

Placeholder

Isaac H. Lopez Diaz

November 5, 2025

1 Introduction

This paper presents the design of a reflective programming language (PL) that reasons about its graph semantics. A PL is said to be reflective when it is able to reason about itself. [4] It can be thought of as the process of converting data into a program. The inverse of this process, reification, can be thought of turning a program into data. [3] These two processes allow a programmer to see the contents of the current execution, much like debugging. However, unlike debugging, one can change the semantics of the language on-the-fly. [2]

The goal of the language is to better understand graph semantics. One such application would be on machine learning (ML) programs, since ML programs rely on graph execution models. [1] The conversion from imperative to graph execution has proven to be challenging for programmers, primarily looking to optimize their code, leading to bugs or performance issues (the opposite of what the programmer intended to do). [5]

References

- [1] Martín Abadi, Michael Isard, and Derek G Murray. A computational model for tensorflow: an introduction. In *Proceedings of the 1st ACM SIGPLAN International Workshop on Machine Learning and Programming Languages*, pages 1–7, 2017.
- [2] Kenichi Asai, Satoshi Matsuoka, and Akinori Yonezawa. Duplication and partial evaluation: For a better understanding of reflective languages. *Lisp and Symbolic Computation*, 9(2):203–241, 1996.
- [3] Daniel P Friedman and Mitchell Wand. Reification: Reflection without metaphysics. In *Proceedings of the 1984 ACM Symposium on LISP and functional programming*, pages 348–355, 1984.
- [4] Brian Cantwell Smith. Reflection and semantics in lisp. In *Proceedings of the 11th ACM SIGACT-SIGPLAN symposium on Principles of programming languages*, pages 23–35, 1984.

- [5] Tatiana Castro Vélez, Raffi Khatchadourian, Mehdi Bagherzadeh, and Anita Raja. Challenges in migrating imperative deep learning programs to graph execution: an empirical study. In *Proceedings of the 19th International Conference on Mining Software Repositories*, MSR '22, page 469–481, New York, NY, USA, 2022. Association for Computing Machinery.