

Notes on Foundations of Programming Languages

Denotational Semantics

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Abstract

In the following sections we will explore some basic notions on domain theory and denotational semantics. For full details on the notions here presented see [Winskel, 1993, Nielson and Nielson, 1992].

1 Fixed-point theory

In this section we will develop the theory of fixed-points, with the purpose of defining the least fixed-point of a function, which is the fixed point that shares its results with the remaining fixed-points of the function. We formally define the fact that $\text{FIX } F$ shares its results with all the other fixed-points for F , by considering an ordering relation between partial functions of type $\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$.

Definition 1.1 *Let $g_1, g_2 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, be two partial functions, then $g_1 \sqsubseteq g_2$ if and only if, for all $\sigma, \sigma' \in \text{State}$:*

$$g_1 \sigma = \sigma' \Rightarrow g_2 \sigma = \sigma'.$$

For example, for the following $g_1, g_2, g_3, g_4 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$:

$$g_1 \sigma = \sigma \text{ for all } \sigma$$

$$g_2 \sigma = \begin{cases} \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \geq 0 \\ \text{not def} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$g_3 \sigma = \begin{cases} \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \\ \text{not def} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

$$g_4 \sigma = \begin{cases} \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \leq 0 \\ \text{not def} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

we have:

$$\begin{aligned} g_1 &\sqsubseteq g_1, \\ g_2 &\sqsubseteq g_1, \quad g_2 \sqsubseteq g_2, \\ g_3 &\sqsubseteq g_1, \quad g_3 \sqsubseteq g_2, \quad g_3 \sqsubseteq g_3, \quad g_3 \sqsubseteq g_4, \\ g_4 &\sqsubseteq g_1, \quad g_4 \sqsubseteq g_4 \end{aligned}$$

The set of functions $\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, together with \sqsubseteq defines a partial order set (*poset*).

Definition 1.2 *A poset is a pair (D, \sqsubseteq_D) , where D is a set and \sqsubseteq_D is a relation:*

- *reflexive:* $\forall d \in D. d \sqsubseteq_D d$
- *transitive:* $\forall d_1, d_2, d_3 \in D. d_1 \sqsubseteq_D d_2 \wedge d_2 \sqsubseteq_D d_3 \Rightarrow d_1 \sqsubseteq_D d_3$
- *anti-symmetric:* $\forall d_1, d_2 \in D. d_1 \sqsubseteq_D d_2 \wedge d_2 \sqsubseteq_D d_1 \Rightarrow d_1 = d_2$

We call \sqsubseteq_D , a partial order in D . If $d \in D$ satisfies $\forall d' \in D. d \sqsubseteq_D d'$, then d is called a minimal element.

Lemma 1.3 *Let (D, \sqsubseteq) be a poset. If (D, \sqsubseteq) has a minimal element, then it is unique.*

Proof: Let d_1, d_2 be two minimal elements of (D, \sqsubseteq) . Since d_1 is a minimal, then $d_1 \sqsubseteq d_2$. Since d_2 is a minimal, then $d_2 \sqsubseteq d_1$. Following anti-symmetry of \sqsubseteq , then $d_1 = d_2$. \square

Definition 1.4 *The minimal element of (D, \sqsubseteq) is called bottom, and denoted by \perp_D (or simply \perp).*

Lemma 1.5 *The pair $(\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}, \sqsubseteq)$ is a poset, and the partial function $\perp : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, defined as:*

$$\perp \sigma = \text{not def}, \text{ for all } \sigma \in \Sigma$$

is the minimal element of $(\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}, \sqsubseteq)$.

Proof: We start by showing that \sqsubseteq is a partial order:

- **reflexive:** $g \sqsubseteq g$, since $g \sigma = \sigma'$ trivially implies $g \sigma = \sigma'$.
- **transitive:** Let $g_1 \sqsubseteq g_2$ and $g_2 \sqsubseteq g_3$ and let $g_1 \sigma = \sigma'$. From $g_1 \sqsubseteq g_2$ it follows that $g_2 \sigma = \sigma'$ and from $g_2 \sqsubseteq g_3$ it follows that $g_3 \sigma = \sigma'$. Therefore $g_1 \sqsubseteq g_3$.
- **anti-symmetric:** Let $g_1 \sqsubseteq g_2$ and $g_2 \sqsubseteq g_1$. Let $g_1 \sigma = \sigma'$, then $g_2 \sigma = \sigma'$, which means that g_1 and g_2 are equal for σ . If $g_1 \sigma = \text{not def}$ then it follows from $g_2 \sqsubseteq g_1$ that $g_2 \sigma = \text{not def}$, otherwise having $g_2 \sigma = \sigma'$ would imply $g_1 \sigma = \sigma'$, which contradicts $g_1 \sigma = \text{not def}$. Therefore $g_1 = g_2$.

We now show that \perp is the minimal element of the poset. Clearly \perp is an element of $\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$. Furthermore, $\perp \sqsubseteq g$, for every g , since $\perp \sigma = \sigma'$ trivially implies $g \sigma = \sigma'$. \square

We now establish our conditions on $\text{FIX } F$:

- $\text{FIX } F$ is a fix-point of F , that is, $F(\text{FIX } F) = \text{FIX } F$;
- $\text{FIX } F$ is the least fix-point of F ,

$$F g = g \Rightarrow \text{FIX } F \sqsubseteq g.$$

Definition 1.6 *Let (D, \sqsubseteq) be a poset and let $Y \subseteq D$. Consider an upper bound of Y , that is, $d \in D$ such that:*

$$\forall d' \in Y. d' \sqsubseteq d.$$

The least upper bound d is such that, for all the upper bound d' of Y , then $d \sqsubseteq d'$. We denote the least upper bound of Y (if such exists), as $\sqcup Y$.

A subset $Y \subseteq D$ is called a chain if and only if:

$$\forall d_1, d_2 \in Y. d_1 \sqsubseteq d_2 \text{ or } d_2 \sqsubseteq d_1.$$

Definition 1.7 *A poset (D, \sqsubseteq) is a complete partially ordered set (CPO) if*

1. (D, \sqsubseteq) has a bottom element, \perp ,
2. $\sqcup Y$ is defined for every chain Y .

Some authors do not require a CPO to have a bottom element and so omit the first condition in the previous definition, using the term pointed CPO when both conditions hold.

2 Continuous functions

We will define the notion of continuous functions on CPOs, and show that these functions always have least fixed points.

Definition 2.1 *Let (D, \sqsubseteq_D) and (E, \sqsubseteq_E) be two CPOs and let $f : D \rightarrow E$ be a total function. We say that f is monotone if and only if:*

$$d_1 \sqsubseteq_D d_2 \Rightarrow f(d_1) \sqsubseteq_E f(d_2), \text{ for all } d_1, d_2 \in D.$$

For example, considering $(\mathcal{P}(\{a, b, c\}), \subseteq)$, $(\mathcal{P}(\{d, e\}), \subseteq)$ and $f_1, f_2 : \mathcal{P}(\{a, b, c\}) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\{d, e\})$ defined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} f_1(\emptyset) &= \emptyset \\ f_1(\{a\}) &= \{d\}, \quad f_1(\{b\}) = \{d\}, \quad f_1(\{c\}) = \{e\} \\ f_1(\{a, b\}) &= \{d\}, \quad f_1(\{a, c\}) = \{d, e\}, \quad f_1(\{b, c\}) = \{d, e\} \\ f_1(\{a, b, c\}) &= \{d, e\} \\ f_2(\emptyset) &= \{e\} \\ f_2(\{a\}) &= \{d\}, \quad f_2(\{b\}) = \{e\}, \quad f_2(\{c\}) = \{e\} \\ f_2(\{a, b\}) &= \{d\}, \quad f_2(\{a, c\}) = \{d\}, \quad f_2(\{b, c\}) = \{e\} \\ f_2(\{a, b, c\}) &= \{d\} \end{aligned}$$

f_1 is monotone, but f_2 is not.

Lemma 2.2 *Let (A, \sqsubseteq_A) , (B, \sqsubseteq_B) and (C, \sqsubseteq_C) be three CPOs and $f_1 : A \rightarrow B$, $f_2 : B \rightarrow C$ two monotone functions. Then $f_2 \circ f_1 : A \rightarrow C$ is monotone.*

Proof: Let $a_1 \sqsubseteq_A a_2$. By monotonicity of f_1 we have $f_1(a_1) \sqsubseteq_B f_1(a_2)$, and by monotonicity of f_2 we have $f_2(f_1(a_1)) \sqsubseteq_C f_2(f_1(a_2))$. Thus

$$a_1 \sqsubseteq_A a_2 \Rightarrow f_2 \circ f_1(a_1) \sqsubseteq_C f_2 \circ f_1(a_2),$$

therefore $f_2 \circ f_1$ is monotone. □

Lemma 2.3 *Let (D, \sqsubseteq_D) , (E, \sqsubseteq_E) be two CPOs and $f : D \rightarrow E$, a monotone function. If $X = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle$ is a chain in D , then $f X = \langle f x_1, \dots, f x_n \rangle$ is a chain in E , and:*

$$\bigsqcup \langle f x_i \rangle \sqsubseteq_E f(\bigsqcup \langle x_i \rangle)$$

Proof: If $X = \emptyset$, then the result follows trivially since $\perp_E \sqsubseteq_E f(\perp_D)$, therefore we will assume that $X \neq \emptyset$. We start by showing that $\langle f x_i \rangle$ is a chain in E . Let e_1, e_2 be two elements of $\langle f x_i \rangle$, then there exist $d_1, d_2 \in X$, such that $e_1 = f(d_1)$ and $e_2 = f(d_2)$. Since X is a chain, then either $d_1 \sqsubseteq_D d_2$ or $d_2 \sqsubseteq_D d_1$. By monotonicity of f , then either $f(d_1) \sqsubseteq_E f(d_2)$ or $f(d_2) \sqsubseteq_E f(d_1)$. That is, for every e_1, e_2 in $\langle f x_i \rangle$, either $e_1 \sqsubseteq_E e_2$ or $e_2 \sqsubseteq_E e_1$. Therefore $\langle f x_i \rangle$ is a chain.

We now need to show that:

$$\bigsqcup f X \sqsubseteq_E f(\bigsqcup X).$$

Let d be an arbitrary element of X . Since $\bigsqcup X$ is the least upper bound of X , then $d \sqsubseteq_D \bigsqcup X$. By monotonicity of f , we have $f(d) \sqsubseteq_E f(\bigsqcup X)$, since $f(d) \sqsubseteq_E f(\bigsqcup X)$ for every $d \in X$, then $f(\bigsqcup X)$ is an upper bound of $f X$, therefore, for the least upper bound of $f X$, we have

$$\bigsqcup f X \sqsubseteq_E f(\bigsqcup X).$$

□

Definition 2.4 *A function $f : D \rightarrow E$ between CPOs (D, \sqsubseteq_D) , (E, \sqsubseteq_E) is continuous if it is monotone and, for all the non-empty chains X :*

$$\bigsqcup f X = f(\bigsqcup X).$$

If the property holds for the empty chain, that is $\perp = f \perp$, then we say that f is strict.

In general the least upper bounds of chains are not maintained. For example, let $(\mathcal{P}(\mathbb{N} \cup \{a\}), \subseteq)$ be a CPO and consider $f : \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{N} \cup \{a\}) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\mathbb{N} \cup \{a\})$ defined in the following way:

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} x & \text{if } x \text{ is finite} \\ x \cup \{a\} & \text{if } x \text{ is infinite} \end{cases}$$

The function f is monotone: if $x_1 \subseteq x_2$ then $f(x_1) \subseteq f(x_2)$. However, consider the chain $X = \{\{0, 1, \dots, n\} \mid n \geq 0\} = \{\{0\}, \{0, 1\}, \{0, 1, 2\}, \dots\}$. The least upper bound of this chain is \mathbb{N} . The chain $f X = \{f\{0, 1, \dots, n\} \mid n \geq 0\} = X$, therefore $\bigsqcup f X = \bigsqcup X = \mathbb{N}$. However $f(\bigsqcup X) = f(\mathbb{N}) = \mathbb{N} \cup \{a\}$.

Consider the function $f_1 : \mathcal{P}(\{a, b, c\}) \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\{d, e\})$ defined before. Let X be a non-empty chain in $(\mathcal{P}(\{a, b, c\}), \subseteq)$. The least upper bound of X is the biggest set $x_0 \in X$. Then $f_1(\bigsqcup X) = f_1(x_0)$, and since $x_0 \in X$ then $f_1(x_0) \subseteq \bigsqcup f_1 X$. But f_1 is monotone, therefore $\bigsqcup f_1 X \subseteq f_1(\bigsqcup X)$. Therefore f is continuous. Furthermore, since $f_1(\emptyset) = \emptyset$, then f_1 is strict.

Lemma 2.5 *Let (A, \subseteq_A) , (B, \subseteq_B) and (C, \subseteq_C) be three CPOs and $f_1 : A \rightarrow B$, $f_2 : B \rightarrow C$ two continuous functions. Then $f_2 \circ f_1 : A \rightarrow C$ is continuous.*

Proof: Since f_1 and f_2 are monotone, then $f_2 \circ f_1$ is also monotone by the previous lemma. Let X be a chain in A . By continuity of f_1 we have

$$\bigsqcup \langle f_1 x \mid x \in X \rangle = f_1(\bigsqcup X)$$

. Since $\langle f_1 x \mid x \in X \rangle$ is a chain in B , by continuity of f_2 we have

$$\bigsqcup \langle f_2 y \mid y \in \langle f_1 x \mid x \in X \rangle \rangle = f_2(\bigsqcup \langle f_1 x \mid x \in X \rangle).$$

Therefore

$$\bigsqcup \langle f_2(f_1(x)) \mid x \in X \rangle = f_2(f_1(\bigsqcup X)).$$

□

Theorem 2.6 *Let $f : D \rightarrow D$ be a continuous function in the CPO (D, \subseteq) and let \perp be its least upper bound. Then*

$$\text{FIX } f = \bigsqcup \langle f^n(\perp) \mid n \geq 0 \rangle$$

defines the element of D that is the least fixed point of f .

Proof: Consider $f^0 = \text{id}$ and $f^{n+1} = f \circ f^n$, $\forall n \geq 0$. Since $f^0 \perp = \perp$ and $\perp \subseteq d$, for all $d \in D$, then (by induction on n and given that f is monotone) we have that, for all $d \in D$:

$$f^n \perp \subseteq f^n d.$$

Therefore $\langle f^n \perp \mid n \geq 0 \rangle$ is a non-empty chain in D , since it follows that $f^n \perp \subseteq f^m \perp$ for $n \leq m$. Since D is a CPO then there exists $\bigsqcup \langle f^n \perp \mid n \geq 0 \rangle$, therefore $\text{FIX } f$ is defined.

We now show that $\text{FIX } f$ is indeed a fixed point of f , that is $f(\text{FIX } f) = \text{FIX } f$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(\text{FIX } f) &= f(\bigsqcup \langle f^n \perp \mid n \geq 0 \rangle) \\ &= \bigsqcup \langle f(f^n \perp) \mid n \geq 0 \rangle \\ &= \bigsqcup \langle f^{n+1} \perp \mid n \geq 0 \rangle \\ &= \bigsqcup (\langle f^n \perp \mid n \geq 1 \rangle \cup \{\perp\})^* \\ &= \bigsqcup \langle f^n \perp \mid n \geq 0 \rangle \\ &= \text{FIX } f \end{aligned}$$

* since $\bigsqcup(X \cup \{\perp\}) = \bigsqcup X$ for all chains X .

The last thing we need to show is that $\text{FIX } f$ is the least fixed-point. Consider d another fixed point of f . Since $\perp \sqsubseteq d$ and f is monotone, then $f^n \perp \sqsubseteq f^n d$, $n \geq 0$. Since d is a fixed point (that is $f(d) = d$), then $f^n \perp \sqsubseteq d$. Therefore d is an upper bound of the chain $\{f^n(\perp) \mid n \geq 0\}$. Given that $\text{FIX } f$ is the least upper bound of that chain it follows that $\text{FIX } f \sqsubseteq d$. \square

For example let $F : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$ be the following function:

$$(F g)\sigma = \begin{cases} g \ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

The minimal element of $\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$ is the function \perp , such that $\perp \ \sigma = \text{not def}$, for all $\sigma \in \Sigma$. We have:

$$F^0 \perp \sigma = \text{not def}$$

$$F^1 \perp \sigma = F^1 \perp \sigma = \begin{cases} \perp \ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases} = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

$$F^2 \perp \sigma = F(F^1 \perp) \sigma = \begin{cases} (F^1 \perp) \ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases} = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

Therefore

$$\text{FIX } F = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

3 Denotational semantics for IMP

We now define a denotational semantics for the IMP language.

Definition 3.1 *The function $\mathcal{A}[\cdot] : \text{AExp} \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z})$, recursively defines the denotational semantics of arithmetic expressions, in the following way:*

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{n}]\sigma &= \mathcal{N}[\mathbf{n}]^* & \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1 + \mathbf{a}_2]\sigma &= \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1]\sigma + \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_2]\sigma \\ \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{x}]\sigma &= \sigma(x) & \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1 - \mathbf{a}_2]\sigma &= \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1]\sigma - \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_2]\sigma \\ & & \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1 * \mathbf{a}_2]\sigma &= \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1]\sigma * \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_2]\sigma \end{aligned}$$

(*) The function $\mathcal{N}[\cdot] : \text{Num} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}$, allows for different representations of numbers. For simplicity, we will assume that $\text{Num} = \mathbb{Z}$, therefore $\mathcal{N}[\cdot]$ is the identity function.

Definition 3.2 *The function $\mathcal{B}[\cdot] : \text{BExp} \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \mathbb{T})$, recursively defines the denotational semantics of boolean expressions, in the following way:*

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{1}]\sigma &= 1 \\ \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{0}]\sigma &= 0 \\ \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{a}_1 = \mathbf{a}_2]\sigma &= \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1]\sigma = \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_2]\sigma \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} & \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{a}_1 \leq \mathbf{a}_2]\sigma &= \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_1]\sigma \leq \mathcal{A}[\mathbf{a}_2]\sigma \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \\ \mathcal{B}[\neg \mathbf{b}]\sigma &= \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{b}]\sigma = 0 \\ 0 & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{b}]\sigma = 1 \end{cases} & \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{b}_1 \wedge \mathbf{b}_2]\sigma &= \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{b}_1]\sigma = \mathcal{B}[\mathbf{b}_2]\sigma = 1 \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Definition 3.3 Given $p : \text{State} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$, and $g_1, g_2 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, the function $\text{cond} : (\text{State} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}) \times (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}) \times (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}) \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State})$ is defined in the following way:

$$\text{cond}(p, g_1, g_2)\sigma = \begin{cases} g_1\sigma & \text{if } p\sigma = 1 \\ g_2\sigma & \text{if } p\sigma = 0 \end{cases}$$

Definition 3.4 The function $\mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\cdot]\!] : \text{Com} \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State})$, recursively defines the denotational semantics of commands, in the following way:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{skip}]\!] &= \text{id} \\ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![x := a]\!]\sigma &= \sigma[\mathcal{A}[a]\sigma/x] \\ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1; c_2]\!] &= \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!] \circ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!] \\ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2]\!] &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!], \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!]) \\ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\!] &= \text{FIX } F \\ \text{where } Fg &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], g \circ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c]\!], \text{id}) \end{aligned}$$

In particular for sequences of commands we have:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1; c_2]\!]\sigma &= (\mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!] \circ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!])\sigma \\ &= \begin{cases} \sigma'' & \text{if } \exists \sigma'. \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \text{ and } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!]\sigma' = \sigma'' \\ \text{not def} & \text{if } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma \text{ not def, or } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \text{ but } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!]\sigma' \text{ not def.} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

And for conditionals we have:

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2]\!]\sigma &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!], \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!])\sigma \\ &= \begin{cases} \sigma' & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[b]\sigma = 1 \text{ and } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \\ & \text{or } \mathcal{B}[b]\sigma = 0 \text{ and } \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c_2]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \\ \text{not def} & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \end{aligned}$$

Regarding a command of the form `while b do c`, its effect should be the same as the effect of the command `if b then (c; while b do c) else skip`:

$$\mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\!] = \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\!] \circ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c]\!], \text{id})$$

However, this is not a compositional definition, which is what we expect of a denotational semantics definition. Nevertheless, the recursive definition of $\mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\!]$, points to the definition above, as the fixed-point of the function F defined as:

$$Fg = \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], g \circ \mathcal{S}_{\text{ds}}[\![c]\!], \text{id})$$

For example consider the command:

`while $\neg(x = 0)$ do skip`

with the corresponding function:

$$(Fg)\sigma = \begin{cases} g\sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

The following function $g_1 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, is a fixed-point of F :

$$g_1\sigma = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases}$$

Note that

$$\begin{aligned} (F g_1)\sigma &= \begin{cases} g_1\sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases} \\ &= \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 0 \end{cases} \\ &= g_1\sigma \end{aligned}$$

The function $g_2 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, defined as $g_2\sigma = \text{not def}$, $\forall \sigma \in \text{State}$, is not a fixed-point of F .

The issue here is that there are functions that have several fixed-points, whereas other do not have fixed point at all. For example

$$(F_1 g) = \begin{cases} g_1 & \text{if } g = g_2 \\ g_2 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}.$$

Considering the different effects of executing a `while b do c` statement, the following conditions must hold for the fixed-point of the functional F . The fixed point of F , denoted by $\text{FIX } F$ is a partial function $g_0 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, such that:

- g_0 is a fixed-point of F , that is, $F; g_0 = g_0$ and,
- if g is another fixed-point of F ($F; g = g$), then

$$g_0 \sigma = \sigma' \Rightarrow g \sigma = \sigma', \forall \sigma, \sigma' \in \text{State}$$

If $g_0 \sigma$ is not defined, then there are no restrictions for $g \sigma$.

Recall from the previous section that for continuous functions of CPOs, the least upper bound of the chain $\{F^n(\perp) \mid n \geq 0\}$ is the least fixed point of F , satisfying the conditions above. Therefore, the following results guarantee the completeness of the $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![\cdot]\!]$ function for commands.

Lemma 3.5 *The pair $(\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}, \sqsubseteq)$ is a CPO.*

Lemma 3.6 *Given $p : \text{State} \rightarrow \top$ and $g_0 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, let*

$$F g = \text{cond}(p, g, g_0)$$

. Then F is a continuous function.

Lemma 3.7 *Given $g_0 : \text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, let*

$$F g = g \circ g_0$$

. Then F is a continuous function.

Proposition 3.8 *The function $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![\cdot]\!]$: $\text{Com} \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State})$ is a total function.*

Proof: By induction on $c \in \text{Com}$.

- **[skip]:** The function `id` is a total function.
- **[atrb]:** The function $\lambda \sigma. \sigma[\mathcal{A}[\![a]\!]\sigma/x]$ is a total function. Note that $\mathcal{A}[\![a]\!]$ is a total function.
- **[seqn]:** Consider the command $c_1; c_2$. By induction hypothesis, both $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!]$ are well-defined, therefore its composition $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!] \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]$ is well-defined.

- **[if]:** Consider the command `if b then c1 else c2`. By induction hypothesis, both $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!]$ are well-defined, therefore $\text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[\![b]\!], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!])$ is well-defined.
- **[while]:** Consider the command `while b do c`. By induction hypothesis $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]$ is well-defined. Let F_1, F_2 be defined as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} F_1 g &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[\![b]\!], g, \text{id}) \\ F_2 g &= g \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]. \end{aligned}$$

F_1 and F_2 are both continuous functions by the previous lemmas. Therefore $F g = F_1(F_2 g)$ is continuous. Therefore, $\text{FIX } F$ is defined, which implies that $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\!]$ is well-defined.

□

Example 3.9 Consider the command `y := 1; while $\neg(x = 1)$ do (y := y * x; x := x - 1)`.

$$\begin{aligned} &\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![y := 1; \text{while } \neg(x = 1) \text{ do } (y := y * x; x := x - 1)]\!]\sigma_0 \\ &= (\text{FIX } F)\sigma_0[1/y] \end{aligned}$$

with

$$F g \sigma = \begin{cases} g(\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![y := y * x; x := x - 1]\!]\sigma) & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[\![\neg(x = 1)]\!]\sigma = 1 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \mathcal{B}[\![\neg(x = 1)]\!]\sigma = 0 \end{cases}$$

that is:

$$F g \sigma = \begin{cases} g(\sigma[y] * \sigma[x]/y)[\sigma(x) - 1/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 1 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 1 \end{cases}.$$

We then have:

$$(F^0 \perp) \sigma = \text{not def}$$

$$(F^1 \perp) \sigma = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 1 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 1 \end{cases}$$

$$(F^2 \perp) \sigma = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) \neq 1 \text{ and } \sigma(x) \neq 2 \\ \sigma[\sigma(y) * 2/y][1/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 2 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 1 \end{cases}$$

$$(F^n \perp) \sigma = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) > n \text{ or } \sigma(x) \geq 1 \\ \sigma[\sigma(y) * j * 2/y][1/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 2 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 1 \end{cases}$$

Therefore

$$(\text{FIX } F) \sigma = \begin{cases} \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) < 1 \\ \sigma[\sigma(y) * n * \dots * 2 * 1/y][1/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 2 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) = 1 \end{cases}$$

3.1 Properties of the denotational semantics

Definition 3.10 Two commands c_1, c_2 are semantically equivalent if and only if $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!] = \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!]$.

Definition 3.11 Let $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![\cdot]\!] : \text{Com} \rightarrow (\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State})$ be the partial function defined in the following way:

$$\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!]\sigma = \begin{cases} \sigma' & \text{if } \langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow^* \sigma' \\ \text{not def} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Theorem 3.12 For every $c \in \text{Com}$, $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!] = \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]$.

Both functions $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]$, are functions in $(\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}, \sqsubseteq)$, which is a poset. To show that two elements d_1, d_2 from a poset are equal, we need to show that $d_1 \sqsubseteq d_2$ and $d_2 \sqsubseteq d_1$. Therefore, we need to prove that: $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!]$.

Lemma 3.13 Let $c \in \text{Com}$, then $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\![c]\!] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]$.

Proof: We will show that for every states σ, σ' we have:

$$\langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow^* \sigma' \Rightarrow \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \quad (1)$$

To that end we will establish the following:

$$\begin{aligned} \langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \sigma' &\Rightarrow \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]\sigma = \sigma' \\ \langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \langle c', \sigma' \rangle &\Rightarrow \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c]\!]\sigma = \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c']]\sigma' \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

Assuming that (2) holds, then (1) holds by induction on k , where k is the length of the sequence

$$\langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow^k \sigma'.$$

We show (2) by induction on the derivation tree of $\langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \sigma'$ or $\langle c, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \langle c', \sigma' \rangle$.

- **[skip]:** We have $\langle \text{skip}, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \sigma$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![\text{skip}]\!]\sigma = \text{id } \sigma = \sigma$.
- **[assn]:** We have $\langle x := a, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \sigma[n/x]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![x := a]\!]\sigma = \sigma[\mathcal{A}[a]\sigma/x]$. (By induction, we need to prove that $\langle a, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow n$ if and only if $\mathcal{A}[a]\sigma = n$). Therefore $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![x := a]\!]\sigma = \sigma[n/x]$.
- **[seqn₁]:** We have $\langle c_1; c_2, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \langle c'_1; c_2, \sigma' \rangle$, which follows from $\langle c_1, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \langle c'_1, \sigma' \rangle$. By induction hypothesis we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma = \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c'_1]\!]\sigma'$. Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1; c_2]\!]\sigma &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!](\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma) \\ &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!](\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c'_1]\!]\sigma') \\ &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c'_1; c_2]\!]\sigma' \end{aligned}$$

- **[seqn₂]:** We have $\langle c_1; c_2, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \langle c_2, \sigma' \rangle$, which follows from $\langle c_1, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow \sigma'$. By induction hypothesis we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma = \sigma'$. Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1; c_2]\!]\sigma &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!](\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma) \\ &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!]\sigma' \end{aligned}$$

- **[if₁]:** We have $\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2 \sigma \Rightarrow \langle c_1, \sigma \rangle$, which follows from $\langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow 1$. (By induction, we need to prove that $\langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow t$ if and only if $\mathcal{B}[b]\sigma = t$). Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2]\!]\sigma &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!])\sigma \\ &= \text{cond}(1, \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_2]\!])\sigma \\ &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\![c_1]\!]\sigma \end{aligned}$$

- **[if₀]**: Analogous to the previous case.
- **[while]**: We have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c]\sigma \rightarrow \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{if } b \text{ then } c; \text{while } b \text{ do } c \text{ else skip}]\sigma$. By the definition of $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\cdot]$, we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] = \text{FIX } F$, where $F g = \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], g \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c], \text{id})$, therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] &= \text{FIX } F \\
&= F(\text{FIX } F) \\
&= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], (\text{FIX } F) \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c], \text{id}) \\
&= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c], \text{id}) \\
&= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c; \text{while } b \text{ do } c], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{skip}]) \\
&= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{if } b \text{ then } c; \text{while } b \text{ do } c \text{ else skip}]
\end{aligned}$$

□

Lemma 3.14 *Let $c \in \text{Com}$, then $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c]$.*

Proof: By induction on c .

- **[skip]**: $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{skip}]\sigma = \sigma = \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{skip}]\sigma$.
- **[assn]**: We have $\mathcal{S}_{st}[x := a]\sigma = \sigma[n/x]$ (with $\mathcal{A}[a]\sigma = n$). From $\mathcal{A}[a]\sigma = n$ it follows that $\langle a, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow n$, therefore $\langle x := a, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow \sigma[n/x]$, which implies $\mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{skip}]\sigma = \sigma[n/x]$.
- **[seqn]**: By induction hypothesis we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_2] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2]$, therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1; c_2] &= \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_2] \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1] \\
&\sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2] \circ \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1]
\end{aligned}$$

Recall that, if $\langle c_1, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow^* \sigma'$, then $\langle c_1; c_2, \sigma \rangle \Rightarrow^* \langle c_2, \sigma' \rangle$. Therefore

$$\mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2] \circ \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1; c_2]$$

- **[if]**: By induction hypothesis we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1]$ and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_2] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2]$, therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2] &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_2]) \\
&\sqsubseteq \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1], \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2])
\end{aligned}$$

Note that

$$\mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2]\sigma = \begin{cases} \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_1]\sigma & \text{if } \langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow 1 \\ \mathcal{S}_{st}[c_2]\sigma & \text{if } \langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow 0 \end{cases}$$

Note that $\langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow t$ iff $\mathcal{B}[b]\sigma = t$, therefore:

$$\text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_1], \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c_2]) = \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{if } b \text{ then } c_1 \text{ else } c_2].$$

- **[while]**: By induction hypothesis we have $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[c] \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[c]$, and $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] = \text{FIX } F$, where $F g = \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], g \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c], \text{id})$. F is continuous, therefore:

$$\begin{aligned}
F(\mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c]) &= \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] \circ \mathcal{S}_{ds}[c], \text{id}) \\
&\sqsubseteq \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c] \circ \mathcal{S}_{st}[c], \text{id}) \\
&\sqsubseteq \text{cond}(\mathcal{B}[b], \mathcal{S}_{st}[c; \text{while } b \text{ do } c], \text{id}) \\
&= \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c]
\end{aligned}$$

Note that, if $f d \sqsubseteq d$, then $\text{FIX } f \sqsubseteq d$, therefore $\text{FIX } F \sqsubseteq \mathcal{S}_{st}[\text{while } b \text{ do } c]$.

□

Exercises

1 Given two posets (A, \sqsubseteq_A) and (B, \sqsubseteq_B) :

(a) Show that $(A \times B, \sqsubseteq)$ is also a poset, considering:

$$(a, b) \sqsubseteq (a', b') \text{ iff } a \sqsubseteq_A a' \wedge b \sqsubseteq_B b'$$

(b) Show that, if s is the least upper bound of the chain $\langle a_i \rangle$ and if s' is the least upper bound of the chain $\langle b_i \rangle$ then (s, s') is the least upper bound of the chain $\langle (a_i, b_i) \rangle$ in $(A \times B, \sqsubseteq)$. As a consequence, if (A, \sqsubseteq_A) and (B, \sqsubseteq_B) are CPOs then $(A \times B, \sqsubseteq)$ is also a CPO.

2 Draw the Hasse diagram for the following partial orders:

(a) $(2^A, \subseteq)$, where $A = \{1, 2, 3\}$.

(b) $(\{\text{true}, \text{false}\}_\perp \times A_\perp, \sqsubseteq)$ where $A = \{x, y, z\}$.

(c) $(\{\text{true}, \text{false}\}_\perp \times A_\perp, \sqsubseteq)$

3 Considering the denotational semantics for IMP, determine:

(a) $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } 1 \text{ do skip}]$

(b) $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } 1 \text{ do } x := x + 1]$

(c) $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[\text{while } x = 3 \text{ do skip}]$

(d) $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[x := 3; \text{while } 1 \leq x \text{ do } x := x - 1]$

(e) $\mathcal{S}_{ds}[y := 0; \text{while } 1 \leq x \text{ do } (y := x + y; x := x - 1)]$

4 Following the denotational semantics given in the course determine the functional F associated to the command

$$\text{while } \neg(x = 0) \text{ do } x := x - 1$$

Determine which of the following partial functions on $\text{State} \rightarrow \text{State}$, are fixed points of F :

$$\begin{aligned} g_1 \sigma &= \text{not def, for all } \sigma & g_2 \sigma &= \begin{cases} \sigma[0/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) \geq 0 \\ \text{not def} & \text{if } \sigma(x) < 0 \end{cases} \\ g_3 \sigma &= \begin{cases} \sigma[0/x] & \text{if } \sigma(x) \geq 0 \\ \sigma & \text{if } \sigma(x) < 0 \end{cases} & g_4 \sigma &= \sigma[0/x], \text{ for all } \sigma \\ g_5 \sigma &= \sigma, \text{ for all } \sigma \end{aligned}$$

5 Considering the operational and denotational semantics for IMP, prove that:

(a) For all arithmetic expressions $a \in \text{AExp}$ and states $\sigma \in \text{State}$, $\langle a, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow n$ if and only if $\mathcal{A}[\![a]\!]\sigma = n$.

(b) For all boolean expressions $b \in \text{BExp}$ and states $\sigma \in \text{State}$ $\langle b, \sigma \rangle \rightarrow t$ if and only if $\mathcal{B}[\![b]\!]\sigma = t$.

6 Consider the denotational semantics of IMP. Show the equivalence between the following commands:

(a) `skip; c` and `c`;

(b) `c1; (c2; c3)` and `(c1; c2); c3`;

(c) `if b then (c1; c else (c2; c))` and `(if b then c1 else c2); c`;

(d) `while b do c1; if b then c1 else c2` and `while b do c1; c2`.

7 Consider the function $f: \mathbb{N}_\perp \rightarrow \mathbb{N}_\perp$ defined as $f(3) = 1$ and $f(x) = f(x + 2) + 5$, for $x \neq 3$.

(a) Determine $F: [\mathbb{N}_\perp \rightarrow \mathbb{N}_\perp] \rightarrow [\mathbb{N}_\perp \rightarrow \mathbb{N}_\perp]$ such that $\text{FIX } F = f$

(b) Show that F is continuous.

(c) Calculate $\text{FIX } F$.

8 Let f be a continuous function. Show that, if $f \sqsubseteq d$, then $\text{FIX } f \sqsubseteq d$.

References

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