

A Dependently-typed Intermediate Language with General Recursion

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Abstract

This is gonna to be written later.

Categories and Subject Descriptors D.3.1 [Programming Languages]: Formal Definitions and Theory

General Terms Languages, Design

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1. Introduction

These are definitely drafts and only some main points are listed in each section.

a) Motivations:

- Because of the reluctance to introduce dependent types¹, the current intermediate language of Haskell, namely System F_C [?], separates expressions as terms, types and kinds, which brings complexity to the implementation as well as further extensions [? ?].
- Popular full-spectrum dependently typed languages, like Agda, Coq, Idris, have to ensure the termination of functions for the decidability of proofs. No general recursion and the limitation of enforcing termination checking make such languages impractical for general-purpose programming.
- We would like to introduce a simple and compiler-friendly dependently typed core language with only one hierarchy, which supports general recursion at the same time.

b) Contribution:

- A core language based on Calculus of Constructions (CoC) that collapses terms, types and kinds into the same hierarchy.
- General recursion by introducing recursive types for both terms and types by the same μ primitive.

¹This might be changed in the near future. See <https://ghc.haskell.org/trac/ghc/wiki/DependentHaskell/Phase1>.

- Decidable type checking and managed type-level computation by replacing implicit conversion rule of CoC with generalized fold/unfold semantics.
- First-class equality by coercion, which is used for encoding GADTs or newtypes without runtime overhead.
- Surface language that supports datatypes, pattern matching and other language extensions for Haskell, and can be encoded into the core language.

c) Related work:

- Henk [?] and one of its implementation [?] show the simplicity of the Pure Type System (PTS). [?] also tries to combine recursion with PTS.
- Zombie [? ?] is a language with two fragments supporting logics with non-termination. It limits the β -reduction for congruence closure [?].
- $\Pi\Sigma$ [?] is a simple, dependently-typed core language for expressing high-level constructions². UHC compiler [?] tries to use a simplified core language with coercion to encode GADTs.
- System F_C [?] has been extended with type promotion [?] and kind equality [?]. The latter one introduces a limited form of dependent types into the system³, which mixes up types and kinds.

2. Overview

BRUNO: Jeremy: can you give this section a go and start writing it up? I think this section should be your priority for now.

2.1 Explicit Reduction Rules

Contrast our calculus with the calculus of constructions. Explain fold/unfold.

2.2 Decidability and Strong Normalization

Informally explain that with explicit fold/unfold rules the decidability of the type system does not depend on strong normalization.

2.3 Unifying Recursive Types and Recursion

Show how in λC_β recursion and recursive types are unified. Discuss that due to this unification the sensible choice for the evaluation strategy is call-by-name.

²But the paper didn't give any meta-theories about the language.

³Richard A. Eisenberg is going to implement kind equality [?] into GHC. The implementation is proposed at <https://phabricator.haskell.org/D808> and related paper is at <http://www.cis.upenn.edu/~eir/papers/2015/equalities/equalities-extended.pdf>.

2.4 Encoding Datatypes

Informally explain how to encode recursive datatypes and recursive functions using datatypes.

3. The Explicit Calculus of Constructions

BRUNO: Linus: can you write up this section? I think this section should be your priority. First bring in all results and formalization: syntax; semantics; proofs ... then write text

This section formalizes the syntax and semantics of the explicit calculus of constructions. This section also shows that how in the explicit calculus of constructions decidability of the type system does not depend on strong normalization.

- Give an overview of the core language and its syntax.
- Show the typing rules and operational semantics.
- The original formalization is suggested to rewrite using ott⁴ which is a standard in academia. For example, the formalization of GHC <https://github.com/ghc/ghc/tree/master/docs/core-spec>.
- Give formal proof of the soundness of the core language.
- Subject reduction and progress theorems will be proved.

4. The Explicit Calculus of Constructions with Recursion

BRUNO: Linus and Jeremy, I think you should do this section together. Most work is on Linus though since he needs to work out the proofs. Jeremy is mostly for Linus to consult with here :).

This section shows how to extend $\lambda C\beta$ with recursion. This extension allows the calculus to account for both: 1) recursive definitions; 2) recursive types. The extension preserves the decidability and soundness of the type system.

5. Surface language

BRUNO: Jeremy, I think you should write up this section.

- Expand the core language with datatypes and pattern matching by encoding.
- Give translation rules.
- Encode GADTs and maybe other Haskell extensions? GADTs seems challenging, so perhaps some other examples would be datatypes like *Fixf*, and *Monad* as a record. Could formalize records in Haskell style.

6. Related Work

7. Conclusion

Conclusion and related work.

Acknowledgments

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A. Appendix Title

Additional proof goes here.

⁴<http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~pes20/ott/>