

Types, Partial Evaluation and Optimality

Neil D. Jones
DIKU (Computer Science Department)
University of Copenhagen
DENMARK

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I: Quick review of 1. order partial evaluation

Programs are data objects in a first order data domain D such as:

$$D = Atom \cup D \times D$$

A *programming language* \mathbf{L} is a set \mathbf{L} -*programs* together with a semantic function

$$\llbracket - \rrbracket_{\mathbf{L}} : \mathbf{L}\text{-}programs \rightarrow D \multimap D$$

Program meanings are partial functions:

$$\llbracket p \rrbracket_{\mathbf{L}} : D \multimap D$$

(Omit \mathbf{L} if clear from context.) Examples for $\mathbf{L} = \text{Lisp}$:

$$\begin{aligned} \llbracket (\text{quote ALPHA}) \rrbracket_{\mathbf{L}} &= \text{ALPHA} \\ \llbracket (\text{lambda (x) (+ x x)}) \rrbracket_{\mathbf{L}} 3 &= 6 \end{aligned}$$

Interpreter, compiler, partial evaluator

An *interpreter* **int** (for **S** written in **L**) must satisfy:

$$\llbracket \text{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{S}}(\mathbf{d}) \doteq \llbracket \text{int} \rrbracket(\text{source}.\mathbf{d})$$

A *compiler* **comp** (from **S** to **T**, written in **L**)

$$\llbracket \text{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{S}}(\mathbf{d}) \doteq \llbracket \llbracket \text{comp} \rrbracket(\text{source}) \rrbracket_{\mathbf{T}}(\mathbf{d})$$

A *partial evaluator* (for **L**) is a program **mix** satisfying, for any program **p** and data **s**, **d**:

$$\llbracket \mathbf{p} \rrbracket(\mathbf{s}.\mathbf{d}) \doteq \llbracket \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket(\mathbf{p}.\mathbf{s}) \rrbracket(\mathbf{d})$$

Techniques for Partial Evaluation

- Applying base functions to known data
- unfolding function calls
- creating one or more *specialized program points*

Example. Ackermann's function with known $n = 2$:

```
a(m,n) = if m=0 then n+1 else
          if n=0 then a(m-1,1)
          else a(m-1,a(m,n-1))
```

Specialized program:

```
a2(n) = if n=0 then 3 else a1(a2(n-1))
a1(n) = if n=0 then 2 else a1(n-1)+1
```

Less than half as many arithmetic operations as the original: since all tests on and computations involving m have been removed.

The Futamura projections

Suppose $\mathbf{L} = \mathbf{T}$.

1. A partial evaluator can **compile**:

$$\mathbf{target} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket(\mathbf{int.source})$$

2. A partial evaluator can **generate a compiler**:

$$\mathbf{comp} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket(\mathbf{mix.int})$$

3. A partial evaluator can **generate a compiler generator**:

$$\mathbf{cogen} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket(\mathbf{mix.mix})$$

Proof. Simple equational reasoning to verify:

1. $\llbracket \mathbf{target} \rrbracket(\mathbf{d}) \doteq \llbracket \mathbf{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{s}}(\mathbf{d})$
2. $\mathbf{target} \doteq \llbracket \mathbf{comp} \rrbracket(\mathbf{source})$
3. $\mathbf{comp} \doteq \llbracket \mathbf{cogen} \rrbracket(\mathbf{int})$

(Surprise! It works well on the computer too...)

Practice: tricky (took a year to get right the first time, in 1984.)

II. Underbar types for partial evaluation

Isn't there a type error somewhere?

Self-application $f(f)$ requires f -type $A = A \rightarrow A$ (?)

A *symbolic version* of an operation on values is a corresponding operation on program texts.

- **Symbolic composition** of programs \mathbf{p} , \mathbf{q} .

Output = program \mathbf{r} .

Meaning of \mathbf{r} = (mathematical) composition of the meanings of \mathbf{p} and \mathbf{q} .

- **Symbolic specialization** of a function to a known first argument value.

Remainder of this talk

- A notation for the types of symbolic operations.
Distinguishes
 - *types of values* from
 - *types of program texts*
- Natural definitions of type correctness of a first-order interpreter, compiler or partial evaluator.
- State the problem of *optimal partial evaluation*.
- Show why it's difficult for typed languages (even first-order).
- Reference a solution by Henning Makholm.

Types for Symbolic Computation

The *Abstract syntax* of a type t :

$$t: \text{type} ::= \text{firstorder} \mid \underline{\text{type}} \mathbf{X} \\ \mid \text{type} \times \text{type} \mid \text{type} \rightarrow \text{type}$$

Type *firstorder* describes values in D .

For each language \mathbf{X} and type t we have a type constructor

$$\underline{t} \mathbf{X}$$

Meaning: the set of all \mathbf{X} -programs that denote values of type t .

Examples

- Atom **ALPHA** has type *firstorder*
- Lisp program (**quote ALPHA**) has type

$$\underline{\text{firstorder}} \mathbf{Lisp}$$

Meanings of Type Expressions

The meaning of type expression t is $\llbracket t \rrbracket$:

$$\llbracket firstorder \rrbracket = D$$

$$\llbracket t_1 \rightarrow t_2 \rrbracket = [\llbracket t_1 \rrbracket \rightarrow \llbracket t_2 \rrbracket]$$

$$\llbracket t_1 \times t_2 \rrbracket = \{(t_1, t_2) \mid t_1 \in \llbracket t_1 \rrbracket, t_2 \in \llbracket t_2 \rrbracket\}$$

$$\llbracket \underline{t} \mathbf{X} \rrbracket = \{ \mathbf{p} \in D \mid \llbracket \mathbf{p} \rrbracket \mathbf{X} \in \llbracket t \rrbracket \}$$

Some type inference rules:

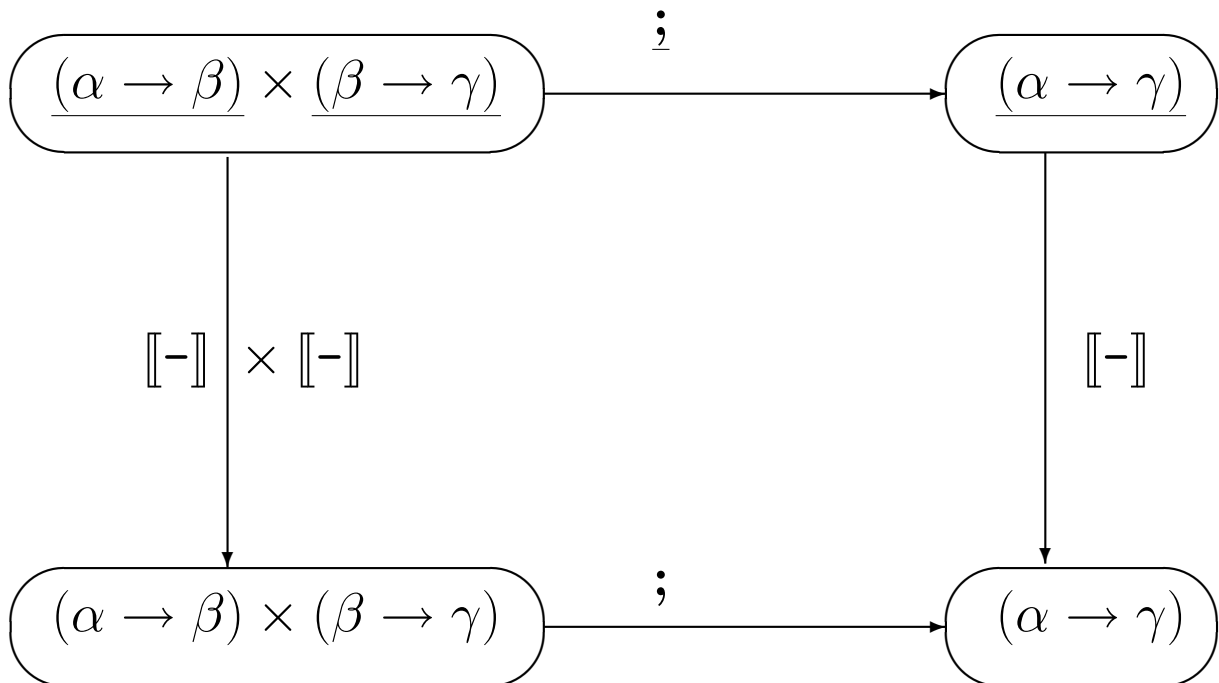
$$\frac{exp_1 : t_2 \rightarrow t_1, \quad exp_2 : t_2}{exp_1 exp_2 : t_1}$$

$$\frac{exp : \underline{t} \mathbf{X}}{\llbracket exp \rrbracket \mathbf{X} : t}$$

$$\frac{}{firstordervalue : firstorder}$$

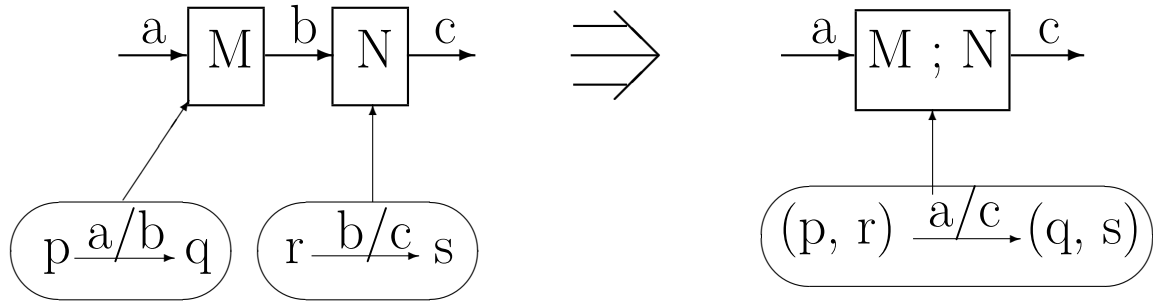
$$\frac{exp : \underline{t} \mathbf{X}}{exp : firstorder}$$

Symbolic Composition



$(\alpha \rightarrow \beta)$ = the set of all programs that compute a function from α to β .

Composition of Finite Transducers



Point: no intermediate symbol b is ever produced.

Composition of programs

Consider composition *oneto ; squares ; sum*

where

$$\begin{aligned} \textit{oneto}(n) &= [n, n-1, \dots, 2, 1] \\ \textit{squares}[a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n] &= [a_1^2, a_2^2, \dots, a_n^2] \\ \textit{sum}[a_1, a_2, \dots, a_n] &= a_1 + a_2 + \dots + a_n. \end{aligned}$$

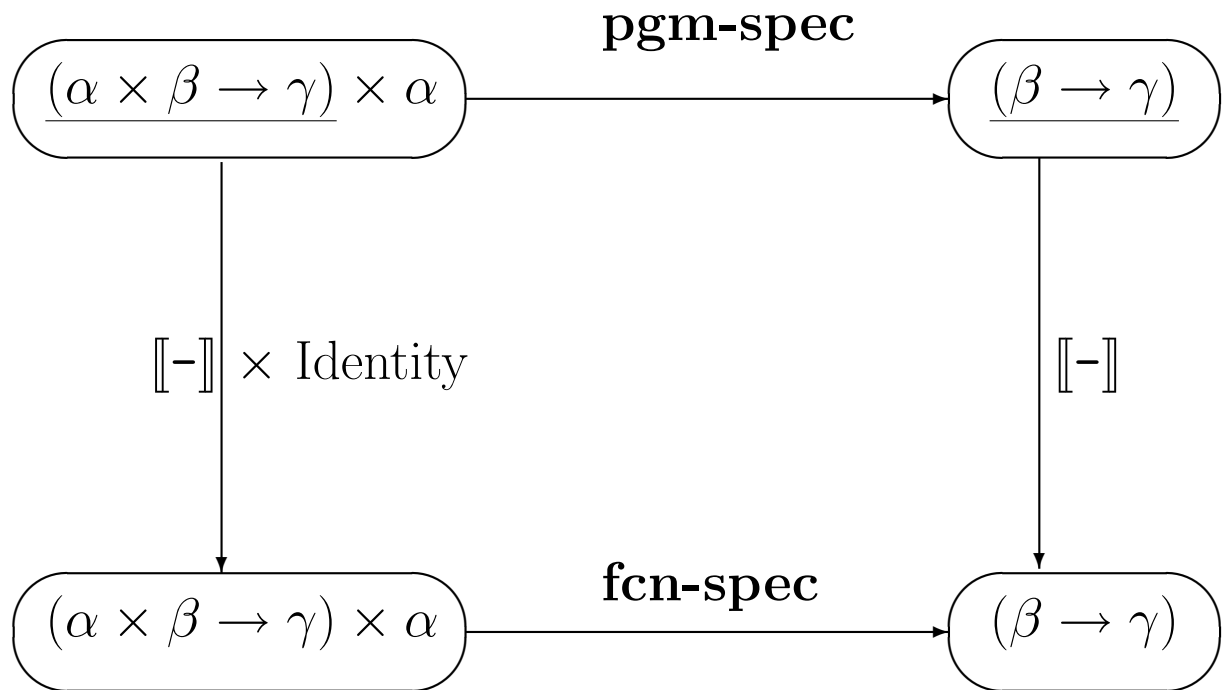
Straightforward program:

```
f(n)      = sum(squares(oneto(n)))
squares(l) = if l = [] then [] else
              cons(head(l)**2,
                    squares(tail(l)))
sum(l)     = if l = [] then [] else
              head(l) + sum(tail(l))
oneto(n)   = if n = 0 then [] else
              cons(n, oneto(n-1))
```

Result of “deforestation”:

```
g(n) = if n = 0 then 0 else n**2+g(n-1)
```

Partial Evaluation



A Better Definition of Partial Evaluation

Type in the diagram:

$$\mathbf{pgm} - \mathbf{spec} : (\underline{\alpha \times \beta \rightarrow \gamma \times \alpha}) \rightarrow (\underline{\beta \rightarrow \gamma})$$

First Curry:

$$\underline{\alpha \rightarrow (\beta \rightarrow \gamma)} \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta \rightarrow \gamma}$$

Then generalize:

$$\mathbf{mix} : \forall \alpha . \forall \tau . \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \tau} \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \underline{\tau}$$

Usually α must be first order.

Definition. Program $\mathbf{mix} \in D$ is a *partial evaluator* if for all $\mathbf{p}, \mathbf{s} \in D$,

$$\llbracket \mathbf{p} \rrbracket \mathbf{s} \doteq \llbracket \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{p} \mathbf{s} \rrbracket$$

Interpreters, compilers, etc. revisited

An *interpreter* **int** (for **S** written in **L**) must satisfy:

$$\llbracket \text{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{S}} \doteq \llbracket \text{int} \rrbracket \text{source}$$

A *compiler* **comp** (from **S** to **T**, written in **L**)

$$\llbracket \text{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{S}} \doteq \llbracket \llbracket \text{comp} \rrbracket \text{source} \rrbracket_{\mathbf{T}}$$

A *partial evaluator* (for **L**) is a program **mix** satisfying, for any program **p** and data **s**:

$$\llbracket \text{p} \rrbracket \text{ s} \doteq \llbracket \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{ p s} \rrbracket$$

Type Inference for Self-Application

The Futamura projections:

$$\begin{array}{lll} \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{int source} & \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} & \text{target} \\ \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix int} & \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} & \text{compiler} \\ \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix mix} & \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} & \text{cogen} \end{array}$$

Do these type-check?

Recall our type inference rules:

$$\frac{\text{exp}_1 : t_2 \rightarrow t_1, \quad \text{exp}_2 : t_2}{\text{exp}_1 \text{exp}_2 : t_1} \qquad \frac{\text{exp} : \underline{t} \mathbf{X}}{\llbracket \text{exp} \rrbracket \mathbf{X} : t}$$
$$\frac{}{\text{firstordervalue} : \text{firstorder}} \qquad \frac{\text{exp} : \underline{t} \mathbf{X}}{\text{exp} : \text{firstorder}}$$

Types of interpreters, etc.

1. Type of **source** : $\tau \mathbf{S}$
2. Type of **[[int]]** : $\forall \tau . \tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau$
3. Type of **[[compiler]]** : $\forall \tau . \tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau \mathbf{T}$
4. Type of **[[mix]]** : $\forall \alpha . \forall \beta . \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta} \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}$
where α is first order

Remark: Line 3 gives the type of

- the compiling *function*. The type of
- the *compiler text* is:

$$\mathbf{compiler} : \forall \tau . \underline{\tau \mathbf{S}} \rightarrow \underline{\tau \mathbf{T}}$$

and similarly for **source**, **int**, **mix**.

Types during Compilation

We wish to find the type of

$$\mathbf{target} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{int} \mathbf{source}$$

Assume program **source** has type $\tau \mathbf{S}$. A deduction:

$$\begin{array}{c} \hline \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket : \underline{\rho \rightarrow \sigma} \rightarrow \underline{\rho \rightarrow \sigma} \\ \hline \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket : \underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau} \rightarrow \underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau} \quad \mathbf{int} : \underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau} \\ \hline \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{int} : \underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau} \quad \mathbf{source} : \tau \mathbf{S} \\ \hline \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{int} \mathbf{source} : \tau \end{array}$$

Thus **target** has type $\tau = \tau \mathbf{L}$ (as expected).

The deduction uses only the type inference rules and generalization of polymorphic variables.

Types during Compiler Generation: 1

Recall that:

$$\text{compiler} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix int}$$

where interpreter **int** has type $\forall \tau . \underline{\tau} \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau$.

We show: If p has type $\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}$
 then $\llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix p}$ has type $\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}}$

Deduction:

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \hline
 \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket : \underline{\rho \rightarrow \sigma} \rightarrow \rho \rightarrow \underline{\sigma} \\
 \hline
 \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket : \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}} \quad \text{mix} : \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}} \\
 \hline
 \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix} : \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}} \quad \text{p} : \underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta} \\
 \hline
 \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix p} : \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \underline{\beta}}}
 \end{array}$$

Types during Compiler Generation: 2

Recall that:

$$\text{compiler} \stackrel{def}{=} \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix int}$$

where interpreter **int** has type $\forall \tau . \underline{\tau \mathbf{S}} \rightarrow \tau$.

We just showed: If \mathbf{p} has type $\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}$
then $\llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix } \mathbf{p}$ has type $\underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}}$

Substituting $\alpha = \underline{\tau \mathbf{S}}, \beta = \tau$, we get

$$\text{compiler} = \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{mix int} : \underline{\underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau}}$$

and so (as desired)

$$\llbracket \text{compiler} \rrbracket : \underline{\underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau}}$$

Furthermore τ was arbitrary, so

$$\llbracket \text{compiler} \rrbracket : \forall \tau . \underline{\underline{\tau \mathbf{S} \rightarrow \tau}}$$

By similar reasoning (too big a tree to show!):

$$\llbracket \text{cogen} \rrbracket : \forall \alpha \forall \beta . \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}} \rightarrow \underline{\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}}$$

III: Optimal Partial Evaluation

Suppose **sint** is a self-interpreter and **p**, **p'** are programs such that

$$p' = \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{ sint } p$$

Correctness of **mix** implies

$$\llbracket p' \rrbracket = \llbracket p \rrbracket$$

but **p**, **p'** need not be the same programs.

Definition Partial evaluator **mix** is **optimal** if it removes all interpretational overhead: For a natural self-interpreter **sint** and any program **p** and input **d**,

$$time_{p'}(d) \leq time_p(d)$$

Intuitively: **mix** has

removed an entire layer of interpretation.

Techniques for Partial Evaluation

- Applying base functions to known data
- unfolding function calls
- creating one or more *specialized functions*

Example. Ackermann's function with known $n = 2$:

$$\begin{aligned} a(m,n) = & \text{ if } m=0 \text{ then } n+1 \text{ else} \\ & \text{ if } n=0 \text{ then } a(m-1,1) \\ & \text{ else } a(m-1,a(m,n-1)) \end{aligned}$$

Specialized program:

$$\begin{aligned} a2(n) &= \text{ if } n=0 \text{ then } 3 \text{ else } a1(a2(n-1)) \\ a1(n) &= \text{ if } n=0 \text{ then } 2 \text{ else } a1(n-1)+1 \end{aligned}$$

where $a1(n) = a(1,n)$ and $a2(n) = a(2,n)$ are specialized versions of function a .

This performs less than half as many arithmetic operations as the original:

All computations involving m have been removed.

Example: part of a first-order interpreter

Trick: split environment into two parallel lists:

$$\begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{ns} = (\mathbf{n}_1, \dots, \mathbf{n}_k) & \text{names} \\ \mathbf{vs} = (\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_k) & \text{values} \end{array}$$

Part of interpreter text:

```
eval(exp,ns,vs,pgm) = case exp of
  "X"      : lookup X ns vs
  "e1+e2"  : eval(e1,ns,vs,pgm) + eval(e2,ns,vs,pgm)
  ...
```

Binding times: $\mathbf{exp}, \mathbf{ns}, \mathbf{pgm}$ are *static*,
while \mathbf{vs} is *dynamic*.

Consequence: all functions in $\mathbf{p}' = \llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{ sint } \mathbf{p}$
have form:

$$\text{eval}_{\mathbf{exp}, \mathbf{ns}, \mathbf{pgm}}(\mathbf{vs}) = \dots$$

Only *one* argument in each \mathbf{p}' function ?

This *cannot* be optimal, i.e., as fast as \mathbf{p} !

Inherited limits during specialisation

This problem: specialised program $\mathbf{p}' = \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{sint} \mathbf{p}$ *inherits a limit* from \mathbf{sint} : a specialised function

$$\mathbf{f}_{a,b}(\mathbf{x}, \mathbf{y}) = \dots$$

has $k' \leq k$ arguments, if \mathbf{sint} function \mathbf{f} has k arguments.

Thus no function in \mathbf{p}' has more than k arguments(!)

For interpreter function \mathbf{eval} , this problem can be solved by *variable splitting*.

Observation: for a fixed \mathbf{p} , the interpreter's variable \mathbf{vs} always has *a constant length* k .

Technical solution:

Split $\mathbf{eval}_{\mathbf{exp}, \mathbf{ns}, \mathbf{pgm}}(\mathbf{vs}) = \dots$ into

$$\mathbf{eval}_{\mathbf{exp}, \mathbf{ns}, \mathbf{pgm}}(\mathbf{v}_1, \dots, \mathbf{v}_k) = \dots$$

By this and similar tricks, a first-order “optimal” \mathbf{mix} can be built.

For the “optimal” \mathbf{mix} , $\mathbf{p}' = \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{sint} \mathbf{p}$ is

identical to \mathbf{p} , up to the naming of variables
(and thereby just as fast).

Optimality is harder for typed languages!

Interpreter example with types (first-order):

```
eval : Exp -> Names -> Values -> Univ
      Univ = Int integer | Pair Univ * Univ | ...
eval exp ns vs = case exp of
  "X"          : env X
  "e1:e2"      : Pair (eval e1 ns vs) (eval e2 ns vs)
  ...
```

Suppose source program has type

$$\llbracket p \rrbracket : \mathcal{N} \rightarrow \mathcal{N}$$

Then specialized program has a different type:

$$\llbracket p' \rrbracket : \text{Univ} \rightarrow \text{Univ}$$

and is significantly less efficient.

The problem is even worse with higher-order types.

A challenging problem

To achieve optimal specialisation for a typed programming language.

- Stated in 1987
- Unsuccessfully attempted for a number of years
- Solved by Henning Makholm in 1999. Reported in SAIG 2000 (ICFP workshop at Montreal)

Makholm's solution

Type of a specializer:

$$\llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket : Pgm \rightarrow Data \rightarrow Pgm$$

Correct, but “doesn't tell the whole story”

To clarify the problem, extend $\underline{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}_{\mathbf{L}}$ to

One version for \mathbf{L} -programs:

$$\frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}{Pgm}$$

and one version for data types:

$$\frac{\alpha}{Data}$$

$\frac{\alpha}{Data}$ is a subtype of $Data$:

encodings of all values of type α .

Optimality revisited

Type of a specializer's meaning, redone:

$$\llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket : \frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta \rightarrow \gamma}{Pgm} \rightarrow \frac{\alpha}{Data} \rightarrow \frac{\beta \rightarrow \gamma}{Pgm}$$

Type of a self-interpreter's meaning:

$$\forall \alpha, \beta . \llbracket \mathbf{sint} \rrbracket : \frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}{Pgm} \rightarrow \frac{\alpha}{Univ} \rightarrow \frac{\beta}{Univ}$$

and thus

$$\forall \alpha, \beta . \mathbf{sint} : \frac{\frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}{Pgm} \rightarrow \frac{\alpha}{Univ} \rightarrow \frac{\beta}{Univ}}{Pgm}$$

Here *Univ* is a universal data-type.

The optimality criterion: $\mathbf{p}' = \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{sint} \mathbf{p}$ should be as good as \mathbf{p} .

Alas this is impossible since:

$$\llbracket \mathbf{p} \rrbracket : \alpha \rightarrow \beta$$

but

$$\llbracket \mathbf{p}' \rrbracket = \llbracket \llbracket \mathbf{mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{sint} \mathbf{p} \rrbracket : \frac{\alpha}{Univ} \rightarrow \frac{\beta}{Univ}$$

Optimality reformulated

Way out: use a self-interpreter with type

$$\llbracket \mathbf{ sint}_{\alpha \rightarrow \beta} \rrbracket : \frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}{Pgm} \rightarrow \alpha \rightarrow \beta$$

This can be obtained from

$$\forall \alpha, \beta . \llbracket \mathbf{ sint} \rrbracket : \frac{\alpha \rightarrow \beta}{Pgm} \rightarrow \frac{\alpha}{Univ} \rightarrow \frac{\beta}{Univ}$$

mechanically:

$$\llbracket \mathbf{ sint}_{\alpha \rightarrow \beta} \rrbracket \mathbf{ p} \mathbf{ a} = \mathit{decode}_{\beta}(\llbracket \mathbf{ sint} \rrbracket \mathbf{ p} \mathit{ encode}_{\alpha}(\mathbf{ a}))$$

Optimality reformulated: for any $\llbracket \mathbf{ p} \rrbracket : \alpha \rightarrow \beta$
the program

$$\mathbf{ p}' = \llbracket \mathbf{ mix} \rrbracket \mathbf{ sint}_{\alpha \rightarrow \beta} \mathbf{ p}$$

is at least as fast as $\mathbf{ p}$.

Optimality achieved

1. **L** = a first-order call-by-value language with
2. types **unit**, **integer** and sum and product types.
3. Self-interpreter uses a universal type *Univ*.
4. Self-interpreter proven correct (Morten Welinder's phd thesis).
5. Phase 1: specialise using unsophisticated techniques.

The output program uses universal type *Univ*.

6. Phase 2: *Retype* output program, using
 - Type *erasure analysis* that uses
 - non-standard type inference for
 - types that are infinite *regular trees*.
7. Phase 3: an *Identity elimination* phase, e.g., η -reductions for product and sum types.

Punch line: It works, and even achieves:

$$\llbracket \text{mix} \rrbracket \text{ sint sint} =_{\alpha} \text{ sint}$$

Conclusions

Contributions:

- A notation for the types of symbolic operations. Distinguishes *types of values* from *types of program texts*.
- Natural definitions of type correctness of an interpreter or compiler.
- Makhholm: type notation (after some refinement) contributed to solving a long-standing open problem.

More to do:

- Better mathematical understanding of the underbar types.
- *How to prove* that an interpreter or compiler has the desired type?