided by ReBlock.
- Static ReBlock Distribution  
 The frequency of occurrence is always taken as 1
- Hide Field: Hides the current Field from view.
- Rename Field: Opens a window to rename the Field.
- Apply Assembly Changes: Applies changes that were carried out interactively.

A Field can be assigned (expanded into) by one or many Mops. The expansion can be changed by selecting the Field menu-buttons with <Button-3> and redefining the expansion in the Mop window.

-----  
 -----  
 Machine Code Files (.abs)  
 -----

Machine code files are expected to be in the .abs format produced by mclink of the Archelon compiler tools chain. These files may be read by ReCode using the 'Display Code Files' button on the main window or by the -a option on the command line (see ReCode -h for more command-line information).

The machine code file contains binary records of the absolute program load module. ReCode expects a header record to determine the instruction-width and number of records.

Developer's Note:

-----  
 The format of the .abs file is checked by structures provided in 'image\_header.pm', a Perl module. This module was generated automatically from absfmt.h found in the Archelon source distribution by the program 'c2ph' available on CPAN (Comprehensive Perl Archive Network). Should the structures in absfmt.h be modified for the compiler in use, image\_header.pm can be generated automatically.

---

 -----  
 Mops (Micro-Operations)  
 -----

The mop window displays the set of micro-operations as menubuttons.

Available operations are:

- Highlight Expansion: The Field expansion of a Mop is shown. Field buttons in the main window are highlighted. Mops with exactly the same expansion as the current are lightly highlighted.
- Selecting Mops: Button-3 selects and unselects Mop buttons. These can be subsequently grouped, isolated, or hidden from view by the main buttons on the right. The selection may also be cleared by the 'clear' button.
- Create Mop: A new button and Mop is created. A default name is provided and should be changed explicitly. Subsequently, the expansion can be defined (following.) Any changes will be reflected in the Spec Dump done on the main window.
- Redefine Expansion: The expansion to Fields is redefined by the current selection of Field buttons. Field buttons can be selected and unselected by Button-3 of the mouse in the main window.
- Rename: A Mop may be renamed at any time. This will be reflected in the 'Spec Dump' should it be activated. (The Spec Dump button in on the main window.)

---

 -----  
 Specification File  
 -----

The specification file is that used by mcpack of the Archelon retargetable compiler tools chain and expected to have a '.mdf' suffix. The file should have three main component parts:

1. Fields directives which describe bit locations and corresponding widths. These fields should be given a set of mnemonics which assign bit patterns to each location.
2. Mops which describe micro-operations and expansions into fields. They also define the assignment of which assembly mnemonics to which fields.
3. Vops or vertical operations which define the assignment to a set of Mops.

Fields and Mops are used by ReCode for analysis and recoding of the instruction-word fields. Should an original specification contain other parts, those parts are ignored by ReCode. However, these parts are saved so that they may be merged in the specification dump. The Spec Dump button on the main window provides this function. Currently, comments are discarded. (This may change in a future version.)

---

 -----  
 Developer's Note:

Currently, the parsing of the specification file is not a true grammar-based parser. Most cases can be handled; however, there could be problems with unforeseen ways of bracketing and spacing. Should this present a large problem, the Berkeley yacc (byacc) compiler has been modified to produce perl code. This is a possible route to a full grammar-based parser.

---



---

 Coding Aids
 

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Some simple touch-button coding aids have been included in ReCode to aid the designer in determining bit patterns for fields and assembly words. In each Field entry, as X's are inserted, new text windows automatically appear below for the assembly bit patterns. If the cursor is on or near an X place-holder, the following touch-buttons are available:

- o one-fill below the X place-holders
- z zero-fill below the X place-holders
- i increment-fill below the X place-holders
- d decrement-fill below the X place-holders

To automatically remove a bit-pattern, simply remove the X place-holders in a 4-bit Field entry.

Note that assembly-level changes will not take effect until 'Apply Assembly Changes' is executed in the Field menu button.

Bit-level consistency checking functions are currently being developed.

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---

 ReBlock Main Help Document
 

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---

This is a HYPertext Document. Press the mouse <Button-3> on any highlighted text to open a new Document.

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 INDEX: Profiling Button Editing ReCode
 

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 Overview:
 

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ReBlock is a mini-profiler designed to aid in the redesign of application code for an embedded processor. It contains functions to estimate performance of compiled code. Alternatively, when used in conjunction with the ReCode instruction-set design utility, it can also be used to redesign the instructions of the processor.

ReBlock gives profile information without the use of a simulator or emulator. The tool expects 3 inputs:

1. A C source file.
2. A Basic Block (BB) file (usually 'bb.out') which results from:
  - a host compilation of the C source with gcc or g++ with the option -a (profiling function) AND
  - the execution on the host
3. A symbolic line information file from the target compiler. (Currently, the '.proc' format and an interface to gdb is supported (COFF).)

The button 'Link & Load All' on the top right of the panel will force a load of all three files and execute the needed links between micro-instruction and profile information.

---



---

 Profiling
 

---



---

In ReBlock, profiling is done by basic block frequency analysis on the host computer (workstation) with correlations to the microcode produced by the target compiler. This gives a significant gain in speed over simulation based profiling.

To profile any block, simply click-and-drag Button-1 on the main text window over any block. Now click on the Performance Estimate button in the upper left corner. A single line may be selected by doing a triple click on Button-1.

If no block is selected, the entire file is taken as default.

If a profile arrow appears in ORANGE, that means that more than one

basic block was found on the current line during profiling. This can happen, for example, when a pre-processor macro is used in the source. Click on Button-3 to rotate through the possible profiling values.

#### Branch Penalty Calculation

A worst-case branch penalty model is provided for pipelined architectures. The branch penalty is calculated for ALL blocks where a jump has occurred. The user may specify the number of extra instruction-cycles which occur in each branch by clicking on the 'Worst Case Model' checkbox.

The support of a more accurate branch penalty model is foreseen; however, this requires semantic knowledge of the branch instructions and therefore an understanding of the assembler specification. This information could be transmit by ReCode.

#### Editing

The text window in the main ReBlock window may also be used as a simple editor. Many key and mouse bindings are available from the Tk kit.

Following editing, two different types of saves are provided:

'Save Text As Shown' - saves the text in its current state. This may include the profile and micro-instruction information.

'Save C file Only' - ensures that only the C code is saved.

#### BINDINGS

Tk automatically creates class bindings for texts that give them the following default behavior. In the descriptions below, ``word'' refers to a contiguous group of letters, digits, or ``\_' characters, or any single character other than these.

- [1] Clicking mouse button 1 positions the insertion cursor just before the character underneath the mouse cursor, sets the input focus to this widget, and clears any selection in the widget. Dragging with mouse button 1 strokes out a selection between the insertion cursor and the character under the mouse.
- [2] Double-clicking with mouse button 1 selects the word under the mouse and positions the insertion cursor at the beginning of the word. Dragging after a double click will stroke out a selection consisting of whole words.
- [3] Triple-clicking with mouse button 1 selects the line under the mouse and positions the insertion cursor at the beginning of the line. Dragging after a triple click will stroke out a selection consisting of whole lines.
- [4] The ends of the selection can be adjusted by dragging with mouse button 1 while the Shift key is down; this will adjust the end of the selection that was nearest to the mouse cursor when button 1 was pressed. If the button is double-clicked before dragging then the selection will be adjusted in units of whole words; if it is triple-clicked then the selection will be adjusted in units of whole lines.
- [5] Clicking mouse button 1 with the Control key down will reposition the insertion cursor without affecting the selection.
- [6] If any normal printing characters are typed, they are inserted at the point of the insertion cursor.
- [7] The view in the widget can be adjusted by dragging with mouse button 2. If mouse button 2 is clicked without moving the mouse, the selection is copied into the text at the position of the insertion cursor. The Insert key also inserts the selection.

- [8] If the mouse is dragged out of the widget while button 1 is pressed, the entry will automatically scroll to make more text visible (if there is more text off-screen on the side where the mouse left the window).
- [9] The Left and Right keys move the insertion cursor one character to the left or right; they also clear any selection in the text. If Left or Right is typed with the Shift key down, then the insertion cursor moves and the selection is extended to include the new character. Control-Left and Control-Right move the insertion cursor by words, and Control-Shift-Left and Control-Shift-Right move the insertion cursor by words and also extend the selection. Control-b and Control-f behave the same as Left and Right, respectively. Meta-b and Meta-f behave the same as Control-Left and Control-Right, respectively.
- [10] The Up and Down keys move the insertion cursor one line up or down and clear any selection in the text. If Up or Down is typed with the Shift key down, then the insertion cursor moves and the selection is extended to include the new character. Control-Up and Control-Down move the insertion cursor by paragraphs (groups of lines separated by blank lines), and Control-Shift-Up and Control-Shift-Down move the insertion cursor by paragraphs and also extend the selection. Control-p and Control-n behave the same as Up and Down, respectively.
- [11] The Next and Prior keys move the insertion cursor forward or backwards by one screenful and clear any selection in the text. If the Shift key is held down while Next or Prior is typed, then the selection is extended to include the new character. Control-v moves the view down one screenful without moving the insertion cursor or adjusting the selection.
- [12] Control-Next and Control-Prior scroll the view right or left by one page without moving the insertion cursor or affecting the selection.
- [13] Home and Control-a move the insertion cursor to the beginning of its line and clear any selection in the widget. Shift-Home moves the insertion cursor to the beginning of the line and also extends the selection to that point.
- [14] End and Control-e move the insertion cursor to the end of the line and clear any selection in the widget. Shift-End moves the cursor to the end of the line and extends the selection to that point.
- [15] Control-Home and Meta-< move the insertion cursor to the beginning of the text and clear any selection in the widget. Control-Shift-Home moves the insertion cursor to the beginning of the text and also extends the selection to that point.
- [16] Control-End and Meta-> move the insertion cursor to the end of the text and clear any selection in the widget. Control-Shift-End moves the cursor to the end of the text and extends the selection to that point.
- [17] The Select key and Control-Space set the selection anchor to the position of the insertion cursor. They don't affect the current selection. Shift-Select and Control-Shift-Space adjust the selection to the current position of the insertion cursor, selecting from the anchor to the insertion cursor if there was not any selection previously.
- [18] Control-/ selects the entire contents of the widget.
- [19] Control-\ clears any selection in the widget.
- [20] The F16 key (labelled Copy on many Sun workstations) or Meta-w copies the selection in the widget to the clipboard, if there is a selection.

- [21] The F20 key (labelled Cut on many Sun workstations) or Control-w copies the selection in the widget to the clipboard and deletes the selection. If there is no selection in the widget then these keys have no effect.
  - [22] The F18 key (labelled Paste on many Sun workstations) or Control-y inserts the contents of the clipboard at the position of the insertion cursor.
  - [23] The Delete key deletes the selection, if there is one in the widget. If there is no selection, it deletes the character to the right of the insertion cursor.
  - [24] Backspace and Control-h delete the selection, if there is one in the widget. If there is no selection, they delete the character to the left of the insertion cursor.
  - [25] Control-d deletes the character to the right of the insertion cursor.
  - [26] Meta-d deletes the word to the right of the insertion cursor.
  - [27] Control-k deletes from the insertion cursor to the end of its line; if the insertion cursor is already at the end of a line, then Control-k deletes the newline character.
  - [28] Control-o opens a new line by inserting a newline character in front of the insertion cursor without moving the insertion cursor.
  - [29] Meta-backspace and Meta-Delete delete the word to the left of the insertion cursor.
  - [30] Control-x deletes whatever is selected in the text widget.
  - [31] Control-t reverses the order of the two characters to the right of the insertion cursor.
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## **Résumé**

Dans le cadre des applications de type télécommunications, multimédia, et électronique grand public, les processeurs embarqués ont tendance à acquérir une importance de plus en plus marquée lors de la conception de systèmes monopuces. Ce phénomène traduit le besoin des concepteurs à tenir compte rapidement des nécessaires adaptations aux fréquentes variations des standards évoluées. C'est ainsi que les techniques de compilation multicibles deviennent primordiales, non seulement pour la production du code d'application, mais aussi afin d'explorer les architectures de processeurs.

Ce mémoire présente les travaux effectuée au sein du Laboratoire TIMA de l'INPG en étroite collaboration avec SGS-Thomson Microelectronics. Les contributions se partagent en trois catégories principales: expériences et méthodologies en utilisant les compilateurs multicibles dans le milieu industriel pour les processeurs embarqués; un approche de compilation pour la génération d'adresses pour les architectures de traitement de signal; et un ensemble d'outils permettant au concepteur d'explorer un jeu d'instructions lié à un processeur donné afin d'envisager une évolution ou une réutilisation du processeur. Les méthodes pratiques utilisées dans divers projets sont décrites à l'aide d'exemples de processeurs réels: les opérateurs du système visiophone, un décodeur MPEG-2 et AC-3, et un processeur téléviseur pour l'application Eurosound.

## **Abstract**

Embedded core processors are becoming a vital part of today's system-on-a-chip in the growing areas of telecommunications, multimedia, and consumer electronics. This is mainly in response to a need to track evolving standards with the flexibility of embedded software. This trend is making retargetable software compilation a key enabler, not only for improving engineering productivity, but to allow designers to explore the architectural possibilities for the application domain.

This manuscript covers work carried out at the TIMA laboratory of INPG in co-operation with SGS-Thomson Microelectronics. Contributions have been made in three categories: methods and experiences in industry using a retargetable compiler methodology for embedded processors; a new compilation approach to address generation for DSP architectures; and a set of tools which allow the exploration of an instruction-set architecture in the light of redesigning the processor for an evolution or reuse of the architecture. Emphasis is made on methodologies and practical experiences which have been carried out with example instruction-set processor systems such as an integrated video telephone, an MPEG-2 / AC-3 audio decoder, and an audio processor used in a Eurosound television application.