Scrap your Boilerplate with Object Algebras!

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Abstract. This is the abstract ...

1 Introduction

This is the Introduction.

2 Overview

We begin by reconsider the company structure problem raised by [1]. A company is divided into departments which in turn have a manager, and consists of a collection of sub-units. A unit is either a single employee or a department. Both managers and ordinary employees are persons receiving a salary. A common OOP programmer may organize the code like:

```
public class Company {
  private List<Department> depts;
  public Company(List<Department> depts){this.depts = depts;}
}
public class Salary {
  private float salary;
  public Salary(float salary){this.salary = salary;}
}
```

Similar code may be applied to Department, Employee, etc. Now consider adding two operations to our company structure: query the salary bill for the whole company and increase the salary for the each employee by 10%. One may decide adding two more methods to all the classes, which is:

```
public class Company {
  public float salaryBill(){
    float r = 0;
    for (Department dept: depts) r+= dept.salaryBill();
    return r;
  }
  public void increaseSalary(){
    for (Department dept: depts) dept.increaseSalary();
  }
}
```

```
public interface SybAlg<Company, Dept, SubUnit, Employee, Person, Salary>{
  public Company C(List<Dept> depts);
  public Dept D(String name, Employee manager, List<SubUnit> subUnits);
  public SubUnit PU(Employee employee);
  public SubUnit DU(Dept dept);
  public Employee E(Person p, Salary s);
  public Person P(String name, String address);
  public Salary S(float salary);
}
```

Fig. 1. Company Structure represented by Object Algebra Interface

```
public class Salary {
  public float salaryBill(){return this.salary;}
  public void increaseSalary(){this.salary *= 1.1;}
}
```

This way of OOP style representation of tree structures can become cumbersome and inflexible due to the bound relationship between classes. For example, adding a new operation such as pretty printing of the company structure requires a lot of changes on the existing code and violates the no modification rule. One can solve this problem by coding with object algebras as Figure 1:

Hence different operations can be realized by inheriting object algebras from object algebra interface. For query salary bill:

```
public class SalaryQuerySybAlg implements SybAlg<Float,Float,Float,Float,
    Float,Float> {
  public Float C(List<Float> depts){
   Float r = 0f;
   for (Float f: depts) r += f;
   return r;
  }
  public Float S(float salary){
   return salary;
  }
}
```

Increasing Salary is trickier:

```
public interface G_Company {
  <Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> Company accept(SybAlg<
      Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> alg);
}
public interface G_Salary {
  <Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> Salary accept(SybAlg<
      Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> alg);
}
public class IncreaseSalarySybAlg implements SybAlg<G_Company, G_Dept,
    G_SubUnit, G_Employee, G_Person, G_Salary>{
  @Override
  public G_Company C(List<G_Dept> p0) {
    return new G_Company() {
     public <Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> Company accept(
         SybAlg<Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> alg) {
```

```
      List<Dept> gp0 = new ArrayList<Dept>();
      for (G_Dept s: p0) {
        gp0.add(s.accept(alg));
      }
      return alg.C(gp0);
    }
   };
  }
  public G_Salary S(float p0) {
   return new G_Salary() {
    @Override
    public <Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> Salary accept(
        SybAlg<Company,Dept,SubUnit,Employee,Person,Salary> alg) {
      return alg.S(1.1f*p0);
    }
   };
  }
}
```

However, although we solved the problem of extensibility with object algebras, the traversal code become so long and most of the time we are writing boilerplate routine code, which is to pass call the methods of its child leaves. The only code we are really interested in is the Salary S(Float salary) method to return the salary. It will be great if the boilerplate code can be generated automatically every time we want to traverse the tree structure.

Motivated by this problem of generating generic code for tree structure traversals, more specifically, queries and transformations in object algebras, we designed an object algebra framework with great features. We introduce monoids in queries and generic visitable interfaces in transformations, and write generic query and transformation which can be easily inherited by real cases of queries and transformations. Furthermore, even the generic query and transformation code can be generated automatically by adding an "@Algebra" annotation.

3 Queries

How to write generic queries by hand

Introduce Monoid

```
public interface Monoid<R> {
   R join(R x, R y);
   R empty();
   default R fold(List<R> lr){
    R res = empty();
    for (R r: lr){
      res = join(res, r);
    }
    return res;
   }
}
```

Free Variables Monoid

```
public class FreeVarsMonoid implements Monoid<String[]>{
 @Override
 public String[] empty() {
  return new String[]{};
 }
 @Override
 public String[] join(String[] e1, String[] e2) {
  int e1len = e1.length;
  int e2len = e2.length;
  String[] res = new String[e1len+e2len];
  System.arraycopy(e1, 0, res, 0, e1len);
  System.arraycopy(e2, 0, res, e1len, e2len);
  return res;
 }
}
```

Fig. 2. Free Variables Monoid

Generic Query by hand with Monoid
Free Vars Query

4 Transformations

Before writing generic transformation interfaces, we first introduce *generic visitable interface* as Figure 5. Implementing the generic visitable interface allows the user to construct objects from the passed in algebra.

The generic transform interface is constructed by inheriting from the *Object Algebra Interface* with *Generic Visitable Interfaces* as Figure 6. Note that the returned *Generic Visitable Interface* will contain all the information for the tree structure.

Now to create a specific transformation, e.g., substitute one variable with another name, it can be easily implemented by inheriting from the generic transform interface with the implementation of interesting cases. Here only the method G_Exp Var(String ss) needs to be overridden as Figure 7.

5 Object Algebras Framework

Writing generic queries and transformations with monoids and generic visitable interfaces can help users write tree structure traversal code with more extensibility and flexibility. However, writing the generic query and transformation interfaces is still painful experience by itself. It will be even better if these boilerplate code can be generated automatically. To address this problem, we provide an *Object Algebra Framework*, which utilizes *Java Annotation* to generate generic query and transformation interfaces based on the *Object Algebra Interface*, as illustrated below:

```
public class QueryExpAlg<Exp> implements ExpAlg<Exp> {
  private Monoid<Exp> m;
  public Monoid<Exp> m() { return m; }
  public QueryExpAlg(Monoid<Exp> m) {
    this.m = m;
  }
  public Exp Add(Exp p0,Exp p1) {
    Exp res = m.empty();
    res = m.join(res, p0);
    res = m.join(res, p1);
    return res;
  }
  public Exp Lit(int p0) {
    Exp res = m.empty();
    return res;
  }
  public Exp Var(String p0) {
    Exp res = m.empty();
    return res;
  }
}
```

Fig. 3. Generic Query by hand with Monoid

```
public class FreeVarsQueryExpAlg extends QueryExpAlg<String[]>{
  public FreeVarsQueryExpAlg(Monoid<String[]> m) {super(m);}
  public String[] Var(String s){return new String[]{s};}
}
```

Fig. 4. Free Vars Query

```
@Algebra
public interface ExpAlg<Exp> {
  Exp Var(String s);
  Exp Lit(int i);
  Exp Add(Exp e1, Exp e2);
}
```

With the annotation "@Algebra", the framework will generate the boilerplate codes for us automatically. As for our ExpAlg example, the following directory structure will be generated by the library.

```
src/
└── generic/
```

```
public interface G_Exp {
  <Exp> Exp accept(ExpAlg<Exp> alg);
}
```

Fig. 5. Generic Visitable Interface

```
public interface ExpAlgTransform extends ExpAlg<G_Exp> {
 @Override
 default G_Exp Add(G_Exp e1, G_Exp e2) {
  return new G_Exp() {
   @Override
   public <Exp> Exp accept(ExpAlg<Exp> alg) {
    return alg.Add(e1.accept(alg), e2.accept(alg));
   }
  };
 }
 @Override
 default G_Exp Lit(int i) {
  return new G_Exp() {
   @Override
   public <Exp> Exp accept(ExpAlg<Exp> alg) {
    return alg.Lit(i);
   }
  };
 }
 @Override
 default G_Exp Var(String s) {
  return new G_Exp() {
   @Override
   public <Exp> Exp accept(ExpAlg<Exp> alg) {
    return alg.Var(s);
   }
  };
 }
}
```

Fig. 6. Generic Transformation by hand with acceptor interface

```
   │  └── G_ExpAlg_Exp
   ├── query/
   │  └── ExpAlgQuery
   └── transform/
      └── ExpAlgTransform
```

Furthermore, the monoid interface is also included in the Object Algebras Framework

Hence when programming with query, one only needs to focus on the interesting case, for instance, the return free variable names, and the specific monoid needed, which in Free Variables case will be a String List monoid. While programming with transformation will be implementing interesting cases by inheriting from the AlgNameTransform interface with *generic visitable interfaces*.

6 Other Features

One More section

```
public class SubstVarsTransform implements ExpAlgTransform{
  private String s;
  private G_Exp gExp;
  public SubstVarsTransform(String s, G_Exp gExp){
    this.s = s;
    this.gExp = gExp;
  }
  @Override
  public G_Exp Var(String ss) {
    return new G_Exp() {
      @Override
      public <Exp> Exp accept(ExpAlg<Exp> alg) {
        if (ss.equals(s)) return gExp.accept(alg);
        else return alg.Var(ss);
      }
    };
  }

}
```

Fig. 7. Substitute Variables Transformation

7 Case Study

Case study section

8 Related Work

Finally related work.

9 Conclusion

And conclusion.

Acknowledgements We should thank someone!

References

1. ralf Lammel, S.P.J.: Scrap your boilerplate: A practical design pattern for generic programming. In: TLDI'03 (2003)