

Lambda calculus (cont)

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(adopted from my & Edward Yang's CSE242 slides)



Logistics

- Assignments:
 - HW 1 is out and due this week (Sunday)
 - There will be one more homework on functions
 - After this: 1 homework / general topic area
- Podcasting: no video while projector is broken
 - Sorry :(
- Come to section and office hours!

Questions

- How are you finding PA1?
 - A: easy, B: okay, C: hard, D: wtf is PA1?

Questions

- How are you finding HW1?
 - A: easy, B: okay, C: hard

Questions

- How are you finding the pace of the lectures?
 - A: too slow, B: it works for me, C:too fast

Today

- Recall syntax of λ calculus
- Semantics of λ calculus
 - Recall free and bound variables
 - Substitution
 - Evaluation order

Review

- λ -calculus syntax: $e ::= x \mid \lambda x.e \mid e_1 e_2$
 - Is $\lambda(x+y).3$ a valid term? (A: yes, B: no)
 - Is $\lambda x. (x x)$ a valid term? (A: yes, B: no)
 - Is $\lambda x. (x) y$ a valid term? (A: yes, B: no)

More compact syntax (HW)

- Function application is left associative
 - $e_1 e_2 e_3 \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} (e_1 e_2) e_3$
- Lambdas binds all the way to right: only stop when you find unmatched closing paren ')'
 - $\lambda x. \lambda y. \lambda z. e \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \lambda x. (\lambda y. (\lambda z. e))$

More on syntax

- Write the parens: $\lambda x.x\ x$
 - **A:** $\lambda x.(x\ x)$
 - **B:** $(\lambda x.x)\ x$

More on syntax

- Write the parens: $\lambda y.\lambda x.x\ x =$
 - A: $\lambda y.(\lambda x.x)\ x$
 - **B: $\lambda y.(\lambda x.(x\ x))$**
 - C: $(\lambda y.(\lambda x.x))\ x$

More on syntax

- Is $(\lambda y. \lambda x. x) x = \lambda y. \lambda x. x x$?
 - A: yes
 - **B: no**

How do we compute in λ calculus?

- Substitution!
 - When do we use substitution?
 - What's the challenge with substitution?

Example terms

- Reduce $(\lambda x.(2 + x))\ 5$
- Reduce $(\lambda x.(\lambda y.2)\ 3)\ 5 \rightarrow (\lambda x. 2)\ 5 \rightarrow 2$
- Reduce (board): $((\lambda x.(\lambda y.2))\ 3)\ 5 \rightarrow ((\lambda y.2)\ 5) \rightarrow 2$
- Reduce: $(\lambda x.\lambda y.\lambda z.y+3)\ 4\ 5\ 6$

Even more compact syntax

- Can always variables left of the .
 - $\lambda x.\lambda y.\lambda z.e \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \lambda xyz.e$
- This makes the term look like a 3 argument function
 - Can implement multiple-argument function using single-argument functions: called currying (bonus)
- We won't use this syntax, but you may see in the wild

Why is substitution hard?

- What does this reduce to if we do it blindly?
 - let $x = a+b$ in
let $a = 7$ in
 $x + a$
- Recall: $\text{let } x = e_1 \text{ in } e_2 \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} (\lambda x. e_2) e_1$
 - Reduce $(\lambda x. (\lambda a. x + a) 7) (a+b)$

How do we fix this?

- Renaming!
 - A: rename all free variables
 - B: rename all bound variables

Def: free variables (recall)

- If a variable is not bound by a λ , we say that it is **free**
 - e.g., y is free in $\lambda x.(x+y)$
 - e.g., x is bound in $\lambda x.(x+y)$
- We can compute the free variables of any term:
 - $FV(x) =$
 - $FV(\lambda x.e) =$
 - $FV(e_1 e_2) =$

think: build out!

Def: Capture-avoiding substitution

- Capture-avoiding substitution:
 - $x[x:=e] = e$
 - $y[x:=e] = y$ if $y \neq x$
 - $(e_1 e_2)[x := e] = (e_1[x := e]) (e_2[x := e])$
 - $(\lambda x.e_1)[x := e] = \lambda x.e_1$
 - $(\lambda y.e_1)[x := e_2] = \lambda y.e_1[x := e_2]$ if $y \neq x$ and $y \notin FV(e_2)$

Lambda calculus: equational theory

- α -renaming or α -conversion
 - $\lambda x.e = \lambda y.e[x:=y]$ where $y \notin FV(e)$
- β -reduction
 - $(\lambda x.e_1) e_2 = e_1 [x:=e_2]$
- η -conversion
 - $\lambda x.(e x) = e$ where $x \notin FV(e)$
- We define our \rightarrow relation using these equations!

Back to old example

- Instead of 1, let's add x to argument (and do it 2x):

$$\text{➤ } (\lambda f. (\lambda x. f (f x))) (\lambda y. y + x)$$

$$=_{\alpha} (\lambda f. (\lambda z. f (f z))) (\lambda y. y + x)$$

$$=_{\beta} \lambda z. (\lambda y. y + x) ((\lambda y. y + x) z)$$

$$=_{\beta} \lambda z. (\lambda y. y + x) (z + x)$$

$$=_{\beta} \lambda z. z + x + x$$

Today

- Recall syntax of λ calculus ✓
- Semantics of λ calculus ✓
 - Recall free and bound variables ✓
 - Substitution ✓
 - Evaluation order

Evaluation order

- What should we reduce first in $(\lambda x.x) ((\lambda y.y) z)$?
 - A: The outer term: $(\lambda y.y) z$
 - B: The inner term: $(\lambda x.x) z$

Does evaluation order really not matter?

- Consider a curious term called Ω

➤ $\Omega \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} (\lambda x. x \ x) \ (\lambda x. x \ x)$

$=_{\beta}$

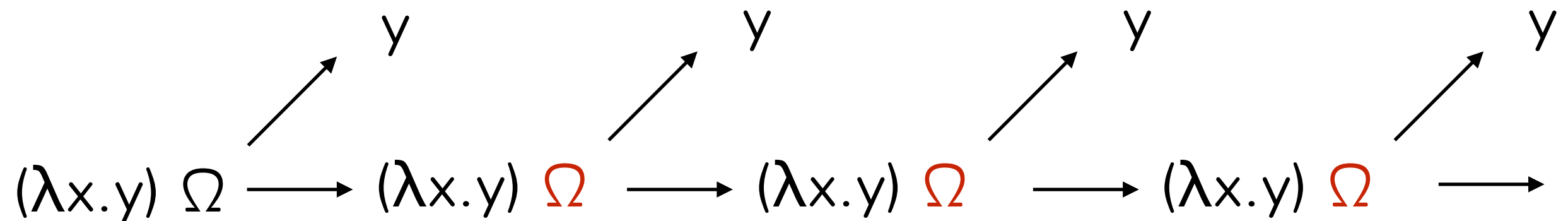
$=_{\beta}$

$\Omega \rightarrow \Omega \rightarrow \Omega \rightarrow \Omega \rightarrow \Omega \rightarrow \Omega$

(Ω has no normal form)

Does evaluation order really not matter?

- Consider a function that ignores its argument: $(\lambda x.y)$
- What happens when we call it on Ω ?



Does evaluation order really not matter?

- Nope! Evaluation order does matter!

Call-by-value

- Reduce function, then reduce args, then apply
 - $e_1\ e_2$
- JavaScript's evaluation strategy is call-by-value (ish)
 - What does this program do?
 - $(x \Rightarrow 33)\ ((x \Rightarrow x(x))\ (x \Rightarrow x(x)))$

Call-by-name

- Reduce function, then reduce args, then apply
 - $e_1\ e_2$
- Haskell's evaluation strategy is call-by-name
 - It only does what is absolutely necessary!

Summary

- A term may have many redexes (subterms can reduce)
 - Evaluation strategy says which redex to evaluate
 - Evaluation not guaranteed to find normal form
- Call-by-value: evaluate function & args before β reduce
- Call-by-name: evaluate function, then β -reduce

Today

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- Semantics of λ calculus ✓
 - Recall free and bound variables ✓
 - Substitution ✓
 - Evaluation order ✓

Takeaway

- λ -calculus is a formal system
 - “Simplest reasonable programming language” –Ramsey
 - Binders show up everywhere!
 - Know your capture-avoiding substitution!
 - Macros in HW1
 - JavaScript modules in PA1

Bonus: multi-argument λ 's

curry.js