Formalising Modal Embeddings of Call-by-Name and Call-by-Value

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Introduction

Context

Functional Programming Languages

- OCaml, F#, SML, Haskell, Clean

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Evaluation Strategies

- Call-by-value (cbv)
  - Evaluate the argument first, then substitute
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Evaluation Strategies

- Call-by-value (cbv)
  - Evaluate the argument first, then substitute
  - OCaml, F#, SML
- Call-by-name (cbn) / lazy
  - Substitute the argument, evaluate only when needed
  - Haskell, Clean

Example cbn and cbv

Let f be defined as

$f(x) = x * x$

Example cbn and cbv

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cbn and **cbv** evaluation of f (3 + 3)

cbn: **cbv:**

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cbn:

$f(3+3) \rightarrow (3+3)*(3+3)$

cbv:

$f(3+3) \rightarrow f(6)$

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Reasons to Unify cbn and cbv

Pros and Cons of cbn and cbv

Sometimes arguments are used:

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Unification

- Best of both worlds
- Universal Framework

Some approaches to Unification

Thunks and CPS Translation (Hatcliff et al.)

- Wrappers around expressions to delay evaluation
- Continuous Passing Style translation

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Modal Logic (Espírito Santo et al.)

- Adds box modality
- Boxed terms are treated as values

Formalisation in Agda

- Agda: programming language and proof assistant
- Unification of cbn and cbv into a universal framework
- Formalise this framework in Agda
- Proof of the main properties of the framework

Main Contribution

We formalised the unification of call-by-name and call-by-value using modal logic in Agda

Background

Lambda Calculus (λ-calculus)

Simple and formal model of computation

$\boldsymbol{\lambda}$-terms and types

$$M, N, P, Q \quad ::= \quad x \mid \lambda x.M \mid MN \qquad\qquad A \quad ::= \quad X \mid A \to A'$$

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X

$X \to X$

$(X \to X) \to X$

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$X \to X$

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$(X \to X) \to (X \to X)$

Call-by-name λ-calculus (λ_n)

β-reduction

$$(\lambda x.M)N \to M[x \mapsto N] \qquad (\beta_n)$$

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$$\frac{M \to M'}{MN \to M'N}\,(\mu)$$

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cbn evaluation

β-reduction together with the μ closure rule

Call-by-box λ-calculus (λ_b)

$\boldsymbol{\lambda}$-terms

$$M, N, P, Q \quad ::= \quad \varepsilon(x) \mid \lambda x.M \mid MN \mid \mathsf{box}(N)$$

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Idea

- ε: unbox operator
- box: box operator
- paramters of abstractions are boxed
- box gives control over what to evaluate

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Idea

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Types

$$A \quad ::= \quad X \mid B \to A \mid B \qquad\qquad B \quad ::= \quad \Box A$$

Call-by-box evaluation

β-reduction

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Call-by-box (cbb) evaluation

β-reduction together with the μ and ν closure rule

Embeddings into λ_b

Girard's and Gödel's Translation

- Translate standard λ-calculus into λ_b
- Girard's translation: λ_n into λ_b
- Gödel's translation: λ_v into λ_b
- Cbb simulates
  - cbn under Girard's embedding
  - cbv under Gödel's embedding
- Notation: M° is the Girard translation of λ-term M

Girard's Embedding

Translation from cbn λ-terms to λ_b

$$X^\circ = X \qquad x^\circ = \varepsilon(x)$$

$$(A_1 \to A_2)^\circ = \Box A_1{}^\circ \to A_2{}^\circ \qquad (\lambda x.M)^\circ = \lambda x.M^\circ$$

$$(MN)^\circ = M^\circ \mathrm{box}(N^\circ)$$

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Embedding of $(\lambda x.x)y$

$$((\lambda x.x)y)^\circ = (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(y^\circ)$$

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Embedding of $(\lambda x.x)y$

$$\begin{aligned} ((\lambda x.x)y)^\circ &= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(y^\circ) \\ &= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y)) \end{aligned}$$

Girard's Embedding

Translation from cbn λ-terms to λ_b

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$$\begin{aligned} ((\lambda x.x)y)^\circ &= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(y^\circ) \\ &= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y)) \\ &= (\lambda x.x^\circ)\mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y)) \end{aligned}$$

Girard's Embedding

Translation from cbn λ-terms to λ_b

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Embedding of $(\lambda x.x)y$

$$\begin{aligned}
((\lambda x.x)y)^\circ &= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(y^\circ) \\
&= (\lambda x.x)^\circ \mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y)) \\
&= (\lambda x.x^\circ)\mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y)) \\
&= (\lambda x.\varepsilon(x))\mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(y))
\end{aligned}$$

Example of cbb under Girard's embedding

$\boldsymbol{\beta}$-reduction

$$(\lambda x.M)\mathrm{box}(N) \to M[\varepsilon(x) \mapsto N] \qquad (\beta_b)$$

Example of cbb under Girard's embedding

β-reduction

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Example cbb evaluation

$$((\lambda x.\varepsilon(x))\ \mathrm{box}(\lambda y.\varepsilon(y)))\ \mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(z)) \to_{b_n} (\lambda y.\varepsilon(y))\mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(z))$$

β-reduction

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Example cbb evaluation

$$\begin{aligned}((\lambda x.\varepsilon(x))\ \mathrm{box}(\lambda y.\varepsilon(y)))\ \mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(z)) &\to_{b_n} (\lambda y.\varepsilon(y))\mathrm{box}(\varepsilon(z)) \\ &\to_{b_n} \varepsilon(z)\end{aligned}$$

Well-typed terms after translation

$$M, N \quad ::= \quad \varepsilon(x) \mid \lambda x.M \mid M\mathrm{box}(N)$$

Well-typed terms after translation

$$M, N \quad ::= \quad \varepsilon(x) \mid \lambda x.M \mid M\mathsf{box}(N)$$

- Eliminates the ν closure rule
- Only the μ rule remains
- Call-by-box becomes deterministic
- If M evaluates to N with cbn, then M° evaluates to N° with cbb

Agda

What is Agda?

- Functional programming language
- Inspired by Haskell
- Proof assistant
- Dependently typed
- Hole-based programming

Some Agda code

Girard's Embedding for Types

$$(A_1 \to A_2)^\circ = \Box A_1{}^\circ \to A_2{}^\circ$$
$$X^\circ = X$$

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Embedding in Agda

$$\mathsf{embedType} : \mathsf{Type} \to \mathsf{Typeb}$$
$$\mathsf{embedType}\ (C \Rightarrow D) = \Box\ (\mathsf{embedType}\ C) \Rightarrow\!\mathsf{b}\ \mathsf{embedType}\ D$$
$$\mathsf{embedType}\ \mathsf{X} = \mathsf{X}$$

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- Variables
  - Use of de Bruijn indices
  - Variables represented as natural numbers

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- Variables
  - Use of de Bruijn indices
  - Variables represented as natural numbers
- Ill-typed terms
  - λ-term $y(\lambda x.x)$ is not typeable
  - Solution: restrict to well-typed λ-terms
- Formal definition of substitution
- Formal definition of raise in Gödel's translation

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- High learning curve
- Hole based programming is amazing
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  - Follow the online PLFA book (Programming Language Foundations in Agda)
  - https://plfa.github.io/

Conslusions

Conclusion

- Recap of the λ-calculus
- Explained λ_b
- Defined the unifying relation cbb
- Girard's translation
- Formally proved the main properties of the translations

Questions?