

Lecture 7: Monads and IO

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Some slides of this presentation are borrowed from
[http://foswiki.cs.uu.nl/foswiki/pub/USCS/CourseSchedule/
C2-Monads-final.pdf](http://foswiki.cs.uu.nl/foswiki/pub/USCS/CourseSchedule/C2-Monads-final.pdf)

Introduction

The **monad abstraction** is a widely used design pattern in modern Functional Programming.

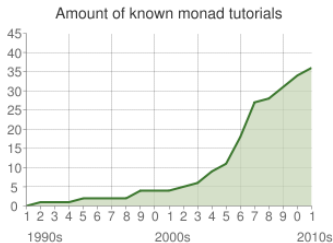
- **1960s:** Category theorists invented monads to concisely express certain aspects of universal algebra.
- **1970s:** Functional programmers invented list comprehensions to concisely express certain programs involving lists.
- **1992:** List comprehensions were generalized to arbitrary monads in 1992 by Philip Wadler - the resulting programming feature can concisely express **pure functional programs** that
 - manipulate state,
 - handle exceptions etc.

Introduction

- **1996:** Monads became a “first-class citizen” of Haskell, with
 - special syntax for monads: the **do**-notation
 - the IO-support of the language exposed as a monad

Abstraction, intuition, and the “monad tutorial fallacy”

- How to learn and gain intuition about abstract concepts?
 - Begin with the concrete - then move to the abstract.



- Throughout the 2000s, the concept of monads have been treated in numerous blog posts of varying quality
- In a sense, this culminated with the **Monads are Burritos** tutorial

Monads in memes



Let's ask Google what a monad is...

Q monads are|



Google Search

monads are like burritos

monads are elephants

monads are not metaphors

monads are windowless

monads are monoids in the category of endofunctors

monads are trees with grafting

Examples of monads

A type constructor is a **monad** if it implements the **monad operations** (which I have not defined yet).

The monad operations can be used to implement a wide range of concepts:

Error handling

Maybe a
Either String a

Non-determinism

[a]

Stateful computation

Reader a
Writer a
State a

Side-effectful computation

IO a

Special language syntax for monadic computations

The special syntax is just syntactic sugar for the application of the **monadic operations** (which I have not defined yet).

Haskell

```
pairs = do x ← xs  
         y ← ys  
         return (x, y)
```

Scala

```
val pairs = for { x ← xs  
                 y ← ys  
                 } yield (x, y)
```

C# (LINQ)

```
var pairs = from x in xs  
            from y in ys  
            select new {x, y};
```


The IO monad

The *IO* type constructor is an example of a monad. Code written with this monad is evaluated sequentially, and can make use of the IO operations of the Operating System:

```
main = do
  colors ← forM [1,2,3,4] ( $\lambda a \rightarrow$  do
    putStrLn ("Which color do you associate "
              ++ "with the number " ++ show a ++ "?")
    color ← getLine
    return color)
  putStrLn ("The colors that you associate "
            ++ "with 1, 2, 3 and 4 are: ")
  mapM putStrLn colors
```

Asynchronous computation

Control.Monad.Par

do

```
fx ← spawn (return (f x))    -- start evaluating (f x)  
gx ← spawn (return (g x))    -- start evaluating (g x)  
a ← get fx      -- wait for fx  
b ← get gx      -- wait for gx  
return (a, b)    -- return results
```

“Futures/promises” which exist in many languages, fit nicely into the monad abstraction.

f and *g* could be functions doing a HTTP POST request, or doing an expensive computation.

Pure vs. impure languages

- Monads can also help with making pure Haskell code shorter and easier to read and write. This is the focus in the beginning of this lecture.
- **Pure languages**
 - easy to reason about (equational reasoning)
 - may benefit from lazy evaluation,
- **Impure languages**
 - offer efficiency benefits
 - sometimes make possible a more compact mode of expression

Using **monads** is an approach to integrate impure effects into pure programs.

“In short, Haskell is the world’s finest imperative programming language”

– Simon Peyton Jones

Problems with pure functional programming

- Pure functional languages have this advantage: All flow of data is made explicit.
- And this disadvantage: Sometimes it is painfully explicit.
- The essence of an algorithm can become buried under the plumbing required to carry data from its point of creation to its point of use.
- We will now exemplify these statements, and later propose solutions based on monads.

Running example: A small interpreter

We introduce the type of terms, and an evaluation function:

data *Term* = *Con Int* | *Div Term Term* **deriving** *Show*

eval :: *Term* → *Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *a*

eval (*Div t u*) = *eval t 'div' eval u*

Examples of terms

answer, err :: *Term*

answer = (*Div* (*Div* (*Con* 1972) (*Con* 2)) (*Con* 23))

err = (*Div* (*Con* 1) (*Con* 0))

We can evaluate...

eval answer = 42

eval err = ⊥

Extension 1/3: Adding error handling

data *Term* = *Con Int* | *Div Term Term* **deriving** *Show*

eval :: *Term* → *Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *a*

eval (*Div t u*) = *eval t 'div' eval u*

- We would like to add **error handling** to *eval*, such that the program will not crash when dividing by zero, but instead return an error that can be used by other parts of the program.
- In impure languages, we would throw an exception
- What can we do in Haskell?

Extension 1/3: Adding error handling

We would like errors to be a *value*, and not \perp :

data *Error* *a* = *Raise Exception* | *Return a* **deriving** *Show*
type *Exception* = *String*

eval :: *Term* → *Error Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *Return a*

eval (*Div t u*) = **case** *eval t* **of**

Raise e → *Raise e*

Return a →

case *eval u* **of**

Raise e → *Raise e*

Return b →

if *b* ≡ 0

then *Raise "divide by zero"*

else *Return (a 'div' b)*

Extension 2/3: Adding state - Counting the number of operations performed

data *Term* = *Con Int* | *Div Term Term* **deriving** *Show*

eval :: *Term* → *Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *a*

eval (*Div t u*) = *eval t 'div' eval u*

- We would like to add a **a count of operations** performed by the evaluation engine.
- In impure languages: increment a global variable
- What can we do in Haskell?

Extension 2/3: Adding state - Counting the number of operations performed

type *State* *s a* = *s* → (*a*, *s*)

eval :: *Term* → *State* *Int* *Int*

eval (*Con a*) *x* = (*a*, *x*)

eval (*Div t u*) *x* = **let** (*a*, *y*) = *eval t x* **in**
 let (*b*, *z*) = *eval t y* **in**
 (*a* 'div' *b*, *z* + 1)

> *eval answer* 0

(42, 2)

Extension 3/3: Adding an execution trace

data *Term* = *Con Int* | *Div Term Term* **deriving** *Show*

eval :: *Term* → *Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *a*

eval (*Div t u*) = *eval t 'div' eval u*

- We would like to add an **execution trace** to the program - and write out which calls are made to eval, and what are their arguments?
- In impure languages: Execute a print statement inside eval
- How would we do in Haskell?

> *putStrLn \$ fst \$ eval answer*

eval (*Con 1972*) = 1972

eval (*Con 2*) = 2

eval (*Div* (*Con 1972*) (*Con 2*)) = 986

eval (*Con 23*) = 23

eval (*Div* (*Div* (*Con 1972*) (*Con 2*)) (*Con 23*)) = 42

Adding an execution trace

type *Writer* *a* = (*Output*, *a*)

type *Output* = *String*

eval :: *Term* → *Writer Int*

eval (*Con a*) = (*line* (*Con a*) *a*, *a*)

eval (*Div t u*) = **let** (*x*, *a*) = *eval t* **in**
 let (*y*, *b*) = *eval u* **in**
 (*x* ++ *y* ++ *line* (*Div t u*) (*a* 'div' *b*), *a* 'div' *b*)

line :: *Term* → *Int* → *Output*

line t a = "eval (" ++ *show t* ++ ") = " ++ *show a* ++ "\n"

Adding an execution trace

```
> putStrLn $ fst $ eval answer
eval (Con 1972) ≤ 1972
eval (Con 2) ≤ 2
eval (Div (Con 1972) (Con 2)) ≤ 986
eval (Con 23) ≤ 23
eval (Div (Div (Con 1972) (Con 2)) (Con 23)) ≤ 42

> putStrLn $ fst $ eval err
eval (Con 1) ≤ 1
eval (Con 0) ≤ 0
eval (Div (Con 1) (Con 0)) ≤ ***Exception : divide by zero
```

Adding an execution trace

- From the discussion so far, it may appear that programs in impure languages are easier to modify than those in pure languages.
- But sometimes the reverse is true.
- Say that it was desired to modify the previous program to display the execution trace in the reverse order:

$(x \mathrel{++} y \mathrel{++} \text{line } (\text{Div } t \ u) \ (a \text{ 'div' } b), a \text{ 'div' } b)$

could be changed to

$(\text{line } (\text{Div } t \ u) \ (a \text{ 'div' } b) \mathrel{++} y \mathrel{++} x, a \text{ 'div' } b)$

- So - explicit data flow gives flexibility, but sometimes the explicit way of programming is too explicit and buries the essence of the algorithm being implemented.

What is a monad?

A monad is a triple $(M, \text{return}, (\gg=))$ where

- M is a type constructor
- $\text{return} :: a \rightarrow M\ a$ is a function (also called *unit*)
- $(\gg=) :: M\ a \rightarrow (a \rightarrow M\ b) \rightarrow M\ b$ is a function (also called *bind*)

The old code

```
data Error a = Raise Exception | Return a deriving Show
type Exception = String
eval :: Term → Error Int
eval (Con a)  = Return a
eval (Div t u) = case eval t of
    Raise e → Raise e
    Return a →
        case eval u of
            Raise e → Raise e
            Return b →
                if b ≡ 0
                    then Raise "divide by zero"
                    else Return (a 'div' b)
```

The new code

```
data Error a = Raise Exception | Return a deriving Show
type Exception = String
eval :: Term → Error Int
eval (Con a)  = return a
eval (Div t u) = do a ← eval t
                  b ← eval u
                  if b ≡ 0
                      then raise "Divide by zero"
                      else return (a 'div' b)
raise :: Exception → Error a
raise e = Raise e
```


The Error monad

data *Error a* = *Raise Exception* | *Return a* **deriving** *Show*
type *Exception* = *String*

instance (*Monad Error*) **where**

return = *Return*

$m \gg= k = \text{case } m \text{ of}$

Return a $\rightarrow k\ a$

Raise e $\rightarrow \text{Raise } e$

Verify the types

- $\text{return} :: a \rightarrow \text{Error } a$
- $(\gg=) :: \text{Error } a \rightarrow (a \rightarrow \text{Error } b) \rightarrow \text{Error } b$

Question: How would you define a function f such that $(\text{Return } x) \gg= f = \text{Return } (x + 5)$ Note that we need no handling of errors in the *input* given to f .

The **do** notation

The **do**-notation

$$\begin{aligned} val = \mathbf{do} \ a \leftarrow eval\ t \\ \quad \quad \quad b \leftarrow eval\ u \\ \quad \quad \quad return\ (a + b) \end{aligned}$$

is just syntactic sugar for

$$\begin{aligned} val = eval\ t \gg= \lambda a \rightarrow \\ \quad \quad eval\ u \gg= \lambda b \rightarrow \\ \quad \quad return\ (a + b) \end{aligned}$$

How to define a monad for *Maybe*?

A simpler version of what we have just seen is:

data *Maybe* *a* = *Nothing* | *Just* *a*

Try to suggest definitions of the following functions:

- *return* :: *a* → *Maybe* *a*
- (*>>=*) :: *Maybe* *a* → (*a* → *Maybe* *b*) → *Maybe* *b*

Introducing state - The old code

type *State* *s a* = *s* → (*a*, *s*)

eval :: *Term* → *State* *Int* *Int*

eval (*Con a*) *x* = (*a*, *x*)

eval (*Div t u*) *x* = **let** (*a*, *y*) = *eval t x* **in**
 let (*b*, *z*) = *eval t y* **in**
 (*a* 'div' *b*, *z* + 1)

What we would like to end up with...

```
type State s a = s → (a, s)
eval :: Term → State Int Int
eval (Con a)  = return a
eval (Div t u) = do a ← eval t
                  b ← eval u
                  tick
                  return (a 'div' b)
```

Notice that the counting is done with the function *tick*, and keeping track of the state variable is done behind the scenes! But we cannot exactly achieve this with standard Haskell.

We would need to activate the **TypeSynonymInstances** compiler pragma, to declare *State s* as a Monad instance.

type *State* *s a* = *s* → (*a*, *s*)

return a = λ*x* → (*a*, *x*)

m >>= *k* = λ*x* → **let** (*a*, *y*) = *m x* **in**
 let (*b*, *z*) = *k a y* **in**
 (*b*, *z*)

tick :: *State s ()*

tick = λ*x* → ((), *x* + 1)

eval :: *Term* → *State Int Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *return a*

eval (*Div t u*) = *eval t* >>= λ*a* →
 eval u >>= λ*b* →
 tick >>= _ →
 return (*a* 'div' *b*)

> *eval answer* 0

(42, 2)

Making it an instance of *Monad*

For technical reasons, we need a **newtype** instead of an ordinary type synonym **type**

```
newtype State s a = State {runState :: s → (a, s)}
```

```
instance (Monad (State s)) where
```

```
    return a = State (λx → (a, x))
```

```
    m ≫ k = State (λx → let (a, y) = runState m x in  
                        let (b, z) = runState (k a) y in  
                        (b, z))
```

```
tick :: M ()
```

```
tick = State (λx → ((), x + 1))
```

So we end up with the nice code that we wanted

```
eval :: Term → State Int Int  
eval (Con a) = return a  
eval (Div t u) = do a ← eval t  
                   b ← eval u  
                   _ ← tick  
                   return (a 'div' b)  
  
> runState (eval answer) 0  
(42, 2)
```

The **do** notation allows us to remove the $_ \leftarrow$ (values which are thrown away)

So we end up with the nice code that we wanted

eval :: *Term* → *State Int Int*

eval (*Con a*) = *return a*

eval (*Div t u*) = **do** *a* ← *eval t*
 b ← *eval u*
 tick
 return (a 'div' b)

> *runState (eval answer) 0*

(42, 2)

Final variant: Adding execution trace

type $M\ a = (Output, a)$

type $Output = String$

$eval :: Term \rightarrow M\ Int$

$eval\ (Con\ a) = (line\ (Con\ a)\ a, a)$

$eval\ (Div\ t\ u) = \mathbf{let}\ (x, a) = eval\ t\ \mathbf{in}$
 $\mathbf{let}\ (y, b) = eval\ u\ \mathbf{in}$
 $(x \mathbin{++} y \mathbin{++} line\ (Div\ t\ u)\ (a\ 'div'\ b), a\ 'div'\ b)$

$line :: Term \rightarrow Int \rightarrow Output$

$line\ t\ a = "eval\ (" \mathbin{++} show\ t \mathbin{++} ") = " \mathbin{++} show\ a \mathbin{++} "\n"$

The code that we want to end up with...

$eval :: Term \rightarrow M\ Int$

$eval\ (Con\ a) = \mathbf{do}\ out\ (line\ (Con\ a)\ a)$
 $\quad\quad\quad return\ a$

$eval\ (Div\ t\ u) = \mathbf{do}\ a \leftarrow eval\ t$
 $\quad\quad\quad b \leftarrow eval\ u$
 $\quad\quad\quad out\ (line\ (Div\ t\ u)\ (a\ 'div'\ b))$
 $\quad\quad\quad return\ (a\ 'div'\ b)$

The definition of the monad...

type $M\ a = (Output, a)$

type $Output = String$

$return\ a = ("", a)$

$m \gg= k = \mathbf{let}\ (x, a) = m\ \mathbf{in}$
 $\mathbf{let}\ (y, b) = k\ a\ \mathbf{in}$
 $(x ++ y, b)$

$out :: Output \rightarrow M\ ()$

$out\ x = (x, ())$

Technicalities - introducing a **newtype**

newtype $M\ a = \text{Writer}\ \{\text{runWriter} :: (\text{Output}, a)\}$

type $\text{Output} = \text{String}$

instance $(\text{Monad}\ M)$ **where**

$\text{return}\ a = \text{Writer}\ (\text{" "}, a)$

$m \gg k = \text{let}\ \text{Writer}\ (x, a) = m\ \text{in}$

$\text{let}\ \text{Writer}\ (y, b) = k\ a\ \text{in}$

$\text{Writer}\ (x \text{ ++ } y, b)$

$\text{out} :: \text{Output} \rightarrow M\ ()$

$\text{out}\ x = \text{Writer}\ (x, ())$

Questions

Recall that a monad is a triple $(M, \text{return}, (\gg=))$ where

$$\text{return} :: a \rightarrow M a$$

$$(\gg=) :: M a \rightarrow (a \rightarrow M b) \rightarrow M b$$

Suggest definitions for $(\gg=)$ and return for the following type constructors:

- **data** $Id\ a = Id\ a$
- **data** $[a] = [] \mid a : [a]$
- **data** $Tree\ a = Tip\ a \mid Node\ (Tree\ a)\ (Tree\ a)$

The List monad

Encoding multiple results and nondeterminism

Get the length of all words in a list of multi-line texts:

map length (concat (map words (concat (map lines txts))))

Easier to understand with a list comprehension:

[length w | t ← txts, l ← lines t, w ← words l]

We can also define sequencing and embedding, i.e., (\gg) and *return* :

(\gg) :: [a] → (a → [b]) → [b]

xs \gg f = concat (map f xs)

return :: a → [a]

return x = [x]

Four equivalent pieces of code

map length (concat (map words (concat (map lines txts))))

[length w | t ← txts, l ← lines t, w ← words l]

do *t ← txts*

l ← lines t

w ← words l

return (length w)

txts $\gg= \lambda t \rightarrow$

lines t $\gg= \lambda l \rightarrow$

words l $\gg= \lambda w \rightarrow$

return (length w)

Adding *filter* functionality

```
odds = [x | x ← [1..10], odd x]
```

```
odds' = do x ← [1..10]  
        -- how to filter odd x?  
        return x
```

```
odds' = do x ← [1..10]  
        _ ← if (odd x) then [()] else []  
        return x
```

```
import Control.Monad  
odds' = do x ← [1..10]  
        guard (odd x)
```

The Monad Laws

class *Monad* *m* **where**

return :: $a \rightarrow m\ a$

$(\gg=)$:: $m\ a \rightarrow (a \rightarrow m\ b) \rightarrow m\ b$

- The name “monad” is borrowed from category theory.
- A monad is an algebraic structure similar to a monoid.
- Monads have been popularized in functional programming via the work of Moggi and Wadler.
- Every monad instance should satisfy the following laws:
 1. Left identity: $return\ x \gg= k \equiv k\ x$
 2. Right identity: $m \gg= return \equiv m$
 3. Associativity: $m \gg= (\lambda a \rightarrow k\ a \gg= l) \equiv (m \gg= k) \gg= l$

The IO Monad

Another type with actions that require sequencing. The *IO* monad is special in several ways:

- *IO* is a primitive type, and $(\gg=)$ and *return* for *IO* are primitive functions,
- I there is no (politically correct) function $runIO :: IO\ a \rightarrow a$, whereas for most other monads there is a corresponding function,
- values of *IO* *a* denote side-effecting programs that can be executed by the run-time system.
- Note that the specialty of *IO* has really not much to do with being a monad.

IO, Internally

```
Prelude > :i IO
newtype IO a
    = GHC.Types.IO (GHC.Prim.State # GHC.Prim.RealWorld
    → (#GHC.Prim.State # GHC.Prim.RealWorld, a#))
    -- Defined in ‘GHC.Types’
instance Monad IO    -- Defined in ‘GHC.Base’
instance Functor IO  -- Defined in ‘GHC.Base’
```

Internally, GHC models *IO* as a state monad having the “real world” as state!

The role of IO in Haskell

More and more features have been integrated into *IO*, for instance:

- classic file and terminal IO
putStr, hPutStr
- references
newIORef, readIORef, writeIORef
- access to the system
getArgs, getEnvironment, getClockTime
- exceptions
throwIO, catch
- concurrency
forkIO

IO examples

Stdout output

```
Main > putStr "Hi "
```

```
Hi
```

```
Main > do {putChar 'H'; putChar 'i'; putChar '\n' }
```

```
Hi
```

Stdin input

```
Main > do {c ← getChar; putStrLn ("' " ++ [c] ++ "' ")}
```

```
z'z'
```

IO examples

File IO

```
Main > do {h ← openFile "TMP" WriteMode; hPutStrLn h "Hi" }  
Main > :q
```

Leaving GHCi

```
$ cat TMP
```

```
Hi
```

IO examples

Side-effect: variables

```
do  $v \leftarrow \text{newIORef}$  "text"  
     $\text{modifyIORef } v (\lambda t \rightarrow t \mathbin{++} \text{" and more text"})$   
     $w \leftarrow \text{readIORef } v$   
     $\text{print } w$ 
```

Results in `text and more text`

The role of *IO* in Haskell (contd.)

- A program that involves *IO* in its type can do everything. The absence of *IO* tells us a lot, but its presence does not allow us to judge what kind of *IO* is performed.
- It would be nice to have more fine-grained control on the effects a program performs.
- For some, but not all effects in *IO*, we can use or build specialized monads.

Lifting functions to monads

$liftM :: (Monad\ m) \Rightarrow (a \rightarrow b) \rightarrow m\ a \rightarrow m\ b$

$liftM2 :: (Monad\ m) \Rightarrow (a \rightarrow b \rightarrow c) \rightarrow m\ a \rightarrow m\ b \rightarrow m\ c$

..

$liftM\ f\ m = \mathbf{do}\ \{x \leftarrow m; \mathbf{return}\ (f\ x)\}$

$liftM2\ f\ m1\ m2 = \mathbf{do}\ \{x1 \leftarrow m1; x2 \leftarrow m2; \mathbf{return}\ (f\ x1\ x2)\}$

..

Question: What is $liftM\ (+1)\ [1..5]$? **Answer:** Same as $map\ (+1)\ [1..5]$. The function $liftM$ generalizes map to arbitrary monads.

Monadic map

$mapM :: (Monad\ m) \Rightarrow (a \rightarrow m\ b) \rightarrow [a] \rightarrow m\ [b]$

$mapM_ :: (Monad\ m) \Rightarrow (a \rightarrow m\ b) \rightarrow [a] \rightarrow m\ ()$

$mapM\ f\ [] = return\ []$

$mapM\ f\ (x : xs) = liftM2\ (\cdot)\ (f\ x)\ (mapM\ f\ xs)$

$mapM_f\ [] = return\ ()$

$mapM_f\ (x : xs) = f\ x \gg mapM\ f\ xs$

Sequencing monadic actions

sequence :: (Monad m) ⇒ [m a] → m [a]

sequence_ :: (Monad m) ⇒ [m a] → m ()

sequence = *foldr* (*liftM2* (:)) (*return* [])

sequence_ = *foldr* (≫) (*return* ())

Monadic fold

$foldM :: (Monad\ m) \Rightarrow (a \rightarrow b \rightarrow m\ a) \rightarrow a \rightarrow [b] \rightarrow m\ a$

$foldM\ op\ e\ [] = return\ e$

$foldM\ op\ e\ (x : xs) = \mathbf{do}\ r \leftarrow op\ e\ x$

$foldM\ f\ r\ xs$

More monadic operations

Browse *Control.Monad* :

filterM :: (Monad m) => (a -> m Bool) -> [a] -> m [a]

replicateM :: (Monad m) => Int -> m a -> m [a]

replicateM :: (Monad m) => Int -> m a -> m ()

join :: (Monad m) => m (m a) -> m a

when :: (Monad m) => Bool -> m () -> m ()

unless :: (Monad m) => Bool -> m () -> m ()

forever :: (Monad m) => m a -> m ()

. . . and more!

Exercises Wednesday

- Will be relevant for the exam project.
- *minimax* and *minimaxAlphabeta* will be discussed.
- Different tree algorithms on “Game trees”
- The exercises next week will be on Real World Haskell
- The labs on friday will be about monad problems, but you can also work on your project.