

CMSC 330: Organization of Programming Languages

Lambda Calculus Encodings

Review

- ▶ A lambda calculus **expression** is defined as

$e ::= x$

variable

| $\lambda x.e$

abstraction (fun def)

| $e e$

application (fun call)

- $\lambda x.e$ is like `(fun x -> e)` in OCaml

Review: Examples

- Make all parentheses explicit

$(\lambda x. x z) \lambda y. w \lambda w. w y z x$

$((\lambda x. (x z)) (\lambda y. (w (\lambda w. (((w y) z) x))))))$

Review: Examples

- Alpha and beta reduction

$(\lambda x. \lambda y. \lambda z. y \ x \ z) \ y \ (\lambda w. w \ w)$

$(\lambda x. \lambda a. \lambda z. a \ x \ z) \ y \ (\lambda w. w \ w)$ Alpha

$(\lambda a. \lambda z. a \ y \ z) \ (\lambda w. w \ w)$ Beta

$\lambda z. (\lambda w. w \ w) \ y \ z \)$ Beta

$\lambda z. y \ y \ z$ Beta

The Power of Lambdas

- ▶ Despite its simplicity, the lambda calculus is quite expressive: it is **Turing complete!**
- ▶ Means we can **encode** any computation we want
 - If we're sufficiently clever...
- ▶ Examples
 - Booleans
 - Pairs
 - Natural numbers & arithmetic
 - Looping

Booleans

- ▶ Church's encoding of mathematical logic

- $\text{true} = \lambda x.\lambda y.x$
- $\text{false} = \lambda x.\lambda y.y$
- if a then b else c
 - Defined to be the expression: $a b c$

- ▶ Examples

- if true then b else $c = (\lambda x.\lambda y.x) b c \rightarrow (\lambda y.b) c \rightarrow b$
- if false then b else $c = (\lambda x.\lambda y.y) b c \rightarrow (\lambda y.y) c \rightarrow c$

Booleans (cont.)

▶ Other Boolean operations

- $\text{not} = \lambda x.x \text{ false true}$

- ▶ $\text{not } x = x \text{ false true} = \text{if } x \text{ then false else true}$

- ▶ $\text{not true} \rightarrow (\lambda x.x \text{ false true}) \text{ true} \rightarrow (\text{true false true}) \rightarrow \text{false}$

- $\text{and} = \lambda x.\lambda y.x y \text{ false}$

- ▶ $\text{and } x y = \text{if } x \text{ then } y \text{ else false}$

- $\text{or} = \lambda x.\lambda y.x \text{ true } y$

- ▶ $\text{or } x y = \text{if } x \text{ then true else } y$

▶ Given these operations

- Can build up a logical inference system

Quiz #1

What is the lambda calculus encoding of `xor x y`?

- `xor true true = xor false false = false`
- `xor true false = xor false true = true`

- A. `x x y`
- B. `x (y true false) y`
- C. `x (y false true) y`
- D. `y x y`

`true = $\lambda x.\lambda y.x$`
`false = $\lambda x.\lambda y.y$`
`if a then b else c = $a b c$`
`not = $\lambda x.x$ false true`

Quiz #1

What is the lambda calculus encoding of **xor x y**?

- xor true true = xor false false = false
- xor true false = xor false true = true

- A. $x x y$
- B. $x (y \text{ true false}) y$
- C. $x (y \text{ false true}) y$**
- D. $y x y$

true = $\lambda x.\lambda y.x$

false = $\lambda x.\lambda y.y$

if a then b else c = $a b c$

not = $\lambda x.x \text{ false true}$

Pairs

- ▶ Encoding of a pair a, b
 - $(a,b) = \lambda x. \text{if } x \text{ then } a \text{ else } b$
 - $\text{fst} = \lambda f. f \text{ true}$
 - $\text{snd} = \lambda f. f \text{ false}$
- ▶ Examples
 - $\text{fst } (a,b) = (\lambda f. f \text{ true}) (\lambda x. \text{if } x \text{ then } a \text{ else } b) \rightarrow$
 $(\lambda x. \text{if } x \text{ then } a \text{ else } b) \text{ true} \rightarrow$
 $\text{if true then } a \text{ else } b \rightarrow a$
 - $\text{snd } (a,b) = (\lambda f. f \text{ false}) (\lambda x. \text{if } x \text{ then } a \text{ else } b) \rightarrow$
 $(\lambda x. \text{if } x \text{ then } a \text{ else } b) \text{ false} \rightarrow$
 $\text{if false then } a \text{ else } b \rightarrow b$

Natural Numbers (Church* Numerals)

► Encoding of non-negative integers

- $0 = \lambda f.\lambda y.y$

- $1 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ y$

- $2 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ (f\ y)$

- $3 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ (f\ (f\ y))$

i.e., $n = \lambda f.\lambda y.<\text{apply } f \text{ } n \text{ times to } y>$

- Formally: $n+1 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ (n\ f\ y)$

*(Alonzo Church, of course)

Quiz #2

$n = \lambda f.\lambda y.<apply\ f\ n\ times\ to\ y>$

What OCaml type could you give to a Church-encoded numeral ($n > 1$)?

- A. $('a \rightarrow 'b) \rightarrow 'a \rightarrow 'b$
- B. $('a \rightarrow 'a) \rightarrow 'a \rightarrow 'a$
- C. $('a \rightarrow 'a) \rightarrow 'b \rightarrow int$
- D. $(int \rightarrow int) \rightarrow int \rightarrow int$

Quiz #2

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- C. $('a \rightarrow 'a) \rightarrow 'b \rightarrow int$
- D. $(int \rightarrow int) \rightarrow int \rightarrow int$

Operations On Church Numerals

▶ Successor

- $\text{succ} = \lambda z.\lambda f.\lambda y.f (z f y)$

- $0 = \lambda f.\lambda y.y$

- $1 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f y$

▶ Example

- $\text{succ } 0 =$

$$(\lambda z.\lambda f.\lambda y.f (z f y)) (\lambda f.\lambda y.y) \rightarrow$$

$$\lambda f.\lambda y.f ((\lambda f.\lambda y.y) f y) \rightarrow$$

$$\lambda f.\lambda y.f ((\lambda y.y) y) \rightarrow$$

$$\lambda f.\lambda y.f y$$

$$= 1$$

Since $(\lambda x.y) z \rightarrow y$

Operations On Church Numerals (cont.)

► IsZero?

- $\text{iszero} = \lambda z.z (\lambda y.\text{false}) \text{true}$

This is equivalent to $\lambda z.((z (\lambda y.\text{false})) \text{true})$

► Example

- $\text{iszero } 0 =$

$(\lambda z.z (\lambda y.\text{false}) \text{true}) (\lambda f.\lambda y.y) \rightarrow$

$(\lambda f.\lambda y.y) (\lambda y.\text{false}) \text{true} \rightarrow$

$(\lambda y.y) \text{true} \rightarrow$

true

Since $(\lambda x.y) z \rightarrow y$

- $0 = \lambda f.\lambda y.y$

Arithmetic Using Church Numerals

- ▶ If M and N are numbers (as λ expressions)
 - Can also encode various arithmetic operations
- ▶ Addition
 - $M + N = \lambda f. \lambda y. M f (N f y)$
 - Equivalently: $+ = \lambda M. \lambda N. \lambda f. \lambda y. M f (N f y)$
 - In prefix notation (+ M N)
- ▶ Multiplication
 - $M * N = \lambda f. M N f$
 - Equivalently: $* = \lambda M. \lambda N. \lambda f. \lambda y. M N f y$
 - In prefix notation (* M N)

Arithmetic (cont.)

► Prove $1+1 = 2$

- $1+1 = \lambda x.\lambda y.(1\ x)\ (1\ x\ y) =$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.((\lambda f.\lambda y.f\ y)\ x)\ (1\ x\ y) \rightarrow$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.(\lambda y.x\ y)\ (1\ x\ y) \rightarrow$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.x\ (1\ x\ y) \rightarrow$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.x\ ((\lambda f.\lambda y.f\ y)\ x\ y) \rightarrow$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.x\ ((\lambda y.x\ y)\ y) \rightarrow$
- $\lambda x.\lambda y.x\ (x\ y) = 2$

- $1 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ y$
- $2 = \lambda f.\lambda y.f\ (f\ y)$

► With these definitions

- Can build a theory of arithmetic

Looping & Recursion

- ▶ Define $D = \lambda x.x x$, then
 - $D D = (\lambda x.x x) (\lambda x.x x) \rightarrow (\lambda x.x x) (\lambda x.x x) = D D$
- ▶ So $D D$ is an infinite loop
 - In general, **self application** is how we get looping

The Fixpoint Combinator

$$Y = \lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))$$

▶ Then

$$Y F =$$

$$(\lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))) F \rightarrow$$

$$(\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)) \rightarrow$$

$$F ((\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)))$$

$$= F (Y F)$$



▶ $Y F$ is a *fixed point* (aka *fixpoint*) of F

▶ Thus $Y F = F (Y F) = F (F (Y F)) = \dots$

- We can use Y to achieve recursion for F

Example

$\text{fact} = \lambda f.\lambda n.\text{if } n = 0 \text{ then } 1 \text{ else } n * (f (n-1))$

- The second argument to `fact` is the integer
- The first argument is the function to call in the body
 - We'll use `Y` to make this recursively call `fact`

$(Y \text{ fact}) 1 = (\text{fact } (Y \text{ fact})) 1$

→ $\text{if } 1 = 0 \text{ then } 1 \text{ else } 1 * ((Y \text{ fact}) 0)$

→ $1 * ((Y \text{ fact}) 0)$

= $1 * (\text{fact } (Y \text{ fact}) 0)$

→ $1 * (\text{if } 0 = 0 \text{ then } 1 \text{ else } 0 * ((Y \text{ fact}) (-1)))$

→ $1 * 1 \rightarrow 1$

Call-by-name vs. Call-by-value

- ▶ Sometimes we have a choice about where to apply beta reduction. Before call (i.e., argument):
 - $(\lambda z.z) ((\lambda y.y) x) \rightarrow (\lambda z.z) x \rightarrow x$
- ▶ Or after the call:
 - $(\lambda z.z) ((\lambda y.y) x) \rightarrow (\lambda y.y) x \rightarrow x$
- ▶ The former strategy is called **call-by-value**
 - Evaluate any arguments before calling the function
- ▶ The latter is called **call-by-name**
 - Delay evaluating arguments as long as possible

Confluence

- ▶ No matter what evaluation order you choose, you get the **same answer**
 - Assuming the evaluation always terminates
 - Surprising result!
- ▶ However, termination behavior differs between call-by-value and call-by-name
 - if true then true else (D D) \rightarrow true under call-by-name
 - true true (D D) = $(\lambda x. \lambda y. x)$ true (D D) \rightarrow $(\lambda y. \text{true})$ (D D) \rightarrow true
 - if true then true else (D D) \rightarrow ... under call-by-value
 - $(\lambda x. \lambda y. x)$ true (D D) \rightarrow $(\lambda y. \text{true})$ (D D) \rightarrow $(\lambda y. \text{true})$ (D D) \rightarrow ...
never terminates

Quiz #3

Y is a fixed point combinator under which evaluation order?

- A. Call-by-value
- B. Call-by-name
- C. Both
- D. Neither

$$Y = \lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))$$

$$Y F =$$

$$(\lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))) F \rightarrow$$

$$(\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)) \rightarrow$$

$$F ((\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)))$$

$$= F (Y F)$$

Quiz #3

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$$Y = \lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))$$

$$Y F =$$

$$(\lambda f.(\lambda x.f (x x)) (\lambda x.f (x x))) F \rightarrow$$

$$(\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)) \rightarrow$$

$$F ((\lambda x.F (x x)) (\lambda x.F (x x)))$$

$$= F (Y F)$$

Discussion

- ▶ Lambda calculus is Turing-complete
 - Most powerful language possible
 - Can represent pretty much anything in “real” language
 - Using clever encodings
- ▶ But programs would be
 - Pretty slow ($10000 + 1 \rightarrow$ thousands of function calls)
 - Pretty large ($10000 + 1 \rightarrow$ hundreds of lines of code)
 - Pretty hard to understand (recognize 10000 vs. 9999)
- ▶ In practice
 - We use richer, more **expressive** languages
 - That include built-in primitives

The Need For Types

- ▶ Consider the **untyped** lambda calculus
 - $\text{false} = \lambda x.\lambda y.y$
 - $0 = \lambda x.\lambda y.y$
- ▶ Since everything is encoded as a function...
 - We can easily misuse terms...
 - $\text{false } 0 \rightarrow \lambda y.y$
 - if 0 then ...
 - ...because everything evaluates to some function
- ▶ The same thing happens in assembly language
 - Everything is a machine word (a bunch of bits)
 - All operations take machine words to machine words

Simply-Typed Lambda Calculus (STLC)

- ▶ $e ::= n \mid x \mid \lambda x:t.e \mid e e$
 - Added integers n as primitives
 - Need at least two distinct types (integer & function)...
 - ...to have type errors
 - Functions now include the type t of their argument
- ▶ $t ::= \text{int} \mid t \rightarrow t$
 - int is the type of integers
 - $t_1 \rightarrow t_2$ is the type of a function
 - That takes arguments of type t_1 and returns result of type t_2

Types are limiting

- ▶ STLC will reject some terms as ill-typed, even if they will not produce a run-time error
 - Cannot type check Y in STLC
 - Or in OCaml, for that matter!
- ▶ Surprising theorem: All (well typed) simply-typed lambda calculus terms are **strongly normalizing**
 - A normal form is one that cannot be reduced further
 - A **value** is a kind of normal form
 - Strong normalization means STLC terms **always** terminate
 - Proof is *not* by straightforward induction: Applications “increase” term size

Summary

- ▶ Lambda calculus is a core model of computation
 - We can encode familiar language constructs using only functions
 - These encodings are enlightening – make you a better (functional) programmer
- ▶ Useful for understanding how languages work
 - Ideas of types, evaluation order, termination, proof systems, etc. can be developed in lambda calculus,
 - then scaled to full languages

Quiz 4

What is a normal form?

- a) The point at which an expression cannot reduce any further
- b) The point at which it is clear that an expression will reduce infinitely
- c) The original form of the lambda expression
- d) The form reached after one reduction

Quiz 4

What is a normal form?

- a) **The point at which an expression cannot reduce any further**
- b) The point at which it is clear that an expression will reduce infinitely
- c) The original form of the lambda expression
- d) The form reached after one reduction

Quiz 5

What feature does the (untyped) lambda calculus require to make it Turing complete?

- a) Types
- b) Natural numbers
- c) Fixed point combinator
- d) It already is Turing complete

Quiz 5

What feature does the (untyped) lambda calculus require to make it Turing complete?

- a) Types
- b) Natural numbers
- c) Fixed point combinator
- d) **It already is Turing complete**