Universe in the Natural Model of Type Theory

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1 Types

Assume an inaccessible cardinal λ. Write **Set** for the category of all sets. Say that a set A is λ-small if $|A| < \lambda$. Write $\mathbf{Set}_\lambda$ for the full subcategory of **Set** spanned by λ-small sets.

Let $\mathbb{C}$ be a small category, i.e. a category whose class of objects is a set and whose hom-classes are sets.

We write $\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbb{C})$ for the category of presheaves over $\mathbb{C}$,

$$\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbb{C}) =_{\mathrm{def}} [\mathbb{C}^{\mathrm{op}}, \mathbf{Set}]$$

The Natural Model associated to a presentable map $\mathsf{tp} \colon \mathsf{Tm} \to \mathsf{Ty}$ consists of

- contexts as objects $\Gamma, \Delta, \ldots \in \mathbb{C}$,
- a type in context $\mathsf{y}(\Gamma)$ as a map $A \colon \mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \to \mathsf{Ty}$,
- a term of type A in context Γ as a map $a \colon \mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \to \mathsf{Tm}$ such that

$$\begin{tikzcd} & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d, "\mathsf{tp}"] \\ \Gamma \arrow[ur, "a"] \arrow[r, "A"'] & \mathsf{Ty} \end{tikzcd}$$

  commutes,
- an operation called "context extension" which given a context Γ and a type $A \colon \mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \to \mathsf{Ty}$ produces a context $\Gamma \cdot A$ which fits into a pullback diagram below.

$$\begin{tikzcd} \mathsf{y}(\Gamma.A) \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d] \\ \mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \arrow[r, "A"'] & \mathsf{Ty} \end{tikzcd}$$

Remark. Sometimes, we first construct a presheaf X over Γ and observe that it can be classified by a map into Ty. We write

$$\begin{tikzcd} X \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d] \\ \mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \arrow[r, "\ulcorner X \urcorner"'] & \mathsf{Ty} \end{tikzcd}$$

to express this situation, i.e. $X \cong \mathsf{y}(\Gamma \cdot \ulcorner X \urcorner)$.

2 A type of small types

We now wish to formulate a condition that allows us to have a type of small types, written U, not just *judgement* expressing that something is a type. With this notation, the judgements that we would like to derive is

$$\mathsf{U} \colon \mathsf{Ty} \qquad \frac{a \colon \mathsf{U}}{\mathsf{El}(a) \colon \mathsf{Ty}}$$

(A sufficient and natural condition for this seems to be that we now have another inaccessible cardinal κ, with $\kappa < \lambda$.)

In the Natural Model, a universe U is postulated by a map

$$\pi \colon \mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{U}$$

In the Natural Model:

- There is a pullback diagram of the form

$$\begin{tikzcd} \mathsf{U} \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d] \\ 1 \arrow[r, "\ulcorner \mathsf{U} \urcorner"'] & \mathsf{Ty} \end{tikzcd}$$

- There is an inclusion of U into Ty

$$\mathsf{El} \colon \mathsf{U} \rightarrowtail \mathsf{Ty}$$

- $\pi : \mathsf{E} \to \mathsf{U}$ is obtained as pullback of $\mathtt{tp}$; There is a pullback diagram

$$\begin{tikzcd} E \arrow[r, tail] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d] \\ \mathsf{U} \arrow[r, tail, "\mathsf{El}"'] & \mathsf{Ty} \end{tikzcd}$$

With the notation above, we get

$$\begin{tikzcd}
\mathsf{y}(\Gamma.\mathsf{El}(a)) \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{E} \arrow[r] \arrow[d] & \mathsf{Tm} \arrow[d] \\
\mathsf{y}(\Gamma) \arrow[r, "a"'] \arrow[rr, bend right, "A"'] & \mathsf{U} \arrow[r, "\mathsf{El}"'] & \mathsf{Ty}
\end{tikzcd}$$

Both squares above are pullback squares.

3 The Universe in Embedded Type Theory (HoTT0) and the relationship to the Natural Model

4 Groupoid Model of HoTT

In this section we construct a natural model in $\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{grpd})$ the presheaf category indexed by the category $\mathbf{grpd}$ of (small) groupoids. We will build the classifier for display maps in the style of Hofmann and Streicher [HS98] and Awodey [Awo23]. To interpret the type constructors, we will make use of the weak factorization system on $\mathbf{grpd}$ - which comes from restricting the “classical Quillen model structure” on $\mathbf{cat}$ [Joy] to $\mathbf{grpd}$.

Notation. We will have two universe sizes - one small and one large. We denote the category of small sets as $\mathbf{set}$ and the large sets as $\mathbf{Set}$ (in the previous sections this would have been $\mathbf{Set}_\lambda$ and $\mathbf{Set}$ respectively). We denote the category of small categories as $\mathbf{cat}$ and the large categories as $\mathbf{Cat}$. We denote the category of small groupoids as $\mathbf{grpd}$. The category of small pointed groupoids will be $\mathbf{grpd}_\bullet$.

We are primarily working in the category of large presheaves indexed by small groupoids, which we will denote by

$$\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{grpd}) = [\mathbf{grpd}^{\mathrm{op}}, \mathbf{Set}]$$

In this section, Tm and Ty and so on will refer to the natural model semantics in this specific model.

Definition 4.1 (The disply map classifier)**.** We would like to define a natural transformation in $\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{grpd})$

$$\mathsf{tp}\colon \mathsf{Tm} \to \mathsf{Ty}$$

with representable fibers.

Consider the functor that forgets the point

$$U\colon \mathbf{grpd}_\bullet \to \mathbf{grpd} \qquad \text{in} \qquad \mathbf{Cat}.$$

If we apply the yoneda embedding $y\colon \mathbf{Cat} \to \mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{Cat})$ to U we obtain

$$U\circ\colon [-, \mathbf{grpd}_\bullet] \to [-, \mathbf{grpd}] \qquad \text{in} \qquad \mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{Cat}).$$

Since any small groupoid is also a large category $\mathbf{grpd} \hookrightarrow \mathbf{Cat}$, we can restrict $\mathbf{Cat}$ indexed presheaves to be $\mathbf{grpd}$ indexed presheaves. We define $\mathsf{tp}\colon \mathsf{Tm} \to \mathsf{Ty}$ as the image of $U\circ$ under this restriction.

$$\begin{array}{ccccc} \mathbf{Cat} & \xrightarrow{y} & \mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{Cat}) & \xrightarrow{\mathsf{res}} & \mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{grpd}) \\ \mathbf{grpd} & \longmapsto & [-, \mathbf{grpd}] & \longmapsto & \mathsf{Ty} \end{array}$$

Note that Tm and Ty are not representable in $\mathbf{Psh}(\mathbf{grpd})$.

References

[Awo23] Steve Awodey. On hofmann-streicher universes, 2023.

[HS98] Martin Hofmann and Thomas Streicher. The groupoid interpretation of type theory. In *Twenty-five years of constructive type theory (Venice, 1995)*, volume 36 of *Oxford Logic Guides*, pages 83–111. Oxford Univ. Press, New York, 1998.

[Joy] André Joyal. Model structures on cat. `https://ncatlab.org/joyalscatlab/published/Model+structures+on+Cat`.