Category Theory with Strings

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March 21, 2016

1 Introduction

This is a complementary document for introductory books of category theory ([1], [2], [3], [8]) using *string diagrams*. Don't trust my poor mathematics. Any feedback is welcome at github.com/okomok/strcat.

2 Preliminaries

2.1 Universality

Definition 2.1 For a boolean-valued function P, define

$$!aP(a) \coloneqq P(a) \wedge \forall a'(P(a') \implies a = a')$$

Definition 2.2 (Uniqueness Quantification) Define

$$\exists!aP(a) \coloneqq \exists a!aP(a)$$

meaning that "there exists a unique a such that P".

Remark 2.3 On the other hand,

$$\exists a\big((!aP(a)) \wedge Q(a)\big)$$

means "there exists a unique a such that P, furthermore the a is Q".

Definition 2.4 (Universality) Given a binary boolean-valued function P, we boldly call a statement of the form

$$(\forall x \in X)(\exists! y \in Y)(P(x, y))$$

the *universality* of P.

Proposition 2.5 (Functional Universality)

$$\begin{aligned} &(\forall x \in X)(\exists! y \in Y)(P(x, y)) \\ \iff &(\exists f : X \to Y)(\forall x \in X)(\forall y \in Y)(P(x, y) \iff y = f(x)) \end{aligned}$$

Proof. ($\Longrightarrow$) by the Axiom of choice. ($\Longleftarrow$) immediate. ∎

Definition 2.6 (Functional Bijectivity) Given a a function $g : Y \to X$, a statement

$$(\exists f : X \to Y)(\forall x \in X)(\forall y \in Y)(x = g(y) \iff y = f(x))$$

is known as the *bijectivity* of f and g. This is a special case of universality where $P(x, y)$ is $x = g(y)$.

2.2 Lambda Expressions

Definition 2.7 (Lambda Expression) Following famous symbols like Σ, define

$$\Lambda_x y \coloneqq x \mapsto y$$

for anonymous functions.

Definition 2.8 Given a function H whose domain is a set of functions, define

$$H_x y \coloneqq H(\Lambda_x y)$$

Definition 2.9 (Placeholder Expression) For simple lambda expressions, you may use *placeholders*:

$$\texttt{?}{+}1 \coloneqq \Lambda_n n{+}1$$

Placeholder symbols can vary: `?`, `-`, `1`, etc.

2.3 Families

Syntax of the function application is world-standard and fixed:

$$f(x) \text{ or } fx$$

but sometimes you might want cuter syntax like that

$$x$$

Definition 2.10 (Family) A *family declaration* is a way to provide a function with arbitary application syntax. The usage is clear from an example

$$(x \in Y)_{x \in X}$$

We call such a function a *family*. Furthermore, a function body can be placed like that

$$(x \coloneqq x^2 \in Y)_{x \in X}$$

Example 2.11 The most-used family declaration is the subscript style $(a_i)_i$. You can view a tuple $(a_1, a_2, \ldots, a_n)$ to be an abbreviation of $(a_i)_{i\in\{1,2,\ldots,n\}}$.

Families can do more.

Definition 2.12 (Dependent Function) Let F a set-valued function.

$$(f(x) \in F(x))_{x\in X}$$

defines a function

$$f : X \to \bigcup_{x\in X} F(x)$$

such that

$$(\forall x \in X)(f(x) \in F(x))$$

Such f is called a *dependent function*, for the $F(x)$ depends on x. In case F is a constant function, f is a normal function $X \to Y$.

2.4 Coherence

It is sure you write

$$3 + 1 + 2$$

rather than

$$(3 + (0 + 1)) + 2$$

because you know the arithmetic laws

$$\begin{aligned} x + (y + z) &= (x + y) + z \\ 0 + x = x &= x + 0 \end{aligned}$$

disambiguate unparenthesized expressions. Informally laws to introduce simpler syntax are called *coherence conditions* or briefly *coherence*.

11 Monads

11.1 Eilenberg-Moore Categories

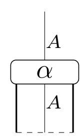
Definition 11.1 (Monad Algebra) Given a monad (T, η, μ) on $\mathcal{C}$, a *monad algebra*, denoted as T-algebra, consists of

1. an object $A \in \mathcal{C}$
2. a morphism $\alpha : TA \to A$

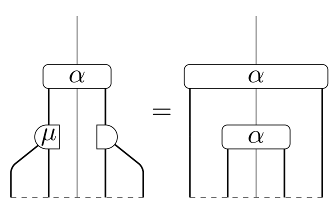
satisfying the coherence

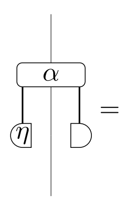
1. *associativity*: $\alpha \circ \mu = \alpha \circ T(\alpha)$
2. *unitality*: $\alpha \circ \eta = \mathrm{id}$

A T-algebra is depicated as



The coherence can be depicted as



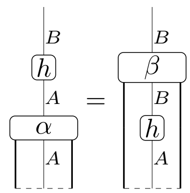


Definition 11.2 (EM Category) Given a monad (T, η, μ), the *Eilenberg-Moore(EM) category* of T, denoted as $\mathcal{C}^T$, is a category whose objects are T-algebras and whose morphisms are those of the form $h : A \to B$ such that

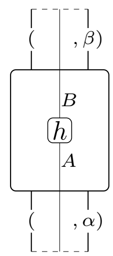
$$h \circ \alpha = \beta \circ T(h)$$

where (A, α) and (B, β) are T-algebras.

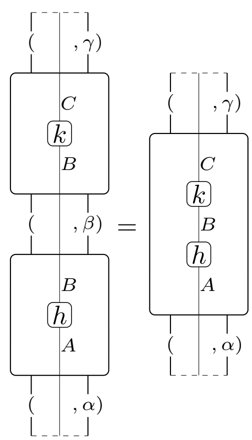
This condition is depicted as



An *EM box* is by compromise defined as

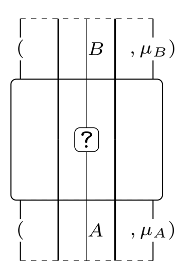


so that the composition can be depicted as

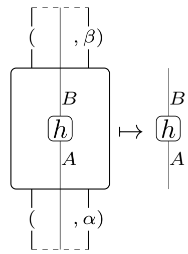


A box for an identity is clear.

Definition 11.3 (EM Adjunction) Given a monad (T, η, μ) on $\mathcal{C}$, define a functor $M : \mathcal{C} \to \mathcal{C}^T$ as

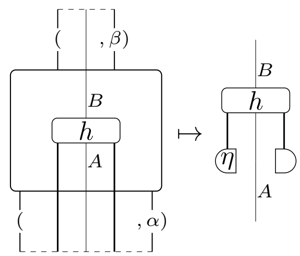


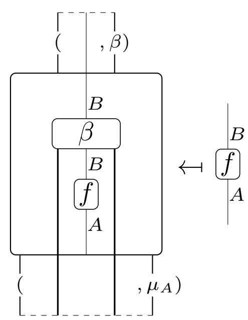
a functor $U : \mathcal{C}^T \to \mathcal{C}$ as



They consistute the *EM adjunction* $M \dashv U$ whose adjunct is defined as

$$\mathcal{C}^T(MA, (B, \beta)) \cong \mathcal{C}(A, U(B, \beta))$$





This adjunction is T-associated.