

# VERIFIED FUNCTIONAL DATA STRUCTURES: PRIORITY QUEUES IN LIQUID HASKELL

Master's Thesis

by

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## Declaration of Independent Work

I hereby declare that I have written the work I am submitting, titled “Verified Functional Data Structures: Priority Queues in Liquid Haskell”, independently. I have fully disclosed all sources and aids used, and I have clearly marked all parts of the work — including tables and figures — that are taken from other works or the internet, whether quoted directly or paraphrased, as borrowed content, indicating the source.

Kaiserslautern, den 12.9.2025

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## Abstract

Formal program verification is a powerful approach to ensuring the correctness of software systems. However, traditional verification methods are often tedious, requiring significant manual effort and specialized tools or languages [RKJ08].

This thesis explores `LiquidHaskell`, a refinement type system for Haskell that integrates SMT (Satisfiability Modulo Theories) solvers to enable automated verification of program properties [Vaz+18]. We demonstrate how `LiquidHaskell` can be used to verify correctness of priority queue implementations in Haskell. By combining type specifications with Haskell’s expressive language features, we show that `LiquidHaskell` allows for concise and automated verification with minimal annotation overhead.



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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Motivation

Data structures are fundamental in computer science, providing efficient ways to organize, store, and manipulate data. However, correctness of these structures is vital, especially in safety-critical systems such as aviation, finance, or healthcare, where software bugs can lead to catastrophic consequences. Traditional testing techniques are often insufficient to cover all execution paths or edge cases, particularly for complex data invariants.

Priority queues are one such data structure used widely in scheduling, pathfinding algorithms (e.g., Dijkstra’s), and operating systems. Their correctness is essential to ensure minimal elements are accessed as expected, and operations like insertion, deletion, and merging preserve the heap property [Oka98].

Formal verification provides a promising avenue for ensuring correctness, but mainstream adoption is hindered by the complexity of existing tools. This thesis explores an approach that brings verification closer to the developer: integrating verification directly into the Haskell programming language via `LiquidHaskell`. By embedding logical specifications into types, developers can catch invariant violations at compile time—without leaving their programming environment [RKJ08].

## 1.2. Problem Statement

Program verification is the process of proving that a program adheres to its intended specifications. For example, verifying that the result of a `splitMin` operation on a priority queue indeed removes the minimum element and preserves the heap invariant.

While powerful tools like Coq, Agda, and Dafny enable formal proofs, they often require switching to a new language or proof assistant environment, a deep understanding of dependent types or interactive theorem proving, and significant annotation and proof overhead. These barriers limit adoption in day-to-day software development.

`LiquidHaskell` offers an alternative: a lightweight refinement type system that integrates seamlessly into Haskell. It leverages SMT solvers to check properties like invariants, preconditions, and postconditions automatically, thus reducing manual proof effort [Vaz+18].

### 1.3. Goals and Contributions

This thesis aims to bridge the gap between practical programming and formal verification by demonstrating how Liquid Haskell can be used to verify the correctness of priority queue implementations.

The key contributions are as follows. First, we implement multiple functional priority queue variants (e.g., Leftist Heap, Binary Heap) in Haskell. Second, we encode structural and behavioral invariants using refinement types in `LiquidHaskell`. Third, we demonstrate verification of correctness properties directly in Haskell with minimal annotation. Finally, we evaluate the ease, limitations, and effort required in this approach compared to traditional theorem provers.

This integrated approach allows both implementation and verification to happen in the same language and tooling ecosystem, making verified software development more accessible.

### 1.4. Structure of the Thesis

The rest of this thesis is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** provides background on functional data structures, priority queues, and program verification techniques, along with related work.
- **Chapter 3** describes the design and implementation of different priority queue variants in Haskell.
- **Chapter 4** introduces Liquid Haskell, its syntax, verification pipeline, and its strengths and limitations.
- **Chapter 5** demonstrates the verification of priority queue operations using Liquid Haskell, including encoding invariants, use of refinement types, and example proofs.
- **Appendices** contain the complete verified code and additional implementation insights.

## 2. Background and Related Work

### 2.1. Functional Data Structures

Functional data structures are *immutable*, meaning their state cannot be changed after creation, and *persistent*, allowing access to previous versions of the structure. Combined with recursive algebraic data types (ADTs), this enables efficient and elegant implementations that are often easier to reason about compared to their imperative counterparts [Oka98].

In contrast, imperative and mutable data structures permit in-place modifications, which can introduce side effects such as data races or unintended state changes in concurrent environments. By ensuring that each operation produces a new version of the structure without altering the original, functional data structures provide strong guarantees of referential transparency and purity. These properties not only improve modularity and composability but also facilitate formal reasoning and verification, since invariants are preserved across all versions of the structure [Oka98].

This thesis focuses on functional data structures, specifically priority queues, due to their suitability for formal verification and the rich body of existing research in this area.

### 2.2. Program Verification Techniques

Overview of Hoare logic, model checking, interactive theorem proving, etc.

### 2.3. Related Work

Comparison with Coq, Agda, Dafny, or other tools verifying similar structures.



## 3. Priority Queue Implementations

### 3.1. Specification of Priority Queue Interface

Priority queues are multisets with an associated priority for each element, allowing efficient retrieval of the element with the highest (or lowest) priority. To avoid confusion with FIFO queues, we will refer to them as "heaps" throughout this thesis.

Typical operations include:

- **insert**: Add a new element with a given priority.
- **findMin**: Retrieve the element with the minimum key (in the min-heap variant).
- **splitMin**: Return a pair consisting of the minimum key and a heap with that minimum element removed.
- **merge**: Combine two priority queues into one.

Below is the specification of the priority queue interface, defined as a Haskell type class. `MinView` is a utility type to represent the result of the `splitMin` operation, which returns the minimum element and the remaining heap.

```
data MinView q a =  
  EmptyView | Min {minValue :: a, restHeap :: q a}  
deriving (Show, Eq)  
  
class PriorityQueue pq where  
  empty :: (Ord a) => pq a  
  isEmpty :: (Ord a) => pq a -> Bool  
  findMin :: (Ord a) => pq a -> Maybe a  
  insert :: (Ord a) => a -> pq a -> pq a  
  splitMin :: (Ord a) => pq a -> MinView pq a
```

**Listing 3.1:** Leftist Heap Implementation in Haskell

Priority queues are widely used in computer science and engineering. They play a central role in *operating systems* for task scheduling, in *graph algorithms* such as Dijkstra's shortest path and Prim's minimum spanning tree, and in *discrete event simulation*, where events are processed in order of occurrence time. Other applications include data compression (e.g., Huffman coding) and networking (packet scheduling).

In this thesis, we focus on the *min-priority queue*, where elements with lower keys are considered higher priority. We will study and verify functional implementations of *Leftist Heaps* priority queues.

## 3.2. Leftist Heap Implementation

Leftist heaps, introduced by Crane [Cra72] and discussed extensively by Knuth [Knu73], are a variant of binary heaps designed to support efficient merging. They are defined by two key invariants:

- **Heap Property** – For every node, the stored key is less than or equal to the keys of its children. This ensures that the minimum element is always found at the root.
- **Leftist Property** – For every node, the rank (also called the *right spine length*, i.e., the length of the rightmost path from the node in question to an empty node) of the left child is greater than or equal to that of the right child. This property ensures that the right spine of the heap is kept as short as possible, which in turn guarantees logarithmic time complexity for merging operations [Oka98].

We represent leftist heaps using a recursive algebraic data type in Haskell, as described by Okasaki [Oka98]:

```
data LeftistHeap a
= EmptyHeap
| HeapNode
  { value :: a
    , left  :: LeftistHeap a
    , right :: LeftistHeap a
    , rank  :: Int
  }
```

**Listing 3.2:** *Leftist Heap data type*

Each node contains a value, its left subtree, right subtree, and its rank.

The merge operation merges the right subtree of the heap with the smaller root value with the other heap. After merging, it adjusts the rank by swapping the left and right subtrees if necessary using the function `makeHeapNode`.

```
heapMerge :: (Ord a) => LeftistHeap a -> LeftistHeap a
             -> LeftistHeap a
heapMerge EmptyHeap EmptyHeap = EmptyHeap
heapMerge EmptyHeap h2@(HeapNode _ _ _ _) = h2
heapMerge h1@(HeapNode _ _ _ _) EmptyHeap = h1
heapMerge h1@(HeapNode x1 l1 r1 _) h2@(HeapNode x2 l2
    r2 _)
| x1 <= x2 = makeHeapNode x1 l1 (heapMerge r1 h2)
| otherwise = makeHeapNode x2 l2 (heapMerge h1 r2)
```

**Listing 3.3:** *Leftist Heap merge*

Because the the right spine is kept short by the leftist property and at most is logarithmic, the merge operation runs in  $O(\log n)$  time.

```

makeHeapNode :: a -> LeftistHeap a -> LeftistHeap a ->
  LeftistHeap a
makeHeapNode x h1 h2
| rrank h1 >= rrank h2 = HeapNode x h1 h2 (rrank h2 + 1)
| otherwise = HeapNode x h2 h1 (rrank h1 + 1)

```

**Listing 3.4:** *Leftist Heap helper functions*

Other functions are straightforward to implement.

```

heapEmpty :: (Ord a) => LeftistHeap a
heapEmpty = EmptyHeap

heapFindMin :: (Ord a) => LeftistHeap a -> Maybe a
heapFindMin EmptyHeap = Nothing
heapFindMin (HeapNode x _ _ _) = Just x

heapIsEmpty :: (Ord a) => LeftistHeap a -> Bool
heapIsEmpty EmptyHeap = True
heapIsEmpty _ = False

heapInsert :: (Ord a) => a -> LeftistHeap a ->
  LeftistHeap a
heapInsert x h = heapMerge (HeapNode x EmptyHeap
  EmptyHeap 1) h

heapSplit :: (Ord a) => LeftistHeap a -> MinView
  LeftistHeap a
heapSplit EmptyHeap = EmptyView
heapSplit (HeapNode x l r _) = Min x (heapMerge l r)

```

In the chapter 5, we will verify that these implementations satisfy the priority queue interface and maintain the leftist heap invariants.





## 4. LiquidHaskell Overview

**LiquidHaskell** is a static verification tool that extends Haskell with *refinement types*. In essence, it augments Haskell’s type system with logical predicates that are automatically checked by an SMT (Satisfiability Modulo Theories) solver [Vaz+14]. This combination makes it possible to verify properties of Haskell programs in a lightweight and automated way.

**LiquidHaskell** is implemented as a GHC plugin and works directly on standard Haskell code. Programmers can enrich type signatures with logical refinements, such as bounds on integers, shape properties of data structures, or functional invariants. During compilation, **LiquidHaskell** generates *subtyping queries* from these annotations and delegates them to an SMT solver. If the queries are valid, the program is accepted as verified; otherwise, Liquid Haskell produces verification errors.

Compared to traditional interactive theorem provers, **LiquidHaskell** emphasizes automation and minimal annotation overhead. Its design philosophy is to preserve Haskell’s expressiveness while enabling program verification as a natural extension of the type system. This makes it particularly suitable for verifying properties of functional data structures, where invariants such as ordering, balance, or size constraints can be expressed concisely at the type level.

In the remainder of this chapter, we present the specification language of **LiquidHaskell** (Section 4.1), and discuss its strengths, limitations, and relation to other verification frameworks.

### 4.1. Type Refinement

Refinement types extend conventional type systems by attaching logical predicates to base types. This enables more precise specifications and allows certain classes of errors to be detected statically at compile time [Vaz+14].

Consider the following function:

```
lookup :: Int -> [Int] -> Int
lookup 0 (x : _) = x
lookup x (_ : xs) = lookup (x - 1) (xs)
```

The Haskell type system ensures that `lookup` takes an integer, a list of integers and returns an integer. For example, an application `lookup True [3]` is rejected because the first argument has type `Bool`. However, the standard type system does not rule out the erroneous call `lookup -1 [3]`.

Of course, we could use Haskell’s `Maybe` type to indicate that the function returns `Nothing` for out-of-bounds indices. However, this merely shifts the

handling of invalid inputs to the caller, who must remember to check for the `Nothing`.

With refinement types, we can express stronger specifications. In `LiquidHaskell`, refinements are written inside comments marked by `-@` and `@-`. For instance, we can define non-negative integers as:

```
{-@ x :: {v:Int | v >= 0} @-}
x :: Int
x = 2
```

A refinement type has the general form

$$\{v : T \mid e\},$$

where  $T$  is a Haskell type and  $e$  is a logical predicate over the distinguished value variable  $v$ . The type denotes the set of all values  $v : T$  for which  $e$  holds [Vaz+14].

For example, the type  $\{v : \text{Int} \mid v \geq 0\}$  describes all non-negative integers. For brevity, one can use type aliases or predicates to define commonly used refinements or predicates:

```
predicate Btwn Lo N Hi = Lo <= N && N < Hi
type Nat = {v:Int | v >= 0}
```

Additionally, Holes can be used for Haskell types, as those types can be inferred from the regular Haskell type signature or via GHC’s type inference [VSJ14].

In `LiquidHaskell`, Constants such as integers and booleans are given singleton types, i.e., types that describe precisely one value [Vaz24]. The typing rule for integer literals is:

$$\frac{}{\Gamma \vdash i : \{v : \text{Int} \mid v = i\}} \quad (T\text{-Int})$$

Here, the environment  $\Gamma$  contains bindings of program variables to their refinement types. One important aspect of refinement types is that expressions can be assigned to multiple types. For instance, the integer literal 3 has type  $\{v : \text{Int} \mid v = 3\}$ , but also any supertype, such as  $\{v : \text{Int} \mid v \geq 0\}$ . Crucially, refinement type systems support *subtyping*: if  $\tau_1$  is a subtype of  $\tau_2$ , then any expression of type  $\tau_1$  may safely be used where  $\tau_2$  is expected:

$$\frac{\Gamma \vdash e : \tau_1 \quad \Gamma \vdash \tau_1 \preceq \tau_2}{\Gamma \vdash e : \tau_2} \quad (SUBTYPE)$$

As an illustration, consider the invalid binding:

```
{-@ x :: Nat @-}
x = -1
```

By rule  $T\text{-Int}$ , the literal  $-1$  has type  $\{v : \text{Int} \mid v = -1\}$ . To assign it to `x` of type `Nat`, the checker must show:

$$\emptyset \vdash \{v : \text{Int} \mid v = -1\} \preceq \{v : \text{Int} \mid v \geq 0\}.$$

This so called *subtyping query* is then translated into a logical implication, known as a *verification condition (VC)*:

$$(v = -1) \Rightarrow (v \geq 0).$$

These logical formula then passed to an SMT solver for validation. Since the formula is unsatisfiable, the assignment is rejected.

Figure 4.1 summarizes the notation used to translate subtyping queries into VCs [Vaz+14].

$$\begin{aligned} (\Gamma \vdash b_1 \preceq b_2) &\doteq (|\Gamma|) \Rightarrow (|b_1|) \Rightarrow (|b_2|) \\ (|\{x : \text{Int} \mid r\}|) &\doteq r \\ (|x : \{v : \text{Int} \mid r\}|) &\doteq \text{“x is a value”} \Rightarrow r[x/v] \\ (|x : (y : \tau_y \rightarrow \tau)|) &\doteq \text{true} \\ (|x_1 : \tau_1, \dots, x_n : \tau_n|) &\doteq (|x_1 : \tau_1|) \wedge \dots \wedge (|x_n : \tau_n|) \end{aligned}$$

**Figure 4.1.:** Notation: Translation to VCs [Vaz+14]

#### 4.1.1. Function Contracts

Refinements can also be used to specify function contracts, i.e., pre- and post-conditions. For lookup, we can require that the index is non-negative and less than the length of the list:

```
lookup :: i : Nat -> xs : {[a] | i < len xs} -> a
```

The type of second argument states that the list `xs` must have length greater than `i`. `len` is a function defined by `LiquidHaskell` in the refinement logic that returns the length of the list. In Section 4.1.3, we will show how to define and use user-defined functions in the refinement logic.

#### 4.1.2. Refined Data Types

In the previous examples, we saw how refinements of input and output of function allow us to have stronger arguments about our program. We can take this further by refining the data types. We use the following example as an illustration, following [JSV20]:

```
data Slist a = Slist {
  size :: Nat,
  elems :: {v:[a] | len v == size}
}
```

This refined `Slist` data type ensures the stored ‘size’ always matches the length of the ‘elems’ list, as formalized in the refinement annotation. This ensures that the size of the list is always correct.

In the following section, we show how can we use reflection or measure directives to reason about user-defined Haskell function in the refinement logic.

### 4.1.3. Lifting Functions to the Refinement Logic

When our programs become more complex, we need to define our own functions in the refinement logic and reason about a function within another function. Refinement Reflection allows deep specification and verification by reflecting the code implementing a Haskell function into the function's output refinement type [Vaz+18]. That means we are able to reason about the function's behavior directly in the refinement logic. There are two ways to do this: **reflection** and **measure**.

**Measure** can be used on a function with one argument which is a Algebraic Data Type (ADT), like a list [Vaz24]. Consider the data type of a bag (multiset) defined as a map from elements to their multiplicities:

```
data Bag a = Bag { toMap :: M.Map a Int } deriving Eq
```

Now we can define a measure **bag** that computes the bag of elements for a list:

```
{-@ measure bag @-}
{-@ bag :: Ord a => [a] -> Bag a @-}
bag :: (Ord a) => [a] -> Bag a
bag [] = B.empty
bag (x : xs) = B.put x (bag xs)
```

LiquidHaskell lifts the Haskell function to the refinement logic, by refining the types of the data constructors with the definition of the function [Vaz24]. For example, **bag** measure definition refines the type of the **List**'s constructor to be:

```
Nil  :: {v:List a | bag v = B.empty}
Cons :: x:a -> l:List a -> {v:List a | bag v = B.put x
    (bag l)}
```

Thus, we can use the **bag** function in the refinement logic to reason about invariants of the **List** data type. For instance, in the following example:

```
{-@ equalBagExample1 :: { bag(Cons 1 (Cons 3 Nil)) ==
    bag( Cons 2 Nil) } @-}

>> VV : {v : () | v == GHC.Tuple.Prim.()}
>> .
>> is not a subtype of the required type
>> VV : {VV##2465 : () | bag (Cons 1 (Cons 3 Nil))
    == bag (Cons 2 Nil)}
```

The  $\{x = y\}$  is shorthand for  $\{v : () \mid x = y\}$ , where  $x$  and  $y$  are expressions. This formulation is motivated by the fact that the equality predicate  $x = y$  is a condition that does not depend on any particular value. Note that equality for bags is defined as the equality of the underlying maps that already have a built-in equality function.

Reflection is another useful feature that allows the user to define a function in the refinement logic, providing the SMT solver with the function's behavior [Vaz+18]. This has the advantage of allowing the user to lift in the logic functions with more than one argument, but the verification is no more automated

[Vaz24]. Additionally, with the use of a library of combinators provided by `LiquidHaskell`, we can leverage the existing programming constructs (e.g. pattern-matching and recursion) to prove the correctness of the program and use the principle of programs-as-proofs. (known as Curry-Howard isomorphism)[Vaz+18; Wad15].

To illustrate the use of reflection, we define the `(++)` function in the refinement logic as follows:

```
{-@ LIQUID "--reflection" @-}
{-@ infixr ++ @-}
{-@ reflect ++ @-}

{-@ (++) :: xs:[a] -> ys:[a] -> { zs:[a] | len zs ==
    len xs + len ys } @-}
(++) :: [a] -> [a] -> [a]
[] ++ ys = ys
(x : xs) ++ ys = x : (xs ++ ys)
```

The `{-@ LIQUID "--reflection" @-}` annotation used to activate the reflection feature in `LiquidHaskell`. The `reflect` annotation, lift the `(++)` into the logic in three steps [Vaz+18]:

1. **Definition:** The annotation creates an *uninterpreted function* `(++)` `:: [a] -> [a] -> [a]` in the refinement logic. By uninterpreted, we mean that the logical `(++)` is not connected to the program function `(++)`; in the logic, `(++)` only satisfies the *congruence axiom*.
2. **Reflection:** In this step, `LiquidHaskell` reflects the definition of `(++)` into its refinement type by automatically strengthening the defined function type for `(++)` to:

```
(++) :: xs:[a] -> ys:[a]
-> { zs:[a] | len zs == len xs + len ys
  && zs = xs ++ ys
  && ppProp xs ys }
```

where `ppProp` is an alias for the following refinement, derived from the function's definition:

```
ppProp xs ys = if xs == [] then ys
              else cons (head xs) (ppProp (tail xs) ys)
```

3. **Application:** With the reflected refinement type, each application of `(++)` in the code automatically unfolds the definition of `(++)` only *once* in the logic. In the next section, we will look into `PLE` that allows to unfold the definition of the function multiple times.

we can now reason about properties of `(++)` in the refinement logic that requires unfolding its definition, as opposed to treating it only as an uninterpreted function. In the following subsection, we will show how to use `LiquidHaskell` to verify that the `(++)` function is associative.

#### 4.1.4. Refinement Abstraction

In addition to reflection and measures, LiquidHaskell provides powerful abstraction mechanisms for refinement types. Suppose we want to define a list where elements satisfy a relation with their neighbors. We can use **Refinement Abstraction** to define a new data type that abstracts over the refinement predicate [VSJ14]:

```
data PList a <p :: a -> a -> Bool> =
  Nil
  | Cons { phd :: a, ptl :: PList <p> a <p phd> }
```

Here, the type  $a\langle p \rangle$  is a refinement type, equivalent to  $\{v:a \mid p \ v\}$ . The abstraction  $\langle p :: a \rightarrow a \rightarrow \text{Bool} \rangle$  allows us to parameterize the list by a binary predicate  $p$ .

We can now use this abstraction to define a list of integers where each element is less than or equal to the next:

```
type SortedList = PList <\x y -> x <= y> Int
```

LiquidHaskell can verify that the following list is sorted:

```
{-@ ok :: SortedList @-}
ok :: PList Int
ok = Cons 1 (Cons 2 (Cons 3 Nil))
```

#### 4.1.5. Equational Proofs

LiquidHaskell allows formulation of proofs following the style of calculational or equational reasoning popularized in classic texts and implemented in proof assistants like Coq and Agda [Vaz+18]. It comes with the proof combinators library that allows to make the proofs more readable.

```
type Proof = ()
```

The alias **Proof** is defined as the unit type  $()$ , representing the result of a completed proof.

```
{-@ (===) :: x:a -> y:{a | y == x} -> {v:a | v == x && v == y} @-}
v == y} @-}
(===) :: a -> a -> a
_ === y = y
```

The  $(===)$  function proves equality. It takes  $x:a$  and  $y:\{a \mid y == x\}$ , returning a value refined as  $\{v:a \mid v == x \ \&\& \ v == y\}$ .

```
data QED = QED

(***) :: a -> QED -> Proof
_ *** _ = ()
```

The QED data type is used to signal the end of a proof. The (\*\*\*) operator takes a value and a QED, returning Proof (i.e., ()).

```
{-@ (?) :: forall a b <pa :: a -> Bool, pb :: b ->
      Bool>. a<pa> -> b<pb> -> a<pa> @-}
(?) :: a -> b -> a
x ? _ = x
```

The (?) combinator preserves refinements. With type  $a\langle pa \rangle \rightarrow b\langle pb \rangle \rightarrow a\langle pa \rangle$ , it maintains the refinement  $pa$  of the first argument, allowing properties to be carried across proof steps.

```
{-@ withProof :: x:a -> b -> {v:a | v = x} @-}
{-@ define withProof x y = (x) @-}
withProof :: a -> b -> a
withProof x _ = x
```

The withProof combinator enforces equality between input and output. With type  $x:a \rightarrow b \rightarrow \{v:a \mid v = x\}$ , it asserts that the returned value is exactly  $x$ , making it useful for chaining with (==) in equational reasoning.

In the following example, we show how to use these combinators to verify that the (++) function is associative:

```
{-@ assoc :: xs:[a] -> ys:[a] -> zs:[a]
      -> { (xs ++ ys) ++ zs = xs ++ (ys ++ zs) } @-}
assoc :: [a] -> [a] -> [a] -> ()
assoc [] ys zs = ([ ++ ys) ++ zs
== ys ++ zs
== [] ++ (ys ++ zs)
*** QED

assoc (x : xs) ys zs = ((x : xs) ++ ys) ++ zs
== x : (xs ++ ys) ++ zs
== x : ((xs ++ ys) ++ zs) ? assoc xs ys zs
== (x : xs) ++ (ys ++ zs)
*** QED
```

As you can see, we use proof by induction and in the induction step we use recursive call in the last step.

#### 4.1.6. Totality

### 4.1.7. Termination

One crucial aspect of LiquidHaskell is ensuring that all functions terminate. This is required for the soundness of the refinement type system, as non-terminating functions can lead to inconsistencies in the logic [Vaz24]. To ensure this, it employs three mechanisms :

1. *Structural Termination*: This is a first method that LiquidHaskell will look to verify that recursive calls in functions operating on data types are made with a smaller part of the input. If this verification fails, either due to the function not being defined on a data type or the recursive calls not being on a subpart, then LiquidHaskell offers two following alternative methods to ensure termination.
2. *Termination Heuristic*: The first argument that can be "sized"– there is measure function that turned into `Nat`– should be decreasing and non negative in recursive calls.
3. *Termination Metrics*: user provide, integer expressions that can depend on the function arguments and are used to check termination.

In code 4.1.5, the `assoc` function is terminating because the recursive call is made on the tail of the list, which is a subpart of the input list.

### 4.1.8. Proof by Logical Evaluation

In our proof in code 4.1.5, for the most parts we used trivial unfolding of `(++)` function definition. However, LiquidHaskell offer a tactic called **Proof by Logical Evaluation** (PLE) that provides two key features [Vaz+18]. First, it is guaranteed to find an equational proof if one can be constructed from unfoldings of function definitions (The user must still provide lemmas and induction hypotheses) [Vaz+18]. We can activate PLE by adding `{-@ LIQUID "--ple" @-}` annotation to automate the most parts of the proof for associativity of `(++)`:

```
{-@ LIQUID "--ple" @-}
{-@ assoc :: xs:[a] -> ys:[a] -> zs:[a]
  -> { (xs ++ ys) ++ zs = xs ++ (ys ++ zs) } @-}
assoc :: [a] -> [a] -> [a] -> ()
assoc [] ys zs = ()
assoc (x : xs) ys zs = assoc xs ys zs
```

In the above code, we only need to provide the base case and induction hypotheses, and LiquidHaskell will automatically unfold the definition of `(++)` to prove the associativity of the function. In the next section, we go through an example application of LiquidHaskell.

## 4.2. Strengths and Limitations



[Mehran] Finish Strengths and Limitations

Where it excels and where it struggles (e.g., termination proofs, higher-order functions).

## 4.3. Related Work

[Mehran] Finish related work

Comparison with Coq, Agda, Dafny, or other tools verifying similar structures.



## 5. Verification in Liquid Haskell

This chapter details the formal verification of the leftist heap implementation using Liquid Haskell. We demonstrate how refinement types can be used to enforce complex structural and behavioral invariants, ensuring the correctness of our priority queue implementation.

### 5.1. Encoding Invariants

The cornerstone of the verification is the refined data type for the leftist heap itself. We encode the core invariants of the data structure directly into its type definition.

```
data LeftistHeap a = EmptyHeap
  | HeapNode { value :: a
              , left  :: {h : LeftistHeap a |
                          isLowerBound value h}
              , right :: {v : LeftistHeap a |
                          isLowerBound value v
                          && rrank v <= rrank left }
              , rank  :: {r : Nat | r == 1 + rrank
                          right}
              }
```

This refined definition enforces three key invariants:

1. **Heap Property:** The value at any node is the minimum in its subtree. This is captured by the `isLowerBound value h` refinement on the `left` and `right` children. `isLowerBound` is a recursively defined predicate that checks if a given value is less than or equal to all elements in a heap.

```
{-@ reflect isLowerBound @-}
isLowerBound :: (Ord a) => a -> LeftistHeap a ->
  Bool
isLowerBound _ EmptyHeap = True
isLowerBound v (HeapNode x l r _) =
  v <= x && isLowerBound v l && isLowerBound v r
```

2. **Leftist Property:** For any node, the rank of its right child is less than or equal to the rank of its left child. This is expressed by `rrank v <= rrank left`. This property is what ensures that the right spine of the heap is short, leading to logarithmic time complexity for merge operations.

3. **Rank Property:** The rank of a node is defined as one plus the rank of its right child. This is specified by `rank :: {r : Nat | r == 1 + rrank right}`. The rank of an `EmptyHeap` is 0.

By embedding these invariants directly into the type, Liquid Haskell’s verifier will ensure that any function constructing or modifying a `LeftistHeap` respects them.

## 5.2. Use of Measures and Predicates

To express these invariants and reason about the behavior of our functions, we use several features of Liquid Haskell.

**Measures** are functions from Haskell’s term-level to the refinement logic’s domain. We define several measures:

- **size:** Computes the total number of nodes in the heap.
- **rrank:** Returns the rank of a heap, which is crucial for the leftist property.
- **bag:** Converts the heap into a multiset (or bag) of its elements. This is invaluable for proving that operations like `heapMerge` do not lose or duplicate elements.

**Reflected Functions** allow us to use standard Haskell functions within the refinement logic. We use this for `isLowerBound`, `heapMerge`, and `makeHeapNode`. This allows us to reason about their behavior during verification.

**Predicates** are aliases for refinement types that improve readability. For instance, we define predicates to describe the post-conditions of the `heapMerge` function:

```
predicate HeapMergeMin H1 H2 H =
  ((not (heapIsEmpty H1) && not (heapIsEmpty H2)) =>
   isLowerBound (min (heapFindMin H1) (heapFindMin H2))
    H )
predicate BagUnion H1 H2 H =
  (bag H == B.union (bag H1) (bag H2))
```

`HeapMergeMin` asserts that the resulting heap `H` respects the heap property relative to the minimum elements of the input heaps `H1` and `H2`. `BagUnion` asserts that the elements in the merged heap are the union of the elements from the input heaps.

## 5.3. Example Proofs

The most critical operation for a leftist heap is `heapMerge`. Its correctness is fundamental to the correctness of `insert` and `deleteMin`.

The type signature for `heapMerge` specifies its behavior:

```

heapMerge :: h1 : LeftistHeap a
  -> h2 : LeftistHeap a
  -> {h : LeftistHeap a | (HeapMergeMin h1 h2 h)
                        && (BagUnion h1 h2 h)}
    / [size h1, size h2, 0]

```

This signature guarantees that merging two valid leftist heaps results in a new valid leftist heap, that the heap property is maintained, and that the set of elements is preserved.

The implementation of `heapMerge` involves a recursive call. To help the SMT solver prove that the invariants hold through this recursion, we provide helper lemmas. For example, in the case where  $x1 \leq x2$ , we merge the right child of the first heap (`r1`) with the second heap (`h2`). We must prove to Liquid Haskell that the root value `x1` is a lower bound for this newly merged heap.

```

... makeHeapNode x1 l1 ((heapMerge r1 h2)
  'withProof' lemma_merge_case1 x1 x2 r1 h2)

```

The lemma `lemma_merge_case1` provides this proof.

```

lemma_merge_case1 :: x1 : a
  -> x2 : { v : a | x1 <= v }
  -> r1 : {h : LeftistHeap a | isLowerBound x1 h}
  -> h2 : {h : LeftistHeap a | not (heapIsEmpty h)
                                && isLowerBound x2 h}
  -> {isLowerBound x1 (heapMerge r1 h2)}

```

This lemma states that if `x1` is a lower bound for `r1` and  $x1 \leq x2$  where `x2` is a lower bound for `h2`, then `x1` must also be a lower bound for the result of merging `r1` and `h2`.

With `heapMerge` verified, the correctness of other operations follows more easily:

- `heapInsert x h` is simply `heapMerge (HeapNode x EmptyHeap EmptyHeap 1) h`.
- `heapDeleteMin h` (or `splitMin`) is `heapMerge` of the left and right children of the root.

The properties proven for `heapMerge` are thus inherited by these functions.

## 5.4. Dealing with Termination and Recursion

Liquid Haskell must ensure that all recursive functions terminate. For `heapMerge`, we provide a termination metric:

```

/ [size h1, size h2, 0]

```

Explain the metric why 0 is used

This specifies a lexicographically ordered tuple. Liquid Haskell verifies that for every recursive call within `heapMerge`, this metric decreases. In our case,

one of the heaps is replaced by its right child, which is strictly smaller, thus decreasing the total size and ensuring termination. The lemmas also have termination metrics that are checked by the verifier.

## 5.5. Challenges and Workarounds

The primary challenge in verifying the leftist heap was proving that the structural invariants are preserved by the recursive `heapMerge` function. The SMT solver, while powerful, cannot always deduce these properties on its own, especially when they rely on inductive reasoning over a recursive data structure.

The main "workaround" was to guide the solver by providing explicit proofs in the form of lemmas (`lemma_merge_case1` and `lemma_heapMerge_case2`). These lemmas essentially break down the proof of correctness into smaller, more manageable steps that the solver can verify. They act as explicit induction steps. For example, `lemma_merge_case1` proves a key property about the recursive call, which Liquid Haskell can then use to prove the property for the function as a whole. This pattern of using helper lemmas to discharge proof obligations is common in formal verification with refinement types.

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## A. My Code

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## B. My Ideas

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