Coinductive Programming and Proving in Agda

Lecture 3: Coinduction case studies

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Outline

Lecture plan

1. The delay monad
2. Stream processors
3. Formal languages

The delay monad

The delay monad embeds potentially non-terminating computations in Agda:

```
mutual
  data Delay (A : Set) : Set where
    now  : A → Delay A
    later : Delay' A → Delay A

  record Delay' (A : Set) : Set where
    coinductive
    field force : Delay A
open Delay' public
```

Delayed values

Classically, any x : Delay A is either never or laters k a for some $k : \mathbb{N}$ and $a : A$:

never : Delay A
never = later (λ where .force $\rightarrow$ never)

laters : $\mathbb{N} \rightarrow A \rightarrow$ Delay A
laters zero a = now a
laters (suc n) a = later
  (λ where .force $\rightarrow$ laters n a)

Exercise. Implement
iter : $(A \rightarrow A \uplus B) \rightarrow A \rightarrow$ Delay B.

Implementing bind for the delay monad

```
_»=_ : Delay A → (A → Delay B) → Delay B
now x »= f = f x
later d »= f = later λ where
  .force → d .force »= f
```

Convergence of delayed values

```
data _⇓_ {A} : Delay A → A → Set where
  now : (x : A) → now x ⇓ x
  later : d .force ⇓ x → later d ⇓ x

⇓-unique : d ⇓ x → d ⇓ y → x ≡ y
⇓-unique (now x) (now y) = refl
⇓-unique (later p) (later q) = ⇓-unique p q
```

Bisimulation of delayed values

```
mutual
  data _~_ {A} : Delay A → Delay A → Set where
    now  : (x : A) → now  x ~ now  x
    later : x ~' y  → later x ~ later y

  record _~'_ (x y : Delay' A) : Set where
    coinductive
    field
      force : x .force ~ y .force
open _~'_ public
```

Monad laws for Delay

```
refl~ : (x : Delay A) → x ~ x
refl~ (now x) = now x
refl~ (later x) = later λ where
  .force → refl~ (x .force)

now-»= : (x : A) (f : A → Delay B)
       → now x »= f ~ f x
now-»= x f = refl~ (f x)
```

Exercise. State and prove the second and third monad laws »=-now and »=-assoc.

Weak bisimilarity

Since we don't really care about the number of laters, we can make more things bisimilar:

```
mutual
  data _~D_ {A} : Delay A → Delay A → Set where
    value : d₁ ⇓ x → d₂ ⇓ x → d₁ ~D d₂
    later  : d₁ ~D' d₂ → later d₁ ~D later d₂

  record _~D'_ (x y : Delay' A) : Set where
    coinductive
    field force : x .force ~D y .force
open _~D'_ public
```

The partiality monad

Instead of making more elements bisimilar, we can quotient the Delay monad by x later x.

This leads to the definition of the partiality monad by Altenkirch, Danielsson & Kraus (FoSSaC 2017) as a *quotient inductive-inductive type* (QIIT).

Outline

Stream processors

A stream processor describes how to transform a stream of *A*s into a stream of *B*s:

```
mutual
  data SP (A B : Set) : Set where
    get : (A → SP A B) → SP A B
    put : B → SP' A B  → SP A B

  record SP' (A B : Set) : Set where
    coinductive
    field force : SP A B
open SP'
```

There can only be a finite number of gets before there must be a put.

Example stream processor: summing elements pairwise

```
sum2by2 : SP ℕ ℕ
sum2by2 =
  get λ x →
  get λ y →
  put (x + y)
  λ where .force → sum2by2
```

Running a stream processor

```
run : SP A B → Stream A → Stream B
run (get f) xs = run (f (xs .head)) (xs .tail)
run (put y sp) xs .head = y
run (put y sp) xs .tail    = run (sp .force) xs

sum2by2-nats :
  take 5 (run sum2by2 nats)
  ≡ (1 ∷ 5 ∷ 9 ∷ 13 ∷ 17 ∷ [])
sum2by2-nats = refl
```

A slightly more interesting example

Question. What does the stream processor below do?

```
mutual
  sums : SP ℕ ℕ
  sums = get λ n → sumN n 0

  sumN : ℕ → ℕ → SP ℕ ℕ
  sumN zero a = put a λ where .force → sums
  sumN (suc n) a = get λ k → sumN n (a + k)
```

Let's run it on nats!

Composing stream processors

If we have a SP A B and a SP B C, we can apply them in sequence to a Stream A to get a Stream C.

Exercise. Do the same with a single processor:

$$\mathsf{compose} : \mathsf{SP}\ A\ B \to \mathsf{SP}\ B\ C \to \mathsf{SP}\ A\ C$$

$$\begin{aligned}&\mathsf{compose\text{-}correct} :\\ &\quad (p1 : \mathsf{SP}\ A\ B)\ (p2 : \mathsf{SP}\ B\ C)\ (s : \mathsf{Stream}\ A) \to\\ &\quad \mathsf{run}\ (\mathsf{compose}\ p1\ p2)\ s \sim \mathsf{run}\ p2\ (\mathsf{run}\ p1\ s)\end{aligned}$$

Outline

Formal languages, coinductively

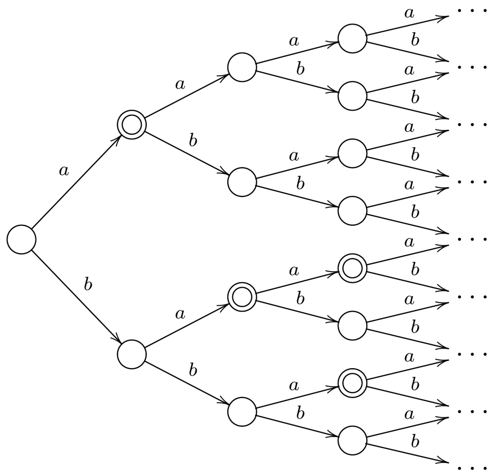
We can describe a formal language l (= a set of strings) over an alphabet A with two pieces of data:

- whether it is nullable
  (= contains the empty string)
- for each $a \in A$, the derivative
  $\delta_a(l) = \{s \mid a \cdot s \in l\}$.

Note that this is a *coinductive* description of formal languages.

Formal languages as (infinite) tries

We can visualize a language as an infinite trie:



Coinductive formal languages in Agda

```
module FormalLanguages
  (A : Set) (_≟_ : DecidableEquality A) where

  record Lang : Set where
    coinductive
    field
      ν : Bool
      δ : A → Lang
  open Lang public
```

Some simple languages

$$\emptyset : \mathsf{Lang}$$
$$\emptyset\ .\nu = \mathsf{false}$$
$$\emptyset\ .\delta = \lambda\ \_ \to \emptyset$$

$$\varepsilon : \mathsf{Lang}$$
$$\varepsilon\ .\nu = \mathsf{true}$$
$$\varepsilon\ .\delta = \lambda\ \_ \to \emptyset$$

$$\mathsf{char} : A \to \mathsf{Lang}$$
$$\mathsf{char}\ a\ .\nu = \mathsf{false}$$
$$\mathsf{char}\ a\ .\delta\ b = \mathsf{if}\ \mathsf{does}\ (a \stackrel{?}{=} b)\ \mathsf{then}\ \varepsilon\ \mathsf{else}\ \emptyset$$

Language membership and tabulation

$$\_\ni\_ : \mathsf{Lang} \to \mathsf{List}\ A \to \mathsf{Bool}$$
$$l \ni [] = l\ .\nu$$
$$l \ni (x :: xs) = l\ .\delta\ x \ni xs$$

$$\mathsf{trie} : (\mathsf{List}\ A \to \mathsf{Bool}) \to \mathsf{Lang}$$
$$\mathsf{trie}\ f\ .\nu = f\ []$$
$$\mathsf{trie}\ f\ .\delta\ a = \mathsf{trie}\ (f \circ (a ::\_))$$

Operations on languages

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\mathrm{complement} : \mathrm{Lang} \to \mathrm{Lang} \\
&\mathrm{complement}\ l\ .\nu \quad = \mathrm{not}\ (l\ .\nu) \\
&\mathrm{complement}\ l\ .\delta\ x = \mathrm{complement}\ (l\ .\delta\ x)
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\_\cup\_ : \mathrm{Lang} \to \mathrm{Lang} \to \mathrm{Lang} \\
&(l_1 \cup l_2)\ .\nu \quad = l_1\ .\nu \vee l_2\ .\nu \\
&(l_1 \cup l_2)\ .\delta\ x = l_1\ .\delta\ x \cup l_2\ .\delta\ x
\end{aligned}
$$

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\_\cap\_ : \mathrm{Lang} \to \mathrm{Lang} \to \mathrm{Lang} \\
&(l_1 \cap l_2)\ .\nu \quad = l_1\ .\nu \wedge l_2\ .\nu \\
&(l_1 \cap l_2)\ .\delta\ x = l_1\ .\delta\ x \cap l_2\ .\delta\ x
\end{aligned}
$$

Language concatenation

We run into a problem when defining concatenation of languages:

$$
\begin{aligned}
&\_\cdot\_ : \mathsf{Lang} \to \mathsf{Lang} \to \mathsf{Lang} \\
&(l_1 \cdot l_2)\ .\nu \quad = l_1\ .\nu \land l_2\ .\nu \\
&(l_1 \cdot l_2)\ .\delta\ x = (\mathbf{if}\ l_1\ .\nu\ \mathbf{then}\ l_2\ \mathbf{else}\ \emptyset) \cup (l_1\ .\delta\ x \cdot l_2)
\end{aligned}
$$

Error: Termination checking failed for $\_\cdot\_$.
Problematic calls: $l_1\ .\delta\ x\ \cdot\ l_2$

The guardedness is obscured by the call to $\cup$.

Sized types to the rescue

```
record Lang (i : Size) : Set where
  coinductive
  field
    ν : Bool
    δ : {j : Size< i} → A → Lang j
open Lang public
```

Language concatenation with sizes

We can define union to be size-preserving:

$$\_\cup\_ : \mathsf{Lang}\ i \to \mathsf{Lang}\ i \to \mathsf{Lang}\ i$$
$$(l_1 \cup l_2)\ .\nu \quad = l_1\ .\nu \lor l_2\ .\nu$$
$$(l_1 \cup l_2)\ .\delta\ x = l_1\ .\delta\ x \cup l_2\ .\delta\ x$$

This allows the definition of concatenation to pass:

$$\_\cdot\_ : \mathsf{Lang}\ i \to \mathsf{Lang}\ i \to \mathsf{Lang}\ i$$
$$(l_1 \cdot l_2)\ .\nu \quad = l_1\ .\nu \land l_2\ .\nu$$
$$(l_1 \cdot l_2)\ .\delta\ x = (\mathsf{if}\ l_1\ .\nu\ \mathsf{then}\ l_2\ \mathsf{else}\ \emptyset) \cup (l_1\ .\delta\ x \cdot l_2)$$

Definition of Kleene star

$$\_^{*} : \mathsf{Lang}\ i \to \mathsf{Lang}\ i$$
$$(l\ {*})\ .\nu \quad = \mathsf{true}$$
$$(l\ {*})\ .\delta\ x = l\ .\delta\ x \cdot (l\ {*})$$

Arden's rule

Arden's rule states: for a non-nullable language k, if $l = (k \cdot l) \cup m$, then $l = (k\ *) \cdot m$

Question. How do we state this rule in Agda?

[1] or path equality in cubical Agda.

Arden's rule

Arden's rule states: for a non-nullable language k, if $l = (k \cdot l) \cup m$, then $l = (k\,*) \cdot m$

Question. How do we state this rule in Agda?

Answer. Using bisimulation![1]

[1]or path equality in cubical Agda.

Bisimulation of languages

```
record _~⟨_⟩~_
  (l₁ : Lang ∞) (i : Size) (l₂ : Lang ∞) : Set where
  coinductive
  field
    ν : l₁ .ν ≡ l₂ .ν
    δ : {j : Size< i} (x : A) → l₁ .δ x ~⟨ j ⟩~ l₂ .δ x
open _~⟨_⟩~_
```

Arden's rule in Agda

Now we can state Arden's rule:

$$\mathsf{arden} : (k\ l\ m : \mathsf{Lang}\ \infty) \to$$
$$l \sim\!\langle\ \infty\ \rangle\!\sim (k \cdot l) \cup m \to l \sim\!\langle\ \infty\ \rangle\!\sim (k\ {*}) \cdot m$$

For the full proof, see *Equational Reasoning about Formal Languages in Coalgebraic Style* by Andreas Abel (2016).

References

- Abel & Pientka (JFP 2016): *Well-founded recursion with copatterns and sized types.*
- Ghani, Hancock & Pattinson (LMC 2009): *Representations of stream processors using nested fixed points.*
- Capretta (LMC 2005): *General Recursion Via Coinductive Types.*
- Altenkirch, Danielsson & Kraus (FoSSaC 2017): *Partiality, Revisited: The Partiality Monad as a Quotient Inductive-Inductive Type.*
- Abel (2016): *Equational Reasoning about Formal Languages in Coalgebraic Style.*
- Capretta (): *Wander types: A formalization of coinduction-recursion*
- Kidney & Wu (POPL 2025): *Formalising Graph Algorithms with Coinduction*