

Canonicity for Indexed Inductive-Recursive Types

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Inductive-Recursive Types

Small Agda example.

```
data Code : Set where
  N' : Code
  Π' : (A : Code) → (El A → Code) → Code
```

```
El : Code → Set
El N'      = N
El (Π' A B) = (a : El A) → El (B a)
```

Early and informal use by Per Martin-Löf [ML75, ML84].

Formal syntax & semantics developed by Dybjer & Setzer [Dyb00, DS99, DS03, DS06].

Inductive-Recursive Types

Let's parameterize Code and El with $u : \text{Set}$ and $\text{el} : u \rightarrow \text{Set}$, and add extra rules.

```
data Code : Set where
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...

$u' : \text{Code}$

$\text{el}' : u \rightarrow \text{Code}$

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El : Code → Set
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$\text{El } u' = u$

$\text{El } (\text{el}' a) = \text{el } a$

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Let $\text{FamSet} = \Sigma(A : \text{Set}).(A \rightarrow \text{Set})$.

Code and El yield a function $\mathbf{F} : \text{FamSet} \rightarrow \text{FamSet}$

We get countable universes by iteration:

$\mathbf{U} : \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \text{FamSet}$

$\mathbf{U} \text{ zero} = (\perp, \text{exfalso})$

$\mathbf{U}(\text{suc } n) = \mathbf{F}(\mathbf{U} n)$

More generally: any well-founded universe hierarchy can be defined by induction-recursion inside Set.

Inductive-Recursive Types

IR is convenient for doing metatheory of universe features.

Recent works on various notions of first-class universe levels, all using IR in Agda formalizations:

- Consistency by AK [Kov22]
- Canonicity by Chan & Weirich [CW25]
- Here at POPL: normalization by Danielsson, Favier & Kubánek [DFK26]

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Impredicative Prop is technically stronger than IR, but

- We may prefer weaker predicative foundations.
- IR formalization may be more direct & convenient.

IR implementation & metatheory

IR has been supported in Agda for 15+ years. Also supported in Idris-es.

The implementation is quite straightforward. *Intuitively*, there's nothing that could go wrong.

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However, syntactic properties had not been shown:

- ① *Canonicity*: every closed term can be computed to a constructor.
- ② *Normalization*: every open term can be computed to a normal form.

We show **canonicity**.

The object theory

The syntax is a quotient inductive-inductive type with these sorts:¹

$$\text{Con} : \text{Set}$$

$$\text{Ty} : \text{Con} \rightarrow \text{Set}$$

$$\text{Sub} : \text{Con} \rightarrow \text{Con} \rightarrow \text{Set}$$

$$\text{Tm} : (\Gamma : \text{Con}) \rightarrow \text{Ty } \Gamma \rightarrow \text{Set}$$

We have

- An explicit substitution calculus, given as a category with families.
- Countable Russell-style universes.
- Basic type formers: Π , Σ , \top , Bool, intensional identity.
- IR types.

¹We omit universe levels here and elsewhere

Canonicity: basic setup

Artin gluing is an established proof-relevant version of **logical predicates** which works nicely for our syntax.²

We define a family of functions by induction:

$$\begin{aligned}-^\circ : (\Gamma : \text{Con}) &\rightarrow \text{Sub} \bullet \Gamma \rightarrow \text{Set} \\ -^\circ : (A : \text{Ty } \Gamma) &\rightarrow \{\gamma : \text{Sub} \bullet \Gamma\}(\gamma^\circ : \Gamma^\circ \gamma) \rightarrow \text{Tm} \bullet A[\gamma] \rightarrow \text{Set} \\ -^\circ : (\sigma : \text{Sub } \Gamma \Delta) &\rightarrow \{\gamma : \text{Sub} \bullet \Gamma\}(\gamma^\circ : \Gamma^\circ \gamma) \rightarrow \Delta^\circ (\sigma \circ \gamma) \\ -^\circ : (t : \text{Tm } \Gamma A) &\rightarrow \{\gamma : \text{Sub} \bullet \Gamma\}(\gamma^\circ : \Gamma^\circ \gamma) \rightarrow A^\circ \gamma^\circ t[\gamma]\end{aligned}$$

$-^\circ$ acts on every type and term former and respects definitional equality.

²See e.g. [Coq19, KHS19]

Canonicity for inductive types

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Example: natural numbers.

In the syntax, assume $\mathbb{N} : \text{Ty} \Gamma$ with zero and suc.

Closed canonical terms of type \mathbb{N} are specified by an **indexed inductive type** in the metatheory.

```
data  $\mathbb{N}^\circ : \text{Tm} \bullet \mathbb{N} \rightarrow \text{Set}$  where
    zero $^\circ : \mathbb{N}^\circ$  zero
    suc $^\circ : (n : \text{Tm} \bullet \mathbb{N}) \rightarrow \mathbb{N}^\circ n \rightarrow \mathbb{N}^\circ (\text{suc } n)$ 
```

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data $\text{Code}^\circ : \text{Tm} \bullet \text{Code} \rightarrow \text{Set}$

$\mathbb{N}'^\circ : \text{Code}^\circ \mathbb{N}'$

$\Pi'^\circ : \{A : \text{Tm} \bullet \text{Code}\}(A^\circ : \text{Code}^\circ A)$

$\{B : \text{Tm} \bullet (\text{El } A \rightarrow \text{Code})\}(B^\circ : \{a : \text{Tm} \bullet (\text{El } a)\} \rightarrow \text{El}^\circ A^\circ a \rightarrow \text{Code}^\circ (B a))$
 $\rightarrow \text{Code}^\circ (\Pi' A B)$

$\text{El}^\circ : \{t : \text{Tm} \bullet \text{Code}\} \rightarrow \text{Code}^\circ t \rightarrow (\text{Tm} \bullet (\text{El } t) \rightarrow \text{Set})$

$\text{El}^\circ \mathbb{N}'^\circ = \mathbb{N}^\circ$

$\text{El}^\circ (\Pi'^\circ A^\circ B^\circ) = \lambda f. \{a : \text{Tm} \bullet (\text{El } A)\}(a^\circ : \text{El}^\circ A^\circ a \rightarrow \text{El}^\circ (B^\circ a^\circ))(f a)$

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Canonicity for all IR types

Code is a *single* IR type, but we want to show canonicity for *all* IR types.

We need to

- ① Specify and assume all IR types in the object theory.
- ② Generalize the canonicity construction across IR type descriptions.

Specifying IR types

Following Dybjer & Setzer: the type of **IR signatures** is an **internal** inductive type:

```
data Sig (O : Set1) : Set1 where
   $\iota$  : O → Sig O
   $\sigma$  : (A : Set) → (A → Sig O) → Sig O
   $\delta$  : (A : Set) → ((A → O) → Sig O) → Sig O
```

For each signature, we postulate type formation, term formation, elimination and computation rules, for the described IR type.

Specifying IR types

Let's write out the signature for Code.

data Code : Set **where**

\mathbb{N}' : Code

Π' : $(A : \text{Code}) \rightarrow (\text{El } A \rightarrow \text{Code}) \rightarrow \text{Code}$

$\text{El} : \text{Code} \rightarrow \text{Set}$

$\text{El } \mathbb{N}' = \mathbb{N}$

$\text{El } (\Pi' A B) = (a : \text{El } A) \rightarrow \text{El } (B a)$

SigCode : Sig Set

SigCode : $\equiv \sigma \text{ Bool } \lambda t. \text{case } t \text{ of}$

true $\rightarrow \iota \mathbb{N}$

false $\rightarrow \delta \top \lambda EIA. \delta (EIA \text{tt}) \lambda EIB. \iota ((x : EIA \text{tt}) \rightarrow EIB x)$

Generic canonicity

Somewhat technical. I try to give computational intuition.

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How to evaluate an **IR type constructor** IR S ?

- ① Evaluate the signature S to get a value (canonicity witness).
- ② Do induction on the value to compute a *metatheoretic indexed IR signature*.
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To evaluate **IR term constructors** and **IR elimination**, we use the corresponding meta-level indexed IR constructors and eliminators.

What about indexed IR?

We only show canonicity for plain IR types, but also show that indexed IR types are constructible in MLTT+IR.

- We use “fording”, i.e. converting indices to parameters and propositional identities.
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Constructed IIR types have the same definitional computation rules as native IIR types in Agda.

However, we can represent some IIR types which are

- ① not representable in Agda
- ② don't support definitional β -rules

This is because we have *first-class* signatures and Agda doesn't.

Overview

1. Indexed IR types can be constructed from IR types and basic type formers (omitted in this talk).
2. Canonicity:

MLTT with ω universes with IR

is proved canonical by ETT with ω universes with IR, plus Set_ω and $\text{Set}_{\omega+1}$

is proved consistent by ZF with ω Mahlo cardinals, plus two inaccessible cardinals above

Future work

Normalization for IR types?

- We want to work internally to presheaves over variable renamings.
- *To use IR reducibility predicates, we first have to show that IR types exists in presheaves.*

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- To a *syntactic parametricity translation*.
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Thank you!

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