Programming Languages and Compilers (CS 421)



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Based in part on slides by Mattox Beckman, as updated by Vikram Adve and Gul Agha

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Lambda Calculus - Motivation

- Aim is to capture the essence of functions, function applications, and evaluation
- λ-calculus is a theory of computation
- "The Lambda Calculus: Its Syntax and Semantics". H. P. Barendregt. North Holland, 1984

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Lambda Calculus - Motivation

- All sequential programs may be viewed as functions from input (initial state and input values) to output (resulting state and output values).
- λ-calculus is a mathematical formalism of functions and functional computations
- Two flavors: typed and untyped

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Untyped λ-Calculus

- Only three kinds of expressions:
 - Variables: x, y, z, w, ...
 - Abstraction: λ x. e

(Function creation, think fun $x \rightarrow e$)

■ Application: e₁ e₂

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Untyped λ-Calculus Grammar

- Formal BNF Grammar:
 - <expression> ::= <variable>

| <abstraction>

| <application>

| (<expression>)

- <abstraction>
 - ::= λ <variable>.<expression>
- <application>

::= <expression> <expression>

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Untyped λ-Calculus Terminology

- Occurrence: a location of a subterm in a term
- Variable binding: λ x. e is a binding of x in e
- Bound occurrence: all occurrences of x in λ x. e
- Free occurrence: one that is not bound
- Scope of binding: in λ x. e, all occurrences in e not in a subterm of the form λ x. e' (same x)
- Free variables: all variables having free occurrences in a term

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Label occurrences and scope:

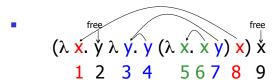
$$(\lambda x. y \lambda y. y (\lambda x. x y) x) x$$

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

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Label occurrences and scope:



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Untyped λ -Calculus

- How do you compute with the λ-calculus?
- Roughly speaking, by substitution:
- $(\lambda x. e_1) e_2 \Rightarrow * e_1 [e_2/x]$
- * Modulo all kinds of subtleties to avoid free variable capture

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Transition Semantics for λ -Calculus

$$\frac{E \rightarrow E''}{E E' \rightarrow E'' E'}$$

Application (version 1 - Lazy Evaluation)

$$(\lambda x . E) E' --> E[E'/x]$$

Application (version 2 - Eager Evaluation)

$$\frac{E' --> E''}{(\lambda x \cdot E) E' --> (\lambda x \cdot E) E''}$$

$$\overline{(\lambda \ x \ . \ E) \ V --> E[\ V/x]}$$
 V - variable or abstraction (value)

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How Powerful is the Untyped λ -Calculus?

- The untyped λ-calculus is Turing Complete
 - Can express any sequential computation
- Problems:
 - How to express basic data: booleans, integers, etc?
 - How to express recursion?
 - Constants, if_then_else, etc, are conveniences; can be added as syntactic sugar

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Typed vs Untyped λ -Calculus

- The pure λ-calculus has no notion of type: (f f) is a legal expression
- Types restrict which applications are valid
- Types are not syntactic sugar! They disallow some terms
- Simply typed λ-calculus is less powerful than the untyped λ-Calculus: NOT Turing Complete (no recursion)

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Uses of λ-Calculus

- Typed and untyped λ-calculus used for theoretical study of sequential programming languages
- Sequential programming languages are essentially the λ-calculus, extended with predefined constructs, constants, types, and syntactic sugar
- Ocaml is close to the λ-Calculus:

fun x -> exp -->
$$\lambda$$
 x. exp
let x = e₁ in e₂ --> (λ x. e₂)e₁

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α Conversion

α-conversion:

$$\lambda$$
 x. exp -- α --> λ y. (exp [y/x])

- Provided that
 - 1. y is not free in exp
 - No free occurrence of x in exp becomes bound in exp when replaced by y

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α Conversion Non-Examples

- 1. Error: y is not free in termsecond
 - $\lambda x. x y \longrightarrow \lambda y. y y$
- 2. Error: free occurrence of x becomes bound in wrong way when replaced by y

$$\lambda x. \lambda y. x y$$
 $\rightarrow x$ $\rightarrow x$

But λ x. (λ y. y) x -- α --> λ y. (λ y. y) y And λ y. (λ y. y) y -- α --> λ x. (λ y. y) x

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Congruence

- Let ~ be a relation on lambda terms. ~ is a congruence if
- it is an equivalence relation
- If $e_1 \sim e_2$ then
 - $(e e_1) \sim (e e_2)$ and $(e_1 e) \sim (e_2 e)$
 - λ x. $e_1 \sim \lambda$ x. e_2

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α Equivalence

- α equivalence is the smallest congruence containing α conversion
- One usually treats α -equivalent terms as equal i.e. use α equivalence classes of terms

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Example

Show: λx . (λy . y x) $x \sim \alpha \sim \lambda y$. (λx . x y) y

- λ x. (λ y. y x) x -- α --> λ z. (λ y. y z) z so λ x. (λ y. y x) x \sim α ~ λ z. (λ y. y z) z
- (λ y. y z) --α--> (λ x. x z) so (λ y. y z) ~α~ (λ x. x z) so λ z. (λ y. y z) z ~α~ λ z. (λ x. x z) z
- λ z. (λ x. x z) z --α--> λ y. (λ x. x y) y so
 λ z. (λ x. x z) z ~α~ λ y. (λ x. x y) y

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■ λ x. (λ y. y x) x ~α~ λ y. (λ x. x y) y

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Substitution

- $\begin{tabular}{ll} \begin{tabular}{ll} \be$
- P [N / x] means replace every free occurrence of x in P by N
 - P called *redex*; N called *residue*
- Provided that no variable free in P becomes bound in P [N / x]
 - Rename bound variables in P to avoid capturing free variables of N

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Substitution

- x [N / x] = N
- $y[N/x] = y \text{ if } y \neq x$
- $(e_1 e_2) [N / x] = ((e_1 [N / x]) (e_2 [N / x]))$
- $(\lambda x. e) [N / x] = (\lambda x. e)$
- (λ y. e) [N / x] = λ y. (e [N / x]) provided y \neq x and y not free in N
 - Rename y in redex if necessary

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Example

$$(\lambda y. yz) [(\lambda x. xy) / z] = ?$$

- Problems?
 - z in redex in scope of y binding
 - y free in the residue
- (λ y. y z) [(λ x. x y) / z] --α-->
 (λ w.w z) [(λ x. x y) / z] =
 λ w. w (λ x. x y)

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Example

- Only replace free occurrences
- $(\lambda y. y z (\lambda z. z)) [(\lambda x. x) / z] =$ $\lambda y. y (\lambda x. x) (\lambda z. z)$

Not

$$\lambda$$
 y. y (λ x. x) (λ z. (λ x. x))

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β reduction

- β Rule: (λ x. P) N --β--> P [N /x]
- Essence of computation in the lambda calculus
- Usually defined on α-equivalence classes of terms

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Example

- (λ z. (λ x. x y) z) (λ y. y z)
- $--\beta-->(\lambda x. xy)(\lambda y. yz)$
- --β--> (λ y. y z) y --β--> y z
- (λ x. x x) (λ x. x x)
- $--\beta-->(\lambda x. xx)(\lambda x. xx)$
- $--\beta--> (\lambda X. X X) (\lambda X. X X) --\beta-->$

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α β Equivalence

- α β equivalence is the smallest congruence containing α equivalence and β reduction
- A term is in *normal form* if no subterm is α equivalent to a term that can be β reduced
- Hard fact (Church-Rosser): if e_1 and e_2 are $\alpha\beta$ -equivalent and both are normal forms, then they are α equivalent

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Order of Evaluation

- Not all terms reduce to normal forms
- Not all reduction strategies will produce a normal form if one exists

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Lazy evaluation:

- Always reduce the left-most application in a top-most series of applications (i.e. Do not perform reduction inside an abstraction)
- Stop when term is not an application, or left-most application is not an application of an abstraction to a term

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Example 1

- (λ z. (λ x. x)) ((λ y. y y) (λ y. y y))
- Lazy evaluation:
- Reduce the left-most application:
- (λ z. (λ x. x)) ((λ y. y y) (λ y. y y))
 --β--> (λ x. x)

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Eager evaluation

- (Eagerly) reduce left of top application to an abstraction
- Then (eagerly) reduce argument
- Then β-reduce the application



Example 1

- (λ z. (λ x. x))((λ y. y y) (λ y. y y))
- Eager evaluation:
- Reduce the rator of the top-most application to an abstraction: Done.
- Reduce the argument:
- **•** (λ z. (λ x. x))((λ y. y y) (λ y. y y))
- $-\beta-> (\lambda z. (\lambda x. x))((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda y. y y))$
- $--\beta$ --> (λ z. (λ x. x))((λ y. y y) (λ y. y y))...

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- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

(λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) -- β -->

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

 $(\lambda \times X \times X)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta-->$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

 $(\lambda \times X \times X)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta --> ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

(λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) --β-->((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

 $(\lambda x. x x)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta-->$ $((\lambda y. y) y) (\lambda z. z)) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

 $(\lambda x. x x)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta--> ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) (-\beta--> ((\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z))((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$

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- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

```
(\lambda x. x x)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta-->

((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))

--\beta--> ((\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z))((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))
```

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

$$(λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) --β-->$$
 $((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))$
 $-β--> ((λ z. z)) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

$$(λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) --β-->$$
 $((λ y. y y) (λ z. z)) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))$
 $--β--> ((λ z. z) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))$
 $--β--> (λ z. z) ((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

 $(\lambda \ X. \ X \)((\lambda \ y. \ y \ y) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z)) --\beta-->$ $((\lambda \ y. \ y \ y \) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z)) \ ((\lambda \ y. \ y \ y \) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z))$ $--\beta--> \ ((\lambda \ z. \ z \) \ ((\lambda \ y. \ y \ y \) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z))$ $--\beta--> \ (\lambda \ z. \ z) \ ((\lambda \ y. \ y \ y \) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z))$ $--\beta--> \ (\lambda \ y. \ y \ y \) \ (\lambda \ z. \ z)$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

$$(\lambda x. x x)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta--> ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$$

$$((\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$$

$$(-\beta--> (\lambda z. z) ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)) --\beta--> (\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)$$

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Example 2

- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Lazy evaluation:

$$(\lambda x. x x)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$$
 --β-->
$$([\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)] ((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$$
--β--> $((\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z))((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$
--β--> $(\lambda z. z)((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$ --β-->
$$(\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z)$$
 ~β~ $\lambda z. z$

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- (λ x. x x)((λ y. y y) (λ z. z))
- Eager evaluation:

$$(\lambda x. x x)$$
 $((\lambda y. y y) (\lambda z. z))$ $--\beta$ -->
 $(\lambda x. x x)$ $((\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z))$ $--\beta$ -->
 $(\lambda x. x x)$ $((\lambda z. z)$ $--\beta$ -->
 $(\lambda z. z) (\lambda z. z)$ $--\beta$ -->

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Untyped λ-Calculus

- Only three kinds of expressions:
 - Variables: x, y, z, w, ...
 - Abstraction: λ x. e
 (Function creation)
 - Application: e₁ e₂

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How to Represent (Free) Data Structures (First Pass - Enumeration Types)

- Suppose τ is a type with n constructors: C_1, \dots, C_n (no arguments)
- Represent each term as an abstraction:
- Let $C_i \rightarrow \lambda X_1 \dots X_n$. X_i
- Think: you give me what to return in each case (think match statement) and I'll return the case for the ith constructor

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How to Represent Booleans

- bool = True | False
- True $\rightarrow \lambda x_1$. λx_2 . $x_1 \equiv_{\alpha} \lambda x$. λy . x
- False $\rightarrow \lambda x_1$. λx_2 . x_2 \equiv_{α} λx . λy . y
- Notation
 - Will write

$$\lambda x_1 \dots x_n$$
. e for $\lambda x_1 \dots \lambda x_n$. e $e_1 e_2 \dots e_n$ for $(\dots (e_1 e_2) \dots e_n)$

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Functions over Enumeration Types

- Write a "match" function
- match e with C₁ -> x₁

$$\mid ... \mid C_n \rightarrow X_n$$

- $\rightarrow \lambda X_1 \dots X_n e. e X_1 \dots X_n$
- Think: give me what to do in each case and give me a case, and I'll apply that case

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Functions over Enumeration Types

- type $\tau = C_1 | ... | C_n$
- match e with C₁ -> x₁

$$\mid ... \mid C_n \rightarrow x_n$$

- $match\tau = \lambda x_1 ... x_n e. e x_1...x_n$
- e = expression (single constructor)
 x_i is returned if e = C_i

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match for Booleans

- bool = True | False
- True $\rightarrow \lambda x_1 x_2 . x_1 =_{\alpha} \lambda x y . x$
- False $\rightarrow \lambda x_1 x_2 \cdot x_2 \equiv_{\alpha} \lambda x y \cdot y$
- match_{bool} = ?

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match for Booleans

- bool = True | False
- True $\rightarrow \lambda x_1 x_2 ... x_1 =_{\alpha} \lambda x y ... x$
- False $\rightarrow \lambda X_1 X_2 \cdot X_2 =_{\alpha} \lambda X y \cdot y$
- match_{bool} = $\lambda x_1 x_2 e. e x_1 x_2$ ≡_a $\lambda x y b. b x y$

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How to Write Functions over Booleans

- if b then x₁ else x₂ →
- if_then_else b $x_1 x_2 = b x_1 x_2$
- if_then_else = λ b x_1 x_2 . b x_1 x_2

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How to Write Functions over Booleans

- Alternately:
- if b then x_1 else x_2 = match b with True -> x_1 | False -> x_2 \rightarrow match_{bool} x_1 x_2 b = (λ x_1 x_2 b . b x_1 x_2) x_1 x_2 b = b x_1 x_2
- if_then_else = λ b x_1 x_2 . (match_{bool} x_1 x_2 b) = λ b x_1 x_2 . (λ x_1 x_2 b . b x_1 x_2) x_1 x_2 b = λ b x_1 x_2 . b x_1 x_2

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Example:

not b

- = match b with True -> False | False -> True
- \rightarrow (match_{bool}) False True b
- = $(\lambda x_1 x_2 b . b x_1 x_2) (\lambda x y. y) (\lambda x y. x) b$
- = b $(\lambda x y. y)(\lambda x y. x)$
- not = λ b. b (λ x y. y)(λ x y. x)
- Try and, or

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and

or

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How to Represent (Free) Data Structures (Second Pass - Union Types)

- Suppose τ is a type with n constructors: type $\tau = C_1 t_{11} \dots t_{1k} | \dots | C_n t_{n1} \dots t_{nm}$
- Represent each term as an abstraction:
- $C_i t_{i1} \dots t_{ii} \rightarrow \lambda X_1 \dots X_n \cdot X_i t_{i1} \dots t_{ii}$
- $C_i \rightarrow \lambda \ t_{i1} \dots \ t_{ij} \ \mathsf{X}_1 \dots \ \mathsf{X}_n \ . \ \mathsf{X}_i \ t_{i1} \dots \ t_{ij}$
- Think: you need to give each constructor its arguments fisrt

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How to Represent Pairs

- Pair has one constructor (comma) that takes two arguments
- type (α,β) pair = (,) α β
- (a, b) --> λ x . x a b
- (_ , _) --> λ a b x . x a b

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Functions over Union Types

- Write a "match" function
- match e with $C_1 y_1 ... y_{m1} \rightarrow f_1 y_1 ... y_{m1}$ | ... | $C_n y_1 ... y_{mn} \rightarrow f_n y_1 ... y_{mn}$
- $match\tau \rightarrow \lambda f_1 ... f_n e. e f_1...f_n$
- Think: give me a function for each case and give me a case, and I'll apply that case to the appropriate fucntion with the data in that case

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Functions over Pairs

- match_{pair =} λ f p. p f
- fst p = match p with (x,y) -> x
- fst $\rightarrow \lambda$ p. match_{pair} (λ x y. x) = (λ f p. p f) (λ x y. x) = λ p. p (λ x y. x)
- snd $\rightarrow \lambda$ p. p (λ x y. y)

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How to Represent (Free) Data Structures (Third Pass - Recursive Types)

- Suppose τ is a type with n constructors: type $\tau = C_1 t_{11} \dots t_{1k} | \dots | C_n t_{n1} \dots t_{nm}$
- Suppose t_{ih} : τ (ie. is recursive)
- In place of a value t_{ih} have a function to compute the recursive value r_{ih} x₁ ... x_n
- $C_i t_{i1} \dots t_{ih} \dots t_{ij} \rightarrow \lambda x_1 \dots x_n \cdot x_i t_{i1} \dots (r_{ih} x_1 \dots x_n) \dots t_{ii}$
- $C_i \rightarrow \lambda t_{i1} \dots r_{ih} \dots t_{ii} X_1 \dots X_n . X_i t_{i1} \dots (r_{ih} X_1 \dots X_n) \dots t_{ii}$

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How to Represent Natural Numbers

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- nat = Suc nat | 0
- $\overline{Suc} = \lambda n f x. f (n f x)$
- Suc $n = \lambda f x$. f(n f x)
- $0 = \lambda f x. x$
- Such representation called Church Numerals

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Some Church Numerals

• Suc $0 = (\lambda n f x. f (n f x)) (\lambda f x. x) --> \lambda f x. f ((\lambda f x. x) f x) --> \lambda f x. f ((\lambda x. x) x) --> \lambda f x. f x$

Apply a function to its argument once

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Some Church Numerals

• $\overline{Suc(Suc\ 0)} = (\lambda \ n \ f \ x. \ f \ (n \ f \ x)) \ (Suc\ 0) --> (\lambda \ n \ f \ x. \ f \ (n \ f \ x)) \ (\lambda \ f \ x. \ f \ (n \ f \ x)) --> \lambda \ f \ x. \ f \ ((\lambda \ f \ x. \ f \ x)) --> \lambda \ f \ x. \ f \ ((\lambda \ x. \ f \ x)) --> \lambda \ f \ x. \ f \ (f \ x)$ Apply a function twice

In general $\overline{n} = \lambda f x. f (... (f x)...)$ with n applications of f

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Primitive Recursive Functions

- Write a "fold" function
- fold f₁ ... f_n = match e with C₁ y₁ ... y_{m1} -> f₁ y₁ ... y_{m1}

$$\mid ... \mid Ci y_1 ... r_{ij} ... y_{in} \rightarrow f_n y_1 ... (fold f_1 ... f_n r_{ij}) ... y_{mn} \mid ... \mid C_n y_1 ... y_{mn} \rightarrow f_n y_1 ... y_{mn}$$

- $fold\tau \rightarrow \lambda f_1 ... f_n e. e f_1...f_n$
- Match in non recursive case a degenerate version of fold

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Primitive Recursion over Nat

- fold f z n=
- match n with 0 -> z
- | Suc m -> f (fold f z m)
- fold = λ f z n. n f z
- is_zero $n = fold (\lambda r. False)$ True n
- = = (λ f x. f n x) (λ r. False) True
- \bullet = ((λ r. False) ⁿ) True
- if n = 0 then True else False

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Adding Church Numerals

- $n = \lambda f x. f^n x$ and $m = \lambda f x. f^m x$
- $\overline{n + m} = \lambda f x. f^{(n+m)} x$ $= \lambda f x. f^{(n+m)} x = \lambda f x. \overline{n} f(\overline{m} f x)$
- $= + = \lambda n m f x. n f (m f x)$
- Subtraction is harder

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Multiplying Church Numerals

- $n \equiv \lambda f x. f^n x$ and $m \equiv \lambda f x. f^m x$
- $\overline{n * m} = \lambda f \underline{x}. (f^{n*m}) x = \lambda f x. (f^m)^n x$ $= \lambda f x. \overline{n} (\overline{m} f) x$
- $\bar{*} = \lambda n m f x. n (m f) x$

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Predecessor

- let pred_aux n =
 match n with 0 -> (0,0)
 | Suc m
- -> (Suc(fst(pred_aux m)), fst(pred_aux m) = fold (λ r. (Suc(fst r), fst r)) (0,0) n
- pred = λ n. snd (pred_aux n) n = λ n. snd (fold (λ r.(Suc(fst r), fst r)) (0,0) n)

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Recursion

- Want a λ-term Y such that for all term R we have
- Y R = R (Y R)
- Y needs to have replication to "remember" a copy of R
- $Y = \lambda y. (\lambda x. y(x x)) (\lambda x. y(x x))$
- $Y R = (\lambda x. R(x x)) (\lambda x. R(x x))$ = R ((\lambda x. R(x x)) (\lambda x. R(x x)))
- Notice: Requires lazy evaluation

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Factorial

• Let $F = \lambda f$ n. if n = 0 then 1 else n * f (n - 1) Y F 3 = F (Y F) 3 = if 3 = 0 then 1 else 3 * ((Y F)(3 - 1)) = 3 * (Y F) 2 = 3 * (F(Y F) 2) = 3 * (if 2 = 0 then 1 else 2 * (Y F)(2 - 1)) = 3 * (2 * (Y F)(1)) = 3 * (2 * (F(Y F) 1)) =... = 3 * 2 * 1 * (if 0 = 0 then 1 else 0*(Y F)(0 -1)) = 3 * 2 * 1 * 1 = 6

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Y in OCaml

let rec y f = f (y f);;
val y : ('a -> 'a) -> 'a = <fun>
let mk_fact =
 fun f n -> if n = 0 then 1 else n * f(n-1);;
val mk_fact : (int -> int) -> int -> int = <fun>
y mk_fact;;
Stack everflow during evaluation (looping)

Stack overflow during evaluation (looping recursion?).

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Eager Eval Y in Ocaml

- : int -> int = <fun>
- # y mk fact 5;;
- -: int = 120
- Use recursion to get recursion

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Some Other Combinators

- For your general exposure
- $I = \lambda x \cdot x$
- $K = \lambda x. \lambda y. x$
- $K_* = \lambda x. \lambda y. y$
- $S = \lambda x. \lambda y. \lambda z. x z (y z)$

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